

The Albany Academy Traded Pathway Curriculum Policy - English

The aim of the English curriculum across all sites within the Raedwald Trust is to ensure that all learners develop their key skills of reading, writing, and speaking and listening, aligned with the National Curriculum

As an alternative provision, we believe that all students should have the same opportunities that mainstream students would experience so we cater for students working at Entry Level up to the GCSE exam level. The skills developed within the curriculum also meet the needs of students studying functional skills specifications if the home school chooses to enter them for these qualifications.

Students that work within our sites have all experienced a varied education. Many students have experienced interrupted education both short and long term. A large investment of time is spent reviewing and improving gaps in knowledge.

The Programmes of study for English are derived from the National Curriculum for all key stages and have been sequenced concentrically so subjects are revisited with increasing complexity throughout the key stages, for example Phonics at EYFS and KS1 leads to increased complexity of texts throughout the key stages.

Grammar and vocabulary are taught explicitly at primary level and then used at secondary level for pupils to analyse texts. Basic comprehension is taught at KS1 which progresses to critical evaluation by KS4. This allows students to have the opportunity to practise the same skills repeatedly.

Across the key stages, pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills through a range of narrative, non-narrative and poetry units.

At a primary and secondary level, reading is the key area. This is in line with current research that says that if children can't read, they can't access the world around them.

In line with the National Curriculum, the English curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information

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- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

Research has also shown a difference in attainment for pupils that are 'word rich' and those that are 'word poor'. Those that are word poor are also linked to other areas of deprivation in their lives. As our cohort of pupils are often word poor, this is a key area for us to address with the English curriculum to support learners in all aspects of their lives.

There have been conscious decisions made throughout the English curriculum to support learners with reading comprehension skills and vocabulary development to give them the best opportunities to be successful in all aspects of learning and life.

Baselining

Many students have missed large gaps in their education and students also join us at various points across the academic year. All students will complete a Baseline assessment that we use to understand pupils confidence with reading, writing and speaking. Explicit vocabulary instruction is taught across all subjects and all key stages. This has been a conscious decision in our curriculum to support learners that are word poor. Vocabulary is explicitly taught to support students in all aspects of their lives.

The English curriculum, complemented by the Readers for Life curriculum aims to equip pupils with effective reading skills to assist in all aspects of their lives, including further education, training and employment. The curriculum also supports pupils to develop a strong command of spoken and written language, so they become effective communicators in the wider world.

Our curriculum has a focus on early identification of pupils who are unable to read during induction. Individual, targeted interventions are then introduced to support learners to address gaps in learning.

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At induction across the key stages, issues with decoding are identified and addressed, with the implementation of a targeted phonics programme if needed. Without this, pupils will not make progress as they cannot understand what they are reading.

Progression of skills is clearly mapped across the curriculum. Curriculums from a lower key stage can be used to support students with gaps in skills and knowledge. As is highlighted in the PoS, we cannot assume that students joining our Pathways have had the opportunity to access fully their entitlement to an English programme of study at previous key stages.

GCSE English

The Programme of study allows students to gain a wide breadth of the GCSE content. At KS3 and 4, the intention is to build on the knowledge and skills from the primary curriculum, and where this has not happened, we use the induction process to identify areas of need and to continue to build on that. Both modern texts and texts from our literary heritage are used to enable students to develop their reading skills, and these texts are used to inspire writing tasks and speaking and listening tasks. At KS4 the focus is on understanding and critically evaluating texts and being able to make an informed personal response to a text.

At KS3 and 4, pupils are expected to write for a wide range of audiences and purposes, including writing to describe, writing to narrate and writing to argue. The curriculum requires pupils to apply their knowledge of a wide range of punctuation and grammar. There is a focus on understanding the difference between spoken and written English. Pupils are enabled to use their knowledge of vocabulary and language techniques gained from their reading in their own writing to achieve particular effects. The curriculum covers a range of organisational and structural devices to support pupils to communicate their ideas clearly and coherently in writing.

If a student can't read, they can't access the world and so this is the foundation of all other areas of the curriculum. Readers for Life complements the English curriculum.

Readers for Life has carefully chosen texts that pupils can relate to, and that link to the wider world. The PoS has been refined deliberately to meet the needs of the cohort we serve.

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Improving recall

Topics are revisited at the start of lessons that review and recap knowledge from last lesson, last week and last month. The EDI framework used within lessons explicitly focusses on recall of previous knowledge. The framework structure is based around Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and focusses on students improving their 'sticky memory'.

The start of the lesson is an ideal opportunity to support students with developing their proof-reading skills when reviewing the previous lesson. Explicit instruction of new vocabulary is a key part of the lesson. Following the presentation of new materials, pupils should access guided practice with lots of modelling and then move to independent practice of the key skill area.

Assessment in English

Assessment is ongoing throughout the English curriculum, enabling all teaching to be adapted to support pupil's individual needs, according to their starting point.

The KS4 curriculum is not written to prepare students to sit any exam board's English Language or English Literature GCSE. It is a skills based curriculum to assess progress as a way:

- a. To find out what they do and do not know so that we can plan next steps in their learning journey.
- b. To understand their patterns of progress.
- c. To make judgements about their progress towards key markers in their education.

Ultimately, good assessment will add value to pupil outcomes by helping teachers and leaders to understand what is having good impact and what needs to be refined or addressed for individual pupils.

Teachers will assess daily learning objectives taught through a RAG rating system which will measure progress over time. Assessment is used to inform future planning and teaching. Pupils who may require extra support are identified quickly. Pupils self-assess each lesson, against the objective, to enable them to develop an understanding of their own knowledge progression.

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All teaching will be adapted to support students' individual needs, according to their starting point. We work closely with mainstream settings during induction to identify starting points and any specific strengths or difficulties.

English and the wider curriculum

Reading

Every opportunity is taken within the classroom to allow students to develop their reading. Many forms of text are actively shared with students to prepare them for independence within society. Students are actively encouraged to read and are supported to understand key words. Shared reading and choral reading often occurs when looking at texts as a class.

We explicitly teach key vocabulary each lesson to allow students to make connective learning and recall the meaning behind command words.

Within lessons staff promote high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English. Displays engage students to support them with the understanding of key command words.