



EAST LEAKE  
— ACADEMY —

# Curriculum Policy March 2021

*Office use*

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<b>Associated documents:</b>			
ELA SEND Curriculum Policy			
<b>Links to:</b>			
		<a href="#">_____</a>	



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# “Everyone enjoying high quality learning experiences through which they are able to achieve their full potential.”

## 1. Intent (the intended curriculum)

We are committed to giving our students the very best opportunities in life. Our students are educated within a comprehensive education setting. The majority of students at East Leake Academy (ELA) have middle and higher ability prior attainment at the end of key stage 2. We support all of our students in achieving their full potential by offering a curriculum that includes academic, creative and vocational subjects that are both relevant and engaging for all our students. The wide range of these subjects allows different pathways that suit our students’ needs to ensure they are both stretched, challenged and supported in their studies.

**Our intent is that the curriculum our students follow is:**

- Student-centred
- Fit for purpose, offering appropriate scaffolding and personalisation
- The progression model. Knowledge is generative; the more knowledge a student has, the more the student will learn
- Looking to reach beyond the immediate context, beyond exam specifications and beyond the remit of the NC, allowing students to connect with knowledge and translate it for the world around them
- Effective at preparing students for a successful adult and working life in a 21st century global society including building individual’s **knowledge**, developing their love of learning through **exploration** and developing effective written and verbal **communication** skills
- Providing every opportunity for students to exceed national standards in attainment and progress
- Nurturing the talents of all and celebrating success at every opportunity
- Focussed on scholastic excellence
- Focussed on research informed evidence of the science of learning
- Logically sequenced and supports activation of prior knowledge, which can reduce cognitive load

## 2. Implementation (the enacted and assessed curriculum)

The curriculum at ELA is structured and sequenced in every subject area to provide opportunities to develop student knowledge, allow deep exploration of subjects and to improve student’s written and verbal communication.

- **Knowledge** aspects of the enacted curriculum focus upon ensuring students know more over time through high quality teacher instruction, with frequent opportunities for retention and recall activities.
- **Exploration** aspects of the enacted curriculum will provide opportunities for debate, question and challenge, hands on experiences, enquiry, analysis, critical evaluation and problem solving.

- **Communication** aspects of the enacted curriculum will place strong emphasis on structured speech to share and debate ideas, alongside developing written communication methods.

The curriculum is carefully planned to activate learning and no overload making explicit connections to pre-existing knowledge and identifying how new knowledge strengthens cognitive architecture.

Assessment activities both formative and summative are carefully considered to ensure that they provide teachers with useful information that can be used to inform the planning of student learning over time. Assessment activities are also focused upon providing students with high quality feedback that identifies knowledge gaps and misconceptions in learning so that students can make improvements over time.

More than offering a range of subject options; students in all year groups experience a wide range of opportunities to promote personal development too such as visits, external speakers, activity days and work experience placements for year 10 and 12. Pathways within each key stage ensure continuity of study for all students and that they are challenged in their learning.

Following a flying start to their studies in year 7, students spend years 7, 8 and 9 in key stage 3, after which they follow a two-year key stage 4 until their examinations at the end of year 11. Students in science will focus their studies in year 9 to provide the foundations of learning for all students to access a triple science qualification at key stage 4 without the need to reduce the breadth of their options choices at the beginning of year 10. Students who remain with us at ELA study a range of higher qualifications, including A-Levels and Level 3 BTECs. ELA introduced increased rigour within our key stage 3 curriculum in September 2016, following the launch of 'life without levels'. Our key stage 3 has a positive impact on students' engagement and progress to help avoid a "lull" in their studies, whilst following all foundation subjects. The aim of key stage 3 is to allow time to deepen their understanding of the subject content to provide students with a cultural capital and the skills they need to be motivated and succeed in their subsequent level 2 qualifications.

