CASTLE MEAD
ACADEMY

CURRICULUM POLICY

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy. The Local Governing Body will review the policy, unless there are significant changes in the interim period.

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Version:	Date:	Author:	Summary of Changes:
1.0	01.02.2023	Chloe French	New Policy
2.0	30.09.2025	Adna Harris	Change in staff roles and no. of lessons
3.0	12.10.2026	Adna Harris	Change in wording around EBACC and Prep for Life

Curriculum Ambition

It is our aim that scholars leave Castle Mead Academy as articulate, resilient, critical individuals who excel academically, in the arts, languages and on the sporting field. Our scholars will enjoy the riches of an ambitious curriculum and be 'heirs of all that has gone before', inheriting all of the rich knowledge from the past to better shape the future.

At Castle Mead Academy, we are committed to:

A curriculum that both offers academic reward and builds cultural capital; a curriculum that prepares our scholars for whatever career they choose, at the highest level they choose; a curriculum which will allow our scholars to join and lead the highest levels of debate in current affairs and community as informed global citizens; a curriculum that brings scholars in to participation and appreciation of the most beautiful, fascinating and exciting areas of culture and human endeavour; a curriculum to empower.

It is through a commitment to research, reading, and looking out beyond our own school that we have arrived at this vision, and we continue with this commitment as we move forward on our journey. We engage with the wider community through Twitter, books, blogs, the Chartered College of Teachers, and conferences such as researchED, and we are building links with subject specialists for all of our departments.

Our overarching curriculum vision, across the secondary schools in TMET:

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*We will provide for all our pupils access to the best which has been thought, said, written and created in every field of human endeavour so that they are **knowledgeable, critical, enriched** and **well poised** to lead fulfilling lives.*

Achieving our vision

At Castle Mead Academy, we believe that knowledge is power. Our curriculum is designed to equip our scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences. Our focus on powerful knowledge means that every single lesson at Castle Mead helps us to realise our vision of giving our scholars access to the very best that has been thought and said. Our centrally-planned curriculum means that our teachers are not required to plan lessons from scratch. Rather, they spend their time refining learning materials, scripting questions and practising their exposition. We focus on the work that matters, so that our teachers can teach and our scholars can learn.

Three key principles underpin curriculum thinking and design at CMA:

- Aligned autonomy
- Imperative
- Critique

Our teachers are experts in their subjects and have the autonomy to use their specialist knowledge in a way that honours their subject. We strongly believe in the power of subject expertise to breathe life into a subject. Careful and critical selection of rich knowledge that is deliberately sequenced, interwoven and revisited for maximum learning potential and for maximum joy, can only be obtained by a team of passionate subject experts who feel empowered to wield their autonomy. That autonomy is aligned with our values as a school and our Invigorating Instruction framework for excellent teaching, but we are not in the business of promoting reductivism or genericism;

one size does not fit all, and the onus is on the curriculum leader and their team to make decisions that do right by their subject.

It is unequivocal that at CMA everyone is capable of excellence. Inextricably linked to this is the truth that everyone is deserving of powerful knowledge. This imperative underpins all that we do. We know well that learning builds on learning. The more a person knows, the more a person can learn. Hirsch calls existing knowledge "mental Velcro", which allows for additional knowledge to become attached to it. We make sure that our curriculum- rich in connections and golden threads- is crafted in such a way that scholars' 'mental Velcro' is constantly being added to, and being strengthened, so that every single one of our scholars know more and can do more over time. We are also driven by the imperative to nurture happy, well-rounded young people and we believe that such happiness comes from learning.

'The continued discourse and the shaping of curriculum over time, and the presence of teachers in this conversation, are vital. There is not an implicit compulsion to accept the status quo; in fact, the opposite is true.' This quote from Ruth Ashbee embodies our belief in the importance of ongoing critique of the curriculum. Whilst some curriculum content is statutory and/or shaped by examination specifications, the curriculum ought not to be written in 'tablets of stone' (Ashbee). What constitutes powerful knowledge, and the 'best that has been thought and said' can be decided only through critique and challenge led by subject experts. These conversations happen every day at CMA: passionate colleagues challenge each other's thinking when reviewing and refining the curriculum, and senior leaders and curriculum leaders engage in critical conversations about the curriculum in their weekly meetings. What knowledge is included and why is a constant subject for interrogation and the ubiquity of this discourse means that *curriculum is forever* at CMA.

