

The Howard School Curriculum Intent Statement

“Working together to build a community of successful learners”

Learning and growth are at the heart of The Howard Academy Trust’s ethos. We strongly advocate that all members of our community become the very best that they can be. We recognise the unique talents and expertise within our community and create a culture of dignity, inclusivity, respect and ambition where all can thrive.

At The Howard School, our core purpose is to provide every student with an excellent education. We want our young people to have the maximum life choices and know an excellent education is central to that.

We are shaping the adults of the future and our purpose is to ensure that our students can live happy and fulfilled lives. We want our students to value themselves and to be a force for good in the local and global community.

We have very high standards because this supports our students to achieve and be the very best that they can be.

At The Howard School, we make no apology for high expectations and unrelenting ambition for all our students.

Our curriculum removes barriers and promotes resilience. Students are supported and challenged in order to make excellent progress in academic, sporting and creative pathways. All students including students with SEND access a broad and balanced curriculum. Our intention is that every child regardless of need can experience an ambitious education. Best endeavours are implemented to ensure that individual needs are met, supported and challenged throughout the students’ learning experience. We equip, with support if necessary, our students with tools to become independent learners.

Our curriculum helps students to achieve the highest standards and make excellent progress. We teach the powerful knowledge and skills that students need to ensure excellent life opportunities and prepare students for life beyond school.

At KS3, our curriculum is broad and balanced. Our strong links with primary schools and the substantial ongoing work around KS2 to KS3 transition means there is a relevant sequence of learning and no time is wasted.

Across the curriculum, learning is linked to ‘purpose’ and why students are learning ‘this’ now. Students continue to learn and embed essential skills and knowledge, developing a deep understanding and full coverage of the KS3 curriculum and beyond. Independent study supports retrieval of previous learning so that ‘powerful’ knowledge is fully embedded. Knowledge Organisers are used as a key mechanism to embed ‘powerful knowledge’, ‘retrieval practise’, and study skills techniques.

Towards the end of year 8, our students have a clear understanding of the subjects they enjoy and would like to develop. At this stage, we ask students to choose four subject areas they would like to explore further.

In Year 9, students study core subjects and their four chosen subject areas. This deepens their understanding and knowledge, preparing them well for the next stage of education. Likewise, it supports and engages students to be an intrinsic part of their own learning therefore maintain interest and enthusiasm in their studies. We have found, via three years of experience and stakeholder voice, that this very much suits our students. These courses are not externally examined; they aim to develop a mastery of the skills required to complete a course of study in Key Stage 4. At the end of year 9, there are opportunities to review the curriculum choices, ready for KS4.

Key Stage 4 courses are carefully planned and sequenced to ensure that content is thoroughly taught and revisited. This prepares students for external assessment at the end of key stage and beyond.

The language of learning and organisation is central to our curriculum. We ensure that there is a logical interconnectedness of literacy, numeracy and organisational skills across the school curriculum. We develop learners who are confident in reading, have high level communication skills and have the confidence to speak to different audiences and for a variety of purposes.

At Key Stage 5, we offer an extensive range of ‘A’ levels and Applied General courses. Students are matched with the most appropriate courses for them based on GCSE outcomes to maximise their success. Students can choose three ‘A’ level courses from the 27 courses on offer and there are a range of pathways available to guide students, should they have a specific career in mind. However, these pathways are for guidance only. There is an opportunity to resit Maths and English GCSE as part of ‘A’ level studies. In addition, all students are assigned an impact tutor who will

track academic progress and act as a mentor throughout their 'A' level studies. A range of Sport Clubs, D of E and involvement in 'House' events compliment our academic curriculum.

Students have the opportunity in all subjects to discuss, challenge and build on other points of view; to use the language of debate; and have access to additional subject specific reading curriculums where they can find wider materials to further expand their knowledge and understanding.

The Howard School strongly supports students' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. SMSC and FBV (Fundamental British Values) are entwined in all we do. These are embedded into our curriculum, enrichment activities, rewards and assemblies. Students in all year groups benefit from a comprehensive personal development programme, delivered in a standalone Culture, Development and Well-being (CDW) lesson at least three times a week.

Our teaching of Religious Education and Philosophy is inclusive and open minded; it promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. RE is provided for all year groups, either through RE lessons or through the CDW Programme.

In addition to workshops, subject visits and careers activities, students are offered opportunities to take part in a wide range of other non-examined activities such as cultural/sporting clubs or House events. These activities allow them to either represent their School or their House, encouraging them to take pride in taking part. Further enrichment activities include our 'Activities Week' at the end of the academic year, The Festival of Sport and other opportunities throughout the year, such as visiting New York, performing in a high-quality Music and Drama production or participating in the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh Award.

With our own dedicated careers advisor, we ensure that students have secure foundations for progression into further education and apprenticeships. They receive careers information with a clear focus on the Gatsby Benchmarks, which ensures that Howard School students flourish, thrive and successfully access the next stage of their education, employment or training.