Tutor groups are organised horizontally from year 7 – 11 to create an environment focussed upon age specific personal development. We strongly believe in creating well rounded students at all levels, horizontal tutoring allows an environment where students can concentrate on their personal development, particularly around key transition points within their educational journey. Alongside the tutor system ELA's pastoral programme also includes a 'House System'. Students are organised into 4 houses (Eagle, Harrier, Kestrel and Osprey). The house system provides excellent opportunities to develop character through healthy competition in all subject domains, contribute to the wider community through engaging with charity activities; and to take responsibility and develop leadership roles. The house system has proved highly effective, students have greater confidence to interact and engage with students of different ages and more maturity. Students also benefit from role models with a range of different experiences, as staff at all levels play a role in tutoring and the house system, including our support and teaching staff.

### **3. A whole curriculum**

Our key stage 3 takes place in years 7, 8 and 9. Students follow core studies in English, mathematics and science and a varied curriculum that gives our students opportunity to engage in a range of different activities that will ensure success in a variety of ways. Students follow a broad range of courses including religious education with philosophy and ethics, personal social & health education, humanities, drama, music, art, textiles, food, computing, resistant materials and modern foreign languages (French or German). In year 10, students then specialise in a number of subjects, in addition to their core studies, following a wide range of inspiring and challenging courses such as business studies, photography, engineering, 3D design, drama, music, sports studies, humanities, sociology and a modern foreign language. We ensure that students can follow a variety of combinations of courses at key stage 4, including access to the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc).

Our co-educational sixth form prepares all students for the next steps in their career. A combination of highly relevant academic and vocational courses enables students to go onto further study at university or into work based employment. English literature, maths the sciences, and history continue to be popular choices while some of our most successful students have followed a broad range of subjects.

### **4. Personal Development and Extra-curricular activities**

An extensive range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities are offered to students across many subject areas, including sport, maths challenges, STEM, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, the debating society, visits and a variety of theatre productions, greatly enhances student experience, enjoyment and understanding. These enrichment opportunities have been proven to have a huge impact upon our students' personal development, behaviour and attitudes, wellbeing, enthusiasm and progress. In addition there is a programme of drop-down sessions across the academic year to support personal development and careers.

### **5. Timetabling**

ELA operates a 1-week timetable, comprising five 60-minute lessons. The day starts with a 20-minute personal development lesson at 08:30 so that all students have access to high quality pastoral support. During horizontal tutoring, students follow an organised programme focussing on personal development, academic mentoring and promotion of British Values. Students also receive an assembly once a week during this time. The first lesson begins at 08:55, followed by lesson 2. After break, students have two lessons followed by lunch. Following a 40-minute lunchtime students complete their day with 1 more 60minute lessons. All lessons at key stage 4 and key stage 5, and the vast majority of key stage 3 lessons, are taught by subject specialists, so that students experience the very best quality of education.

### **6. Students who are excelling due to hard work and developing significant talent**

As an aspirational academy, we seek to meet the needs of students of all abilities through a wide range of well thought out strategies and opportunities.

Students who are excelling within areas of the curriculum are encouraged to maximise their academic and personal potential through experiences that are both challenging and varied, incorporating a range of higher order thinking skills. Students that are talented in the arts, music, drama and sports for example, are given the opportunity to develop their expertise to the full.

We are fully committed to the Growth Mind-set philosophy and passionately believe that students are talented because of their hard work and dedication given to a particular field. This means that the students we consider to be excelling is fluid over time and anyone has the capacity to become part of this group.

## **7. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

Our curriculum meets the needs of our students with special educational needs or disabilities by ensuring we have a deep understanding of how they learn best and what support they need the most. Working closely with parents, our SEND team ensures students have the appropriate support for their individual needs, including additional literacy lessons, one-to-one tutoring and homework support sessions. In addition we have two specialist provisions: a nurture unit to support primary transition and Brook House: an alternative academic provision for students with SEMH needs. Please see the SEND Curriculum document for more detail.