An important part of this work to critique the curriculum is to ensure that the rich knowledge contained within it is diverse and recognises, and represents, a multitude of voices. In making curricular decisions we *must* continue to critically challenge the *why*, recognising the potential for bias as we do so. Such conversations can disrupt our thinking and even cause discomfort, but it is vital for us to question who decides what knowledge is best, and to challenge the status quo. The window and mirror analogy is helpful here:

'There is a need for curriculum to function as both window and as mirror, in order to reflect and reveal most accurately both a multicultural world and the student herself or himself. If the student is understood as occupying a dwelling of self, education needs to enable the student to look through window frames in order to see the realities of others and into mirrors in order to see her/his own reality reflected. Knowledge of both types of framing is basic to a balanced education which is committed to affirming the essential dialectic between the self and the world.'

Through staff interactions with scholars throughout the school day, including in tutor time, PSHE and in general, explicit teaching of mindset, character and behaviour are the final part of the provision to allow our scholars to be '*knowledgeable, critical, enriched and well poised to lead fulfilling lives'*.

The attributes of great curricula

We consider the following to be necessary components of great curricula:

- A **vision** for the subject in its own right
  The subject specialisms are crucial for the Powerful Knowledge approach, and it is vital that staff have clarity around the character and intrinsic value of their specialism.

- An explicit **model of progression**, informed by knowledge profiles
  If we use "the curriculum as the progression model" (Counsell, 2018), we can say that to get better at our subject is to learn more of our subject – but an analysis of the types of knowledge within the subject, and what progression exists within and across the types, is vital for a model of progression that allows us to say in detail, what progress looks like in our subject.

- Ambitious goals and content including an appropriate balance of **substantive and disciplinary knowledge**
  We believe that with hard work and great teaching informed by cognitive science, all scholars can access and remember incredibly ambitious knowledge. The knowledge in our subjects is not just a series of disconnected facts, but an intricate web of statements, descriptions, explanations, relationships, techniques, methods, and skills. A rich curriculum represents all of these elements.

- Intentional and intelligent **sequencing** for progression
  The curriculum is sequenced as a whole so that knowledge feeds and builds, so that scholars are taken on a meaningful journey, and so that progression is achieved. Effective sequencing allows for a strong schema to be built.

- **Expert explanation**
  Following Kirschner, Sweller and Clark (2006), we are putting expert, planned, teacher exposition at the heart of our teaching, to allow for ambitious knowledge to be taught, free of misconceptions, to be accessible and memorable for all scholars.

- Carefully planned **practice**
  Since "Memory is the residue of thought" (Willingham, 2009), we commit to spending as much time as possible on independent practice, on tasks that force scholar thinking to focus on the knowledge we want them to learn.

- **Challenging texts** (core and hinterland)
  We see reading as pivotal in a child's academic success, both for the knowledge gained from reading and because of the fluency and vocabulary that accrue from doing so. Thus, we include reading of challenging and academic texts in as many lessons as possible. These texts present both the core knowledge and the hinterland: the foreground and the background of the richness of the curriculum.

- **Cultural curriculum** enhancement.
  We subscribe to and develop Bordieu's definition of cultural capital (see below) and see trips and other activities as playing a key role in the induction of scholars into culture and appreciation. Trips are planned to enhance and work with the taught curriculum in order to derive the most value from these experiences.

- **Vocabulary**.
  We follow Wittgenstein in his contention that words define thought: and so, a sophisticated vocabulary is a requisite for sophisticated thought and knowledge of a subject. We identify and explicitly teach Tier 2 and Tier 3 across subjects and tutor time.

- Core questions for **retrieval practice** form a strong framework for well-remembered knowledge.