## **8. Preparing for Key Stage 3: Careers Guidance and Transition**

A smooth transition to secondary school for all students is vital to their success in key stage 3 and beyond. Therefore, additional staffing time and leadership roles are allocated to this area of the curriculum; strong strategic leadership results in highly effective transition into key stage 3 for all students. ELA staff maintain contact with staff and students from all schools; currently at least 15 primary schools send students to ELA, and so it is important to ensure that this contact is sustainable and effective. At a strategic level, ELA attends a termly 'Primary Heads' meeting so that leaders have regular communication and discuss a range of common issues. A range of teaching staff from ELA attend primary schools throughout the year and also organise events at ELA for primary feeder schools. There is a particular focus on maths and English; therefore, staff from the primary schools and ELA have the opportunity to meet regularly to share best practice for Teaching and Learning in year 6 English and mathematics

As part of a smooth transition, a wide range of engagement activities take place well in advance of students joining ELA. This culminates in a three day transition programme for year 6 students at ELA in the first week of July and first day in September – this has proved highly successful and very popular with staff, parents and students.

## Key Stage 3

### Year 7

<b>Subject</b>	<b>No. of allocated lessons</b>
English	4
Maths	4
Science	3
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics	1
PE	2
Design and Technology	2
Art	1
French or German	2
Humanities	3
Drama & Music	2
Computing	1

### Year 8

<b>Subject</b>	<b>No. of allocated lessons</b>
English	4
Maths	4
Science	3
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics	1
PE	2
Design and Technology	2
Art	1
French or German	2
Humanities	3
Drama & Music	2
Computing	1

### Year 9

<b>Subject</b>	<b>No. of allocated lessons</b>
English	4
Maths	4
Science	3
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics	1
PE	2
Design and Technology	2
Art	1
French or German	2
Humanities	3
Drama & Music	2
Computing	1

All students spend at least 3 hours per week in each core subject, ensuring they have a solid foundation of skills and knowledge in literacy, numeracy and science that will ensure that they thrive in all other subjects. A range of subjects are offered at key stage 3 so that students can access a diverse array of subjects in key stage 4 and beyond, to give them the best opportunities to achieve their chosen career pathway.

All key stage 3 students study 1 lesson of philosophy and ethics so they develop a strong moral core and acceptance of individual differences as part of their personal development; alongside gaining an understanding and appreciation of world religion and different beliefs. Performing arts is taught in 2 lessons per week (year 7 and 8), so that it can be specialised into drama and music. Both subjects are taught by subject specialists. Students will focus on one language, either German or French so that they can develop a deeper knowledge and skill base to take this additional language forward in later life.

## 9. Preparing for Key Stage 4 & 5: Careers Guidance and Transition

To ensure that students select the most appropriate subjects for their career aspirations our students are supported in a variety of ways. Throughout year 7-13 a comprehensive careers programme is supported via tutor activities, online resources, independent careers advice, careers fairs, interview skills days, post 16 interviews, post 16 enrichment and assemblies. An 'Options' and 'Careers' evening is held before every key stage transition for students and their parents to discuss any queries with each specialist teacher and the head of subject. All subject teachers discuss with students and parents any queries about their specialist courses and a student's aptitude for them. The Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) team runs assemblies, individual meetings and advice sessions throughout the year as well as drop-in sessions at lunchtimes. They also run visits to universities and engage with a variety of careers organisations to raise awareness of the opportunities available for students.

### Key Stage 4 on average across Y10 and 11 per week

Subject	No. of allocated lessons
English	4
Maths	4
Science	6
Option A	2.5
Option B	2.5
Option C	2.5
Option D	2.5
PE	1

Example options:

Art	Drama	Music
Engineering	Food	3D Design
French	German	Computer Science
Religious Studies	Photography	Sociology
Sports Studies	Business Studies	Media
Geography	History	Travel & Tourism



As with key stage 3, the core subjects are allocated a slightly higher proportion of time in key stage 4, to ensure students have a strong grounding in subjects that complement all other subjects. During the subject choices process, students are asked to choose either history, geography, languages, computing as their first choice, as well as two further option subjects, a total of three optional subjects. This ensures that students follow a well-rounded curriculum with a strong academic core that includes an additional Ebacc subject within a wide portfolio of subjects. The subject choices blocks ensure that students can follow a variety of combinations of courses at key stage 4, including access to the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc).

We continue to ensure that curriculum best matches the needs of our students and so we offer a mix of vocational and GCSE qualifications. Senior and middle leaders spend a significant amount of time liaising with students and their parents ensuring that course choices best match each student. The vast majority of students have the opportunity to gain nine Level 2 qualifications, so that they have appropriate qualifications for further study beyond key stage 4, but have sufficient time to study each qualification in depth to maximise their success. We offer bespoke packages where there is a real need; for example, students with significant barriers to learning will study a bespoke curriculum with less option subjects and/or more bespoke qualifications. We offer a range of support packages tailored to individuals to help everyone achieve their potential.

We offer one modern foreign language at key stage 3. Students are offered a modern foreign language as it is proven to promote the development of oral, written, research, and editing skills. Extra-curricular opportunities are offered to all students so that they can study a second language if they wish. By accessing this provision students have achieved a high enough standard in a second language by attending languages club regularly to allow them to study the subject for GCSE.

An extensive range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities are offered to students across many subject areas, including mathematics challenges and a variety of theatre productions, which greatly enhances student experience, enjoyment and understanding. These enrichment opportunities have been proven to have a huge impact upon our students' wellbeing, enthusiasm and progress.

## **10. Ebacc position statement**

The government ambition has indicated that for a curriculum to maintain a strong academic core that schools could enter 75% of students for the English Baccalaureate from 2022 and 90% of students by 2024. To achieve the EBacc, each student must achieve a GCSE grade at 5 and above in:

- English language
- mathematics
- 2 sciences
- geography or history
- A modern foreign language (French or German at ELA)

Governors and staff at ELA's view is that the academy should offer the curriculum it believes to be appropriate to the needs of each student in the academy and would support each individual student's life chances.

This would mean that the proportion of students taking courses that comply with EBacc requirements would vary from year to year, according to the needs of the students. In some years the academy might meet the 75%/90% threshold; in other years it may not. In effect, therefore, the academy's position will continue as follows:

- We will give clear advice to parents/carers and students about the implications of students following courses which are EBacc compliant and non-EBacc compliant. We will also provide advice during the options process from Post 16 colleges re their entry criteria and requirements.
- We will express to students and parents/carers during the year 9 options process the importance of following a curriculum with a strong academic core including promoting the value of the EBacc curriculum. We will strongly encourage students who are higher attaining in English and MFL in each half/third of the population take the full EBacc curriculum to support their life chances.
- We will not insist that all students take the EBacc curriculum.
- All students will have the opportunity via the options programme in year 9, to select the full EBacc curriculum if they so wish.

## **11. Preparing for Key Stage 5: Careers Guidance and Transition**

Typical entry requirements for each subject at year 12 is a higher grade (5-9) at GCSE. Entry requirements for each subject are carried out on an individual basis for each student to ensure that they are following appropriate courses for their chosen career pathway and that they will be successful in their studies. In some instances classes in key stage 5 are taught across multiple year groups.

An engaging and bespoke transition programme prepares all our students for Level 3 learning to post-16/ key stage 5. The Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) is delivered through a comprehensive careers programme; supported via tutor activities, online resources, independent careers advice, careers fairs, interview skills days, post 16 interviews, post 16 enrichment and assemblies. The team works strategically to engage with external organisations, raising funding to support students to experience work placements, university visits and mentoring, that they would not normally have access to. ELA works in close partnership with Nottingham University and other higher education establishments, which has created opportunities for year 11 students to attend an Oxbridge University. Further visits to universities and hands-on sessions with a variety of careers organisations continue to raise awareness of the opportunities and career pathways available for students. Students are encouraged, and supported, in attending events such as UCAS conventions and several open days organised to help students select appropriate pathways. On a regular basis, all subject teachers discuss with students and parents any queries about their specialist courses and a student's aptitude for them. A post-16 careers evening is held early in the academic year for students and their parents to discuss courses with each specialist teacher and the subject leader as well as find out about other opportunities at post-16 such as apprenticeships and other post-16 providers. Individual interviews are made available for specifically targeted students with an external expert and optional parental attendance. Transition days and preparatory summer work for year 11 continue to be popular and highly successful; the proportion of students changing subjects at the start of year 12 is low.