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010, and the National Curriculum programmes of study which we have broadly chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Staff roles and responsibilities

Staff	Responsibilities for Curriculum
Principal	To ensure that the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board. To manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate.
Vice Principal – Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	To oversee the strategic development and implementation of the curriculum. To lead the curriculum ambition and development of this at all levels. To lead on curriculum enactment through teaching and learning To oversee the production, QA, execution of and responses to summative assessments. To lead the production and use of models of progression.
SLT Line-managers of curriculum areas	To provide robust challenge for middle leaders, to strengthen the thinking that underpins their curricular decision-making, ensuring they possess a strong working knowledge of the curriculum for the subjects they line-manage and can articulate the rationale underpinning the curriculum map for the subjects they line-manage. Senior leaders must strive to acquire this knowledge, particularly in subjects outside of their own specialist discipline. This might be through professional reading, engaging with subject communities and associations, and capitalising on professional networks.
Curriculum Leaders	To engage proactively with CPD on Curriculum and its enactment through T&L. To role model CMA curriculum vision statement in ambition and energy for enactment, and a research-engaged approach to continuous improvement for all. To participate fully in the Curriculum Leaders' Forum to deepen own understanding and expertise and support colleagues in doing the same.
Teachers	To engage in PL around curriculum and develop own subject expertise to support effective enactment of intended curriculum.
Academy Councillors	The Academy Council will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The Academy Council will also ensure that: ▪ A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets ▪ The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, science and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) religious education, and enough teaching time is provided for scholars to cover the requirements of the funding agreement ▪ Proper provision is made for scholars with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) ▪ All courses provided for scholars below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the secretary of state ▪ The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements

Staff	Responsibilities for Curriculum
	▪ It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum ▪ Scholars from year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

Organisation and planning

The curriculum model allows the special focus on the EBacc subjects, as always intended from the original bid for CMA. The intention is for as many scholars as possible to study the EBacc to GCSE. Research has shown that studying the subjects included in the Ebacc provides young people with greater opportunities and increases the likelihood that they will stay on in full-time education.

In KS3, relative extended learning time in the core subjects allows a tight focus on these subjects and allows depth to the curriculum. The discrete Reading for Pleasure lesson is in keeping with our belief that 'reading trumps everything'- scholars need to be able to read fluently and with enjoyment in order to access the whole curriculum.

At KS4, as many scholars as possible should study either geography or history. All scholars will study French also, which will provide them with a wealth of opportunities for the future in terms of employment and travel, as well as opening the door different cultures. We want out scholars to be tolerant, and to actively learn about other cultures, traditions and religions: all scholars will study RE to GCSE as part of their core curriculum as we believe this subject has enormous value, both in terms of academia and enrichment.

Scholars have Citizenship, PSHE and Careers as part of their 'Prep for Life' offer once a week.

KS3 curriculum allocations

Subject	Number of lessons per week		
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	5	5	5
Reading for Pleasure	1	1	1
Mathematics	4	4	5
Science	4	4	4
French	3	3	3
Geography	2	2	2
RE	1	1	1
History	2	2	2
PE	2	2	2
Computer Science	1	1	1
Art	1	1	1
Music	1	1	0.5
Drama	1	1	0.5
DT	2	2	2
Prep for Life	1 per week Wednesday P5		
Citizenship	As part of Prep for Life curriculum		

KS4 curriculum allocations

Subject	Number of lessons per week
English	7

Mathematics	5
Science	6
RE	2
French	3
Core PE	2
Option 1 *(Including History and Geography for Ebacc scholars)*	3
Option 2	3
Prep for Life	1 per week Wednesday P5
Citizenship	As part of Prep for Life curriculum

Relationships and sex education

In line with **TMET Relationships and Sex Education Policy** RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Personal, Social and Health Education

At CMA we believe that Physical, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education is a **key element** to our school's curriculum offer. The PSHE curriculum is designed to help scholars of CMA become **citizens of Leicester** as well as understand their place in a **global community**. Furthermore, the curriculum is spiralled and designed to be **reflective** of the needs of CMA scholars and this **flexibility** allows the PSHE offer to be as inclusive and tailored as needed.

During key stage 3 scholars will **build on the attributes** they acquired during their time at primary school. Between years 7 and 9 PSHE needs to address the **changes** young people are experiencing as they move into their adolescence and gain increasing independence. Scholars must learn to manage **diverse relationships**, their **online lives** and the pressures of **media** as well as the changes which their bodies are experiencing.

During key stage 4, scholars will further **deepen their understanding** gained at key stage 3 and will extend the skills and knowledge into years 10 and 11. Here there will be a greater emphasis on students moving towards an **independent, adult life** as they take on more responsibility for themselves and others. Scholars will need to be prepared for the **challenges**, **opportunities** and **responsibilities** of life.

PSHE is taught thematically under the titles of **health and wellbeing**, **living in the wider world** and **relationships**.

Health and Wellbeing

- Self-concept
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Healthy lifestyles and health-related decisions
- Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco
- Managing risk and personal safety
- Puberty, sexual health, and fertility

Relationships

- Positive relationships
- Relationship values
- Forming and maintaining respectful relationships
- Consent
- Contraception and parenthood
- Bullying, abuse and discrimination
- Social influences

Living in the wider world

- Learning skills
- Choices and pathways
- Work and career
- Employment rights and responsibilities
- Financial choices
- Media literacy and digital resilience

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

At Castle Mead Academy our aim is to equip every scholar with the knowledge, learning power and character necessary for success in later life. A key aspect of this is the promotion of scholars' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development which provides a vital foundation for life. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an integral part of both the taught curriculum and enrichment opportunities at Castle Mead Academy. It is woven into our Castle Credo and hence a daily priority for us.

Information as to how SMSC development, including the explicit teaching of British Values, is enacted across the curriculum is outlined the **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy.**

Citizenship

At Castle Mead Academy, our scholars understand the importance of Citizenship education. They understand what it means to be a citizen of their local and wider community, as well as what it means to be a 'CMA Citizen'. Through the study of Citizenship, scholars learn about democracy, politics, parliament and voting. They also learn about human rights, justice, the law, personal finance and the economy. Underpinning the CMA Citizenship curriculum is a strong focus on the importance of British Values, and this is complemented by our assembly calendar, PSHE and RE curricula also.

The Citizenship curriculum is taught through Prep for Life. These lessons equip scholars with powerful knowledge and provide lots of opportunities for discussion and debate. Through studying Citizenship, our scholars develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to play a full part in society, as active and responsible citizens.

Careers guidance

Curriculum Leaders have strategically planned for where meaningful opportunities for explicit careers teaching, and the teaching of essential skills for employment, can be capitalised upon in each curriculum area. This is mapped in the **Careers Guidance Policy.**

Inclusion

As outlined in our **Inclusion Policy,** at we strive to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to fully engage in the whole curriculum. The department of SEND and Inclusion has embedded its practice in the four principles of building secure attachments: nurture, engagement, structure and challenge. Our universal provision is high quality teaching for all.

Teachers set high expectations for all scholars. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able scholars
- Scholars with low prior attainment
- Scholars from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Scholars with SEND
- Scholars with English as an additional language (EAL)

The centrally-planned curriculum means that teachers are not required to plan lessons from scratch. Rather, they spend their time **'planning to the detail'** to adapt teaching to meet the needs of the scholars they teach, giving careful consideration as to how they will pre-empt misconceptions, model, scaffold and question. 'Planning to the detail' ensures that teaching is highly responsive and ensures there are no barriers to every scholar achieving.

The Castle Mead Academy Teaching and Learning framework for excellent teaching, Invigorating Instruction, is rooted in the principles of explicit instruction. As outlined in the EEF report *Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* (EEF, 2021), explicit instruction is an effective approach for all learners, including scholars with SEND.

Monitoring and evaluation

Our evaluation of the curriculum is encompassed in our Culture of Critique quality assurance activities, led by Senior Leaders, Curriculum Leaders, and Trust / other external visitor, which include:

- Critical conversations through line-management
- Lesson visits
- Learning conferences with scholars
- Interrogation of assessments and assessment data

Appendix A - The purpose of each subject within our curriculum

Art

What makes the art curriculum so special?

Art is a visual language. It is the only subject that is totally visually creative; no words are necessary. Scholars learn to communicate in many ways apart from written and spoken language and they discover themselves emotionally as well as academically. It is an opportunity for less well-represented communities to have a louder voice.

Beyond the experience of exhibiting and entering competitions, an art education empowers scholars in careers across the board by developing their critical thinking, independence and problem solving. It is also a gateway to a career in the creative sector, which is the third biggest employment sector in the UK.

Art helps us to understand the visual world whilst developing our whole selves. Scholars step out of their experience bubbles and are given the opportunity to think of themselves and others critically. Then they can react playfully, emotionally and experimentally. Scholars get to experience actual colours and physical media in a world that is overwhelmed with screen-based activities. They have within their grasp everything from moulding clay to seeing how colours mix to learning how a camera works. Art champions failure as it is a key part of a successful creative.