### **Key Stage 5**

We strongly believe that our 16–19 study programmes should have the characteristics of a Baccalaureate approach, with support activities and a co-curriculum including work experience to develop the 'soft' skills essential to higher study and employability. We offer mainly academic A levels alongside a small range of vocational qualifications for students. The combination of subjects has been carefully chosen to ensure that there are alternatives available within each career pathway, so that students are best matched to the courses they study. Subjects are taught in 5 lessons per week, with additional study sessions allocated to students requiring further support –above the national average for allocated teaching time. A high proportion of teaching time and regular 1:1 support from teachers ensures that all students achieve their potential.

### **Example subjects offered:**

English Literature  
Core Maths  
Maths  
Further Maths  
Biology  
Chemistry  
Physics  
French  
Geography  
History  
Philosophy & Ethics  
Business Studies  
Economics  
Computing  
Food  
Product Design  
Drama  
BTEC Music  
Art  
Photography  
Media  
Film Studies  
GCSE Maths  
GCSE English

Senior and middle leaders spend a significant amount of time liaising with students and their parents ensuring that course choices best match each student. We continue to offer an enrichment lesson at key stage 5, which has been highly successful in providing outstanding CEIAG and personal development.

## **12. The wider curriculum at East Leake Academy**

### **Physical Education**

The academy promotes a healthy lifestyle. All students in key stages 3 and 4 follow the National Curriculum and are expected to participate in PE within their weekly core curriculum. There are many enrichment opportunities provided through the lunchtime and extra-curricular programme. Team sport is a regular feature in house activities and competitions. Post 16 students are encouraged to continue to lead a physically active lifestyle.

### **Equal opportunities**

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief.

Disabilities: In accordance with the statutory requirements the academy aims to make the curriculum accessible to all students as far as is reasonably practicable.

### **Sex and relationships education**

The academy provides sex education in the basic curriculum for all students, in which students are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life.

### **Careers education and work related learning**

Careers education is delivered to all students in years 7–13, through careers education elements of the PSHE lessons and tutoring programmes. Key stage 5 students have access to the academy's alumni which offers direct and networking opportunities to access relevant career professionals. Returning ambassadors also provide key stage 5 students with advice and guidance to life after school.

### **E-safety**

Being aware of how to be safe when interacting with the wide range of ICT resources available to the academy is an entitlement of all members of our academy community. Staff follow the Acceptable Use Policy regarding ICT in the academy. Students are taught as part of their curriculum about how to recognise and avoid danger when using ICT resources. Through its Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies the academy works to prevent any member of its community becoming the victim of online exploitation and/or cyber-bullying.

### **13. Impact (the learned curriculum)**

Our students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained the relevant qualifications to allow them to progress. Students completing year 11 with 5A\*-C grades has been consistently significantly higher than national averages, with very low NEET figures. Increasing numbers of students have continued to study with us at post-16, whilst others have secured apprenticeships and college placements. These destinations strongly support their career plans. Attendance in all year groups is excellent, students are punctual and are keen to learn.

The whole curriculum is quality assured by the following groups:

- Senior Leaders
- Middle Leaders
- Student Leadership
- Governors
- Trust Leaders (Senior Principal)

The Governing Body and these groups proactively seek the views of parents'/carers' and students as part of their monitoring of the Curriculum Policy.

Quality assurance will be focussed upon how well the curriculum is structured and sequenced to allow for the development of student **knowledge, exploration** and **communication** (see implementation