Art history introduces scholars to a diverse range of artists and movements which have shaped today's world. Every culture throughout time has embraced art as a means of communication. Art shows scholars their place in the world and within culture, religion, identity and history. It is a driver for social change and mobility.

How is the art curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

The art curriculum encourages scholars to work independently, building confidence to experiment with a wide variety of media and developing their skills and techniques. Scholars are taught how to visually analyse and are encouraged to engage with artists and artworks from history to modern day and appreciate the beauty in the world outside their own experience. It is a rich, visually aesthetic subject that is beautiful because scholars respond in their own individual ways.

How does the art curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world, taking them beyond their own original experiences?

By studying artists and artworks from a range of cultures and backgrounds, our scholars develop a wider and deeper appreciation of society. By learning the narratives of artists, they can begin to 'step in their shoes' and empathise on life choices and reasons for artists to visually communicate their lives and passions.

There are no right or wrong answers in art. The art teacher digs deep and questions scholars' thinking to encourage them to see from different viewpoints. Art teachers lead scholars to understand that the world is a big place full of lots of types of people and opinions. This equips them to create artworks that are passionate and engage with their own experiences and those of others too.

How does the art curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

There are constant deep connections in which art links all areas together. We explore where artists lived in the world and how their culture shaped them, how the art movements were influenced by music movements of their time, and the impact on world history.

Art lets all the other subjects breathe as it links all subjects culturally. Other subjects look outwards for inspiration. In art, we look inwards towards our thoughts and hearts and we respond emotionally to the world. This makes connections meaningful and personal. By studying artists' techniques and what led the artists on their individual journeys, scholars are equipped to respond in kind with their own education and experiences.

Computer Science

What makes the computer science curriculum so special?

Computer science empowers scholars with the ability to control and manipulate computers, to create something out of nothing. Every lesson offers scholars the opportunity to explore the digital world, to understand how computers work and why they work the way they do. The aim of the curriculum is to spark a lasting passion in the subject of computer science and provide a platform from which scholars can be and create anything they want in the future.

How is the computer science curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

Lessons are a mix of practical and theory, where scholars learn by enacting and refining their skills and knowledge. The curriculum is designed to integrate traditional ICT skills with computer science theory; this ensures all scholars have the skills needed for a successful future using digital media where they can safely find, evaluate, create and communicate information. Computer science augments these skills with problem solving and programming that empowers scholars with the ability and freedom to create anything. Scholars are encouraged to build on interdisciplinary skills through working independently and in teams to promote resilience, creativity and communication.

How does the computer science curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

The subject promotes problem solving through computational thinking, scholars use abstraction, decomposition, algorithmic thinking and pattern recognition to design creative solutions. These skills are transferrable, they provide scholars with the tools they need to solve any problem in any other subject. All scholars have the opportunity to build software using Python, a programming language used by Intel, Pixar, NASA and many others. Scholars can use the programming skills they learn here as steppingstones to a successful future in the dynamic, growing and exciting world of tech.

How does the computer science curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

The computer science curriculum has natural links to mathematics and science but learning how to code is also akin to learning how to speak and write in a foreign language. Scholars learn how the computer is made from transistors which can be controlled using electrical signals and take knowledge from science about electricity and circuits. Knowledge about transistors links to binary and other number systems providing a direct relationship to mathematics. Inversely all subjects link to computers, from doing homework and research to creating presentations and 2D designs, every scholar needs to be able to utilise digital media.

<u>Design Technology</u>

What makes the DT curriculum so special?

The DT curriculum incorporates a range of life skills that are learnt through knowledge rich sessions delivered by experts in their field that is then applied to practical projects that scholars make in a 13 week rotation to create a successful product. The products link to everyday life skills and train and develop scholars to be ready for future life at college, apprenticeships and careers.

In food and nutrition, scholars learn about The Eat Well Guide and how to sustain a healthy lifestyle, learning all about nutrients, how the body works and the benefits of the different food groups to then creating a series of dishes such as fruit salads, cheese scones, chicken stir fry, lasagne and many more. As scholars grow through each year they delve into the world of cultural cuisine, creating curries, pasta dishes, bakery items, chilli con carne and falafels. They conduct science experiments to find out how yeast makes bread rise and the functions of different ingredients.

In product design, scholars follow a spiral curriculum that develops knowledge over the years of different materials. Scholars start by learning about timbers, joining methods, maths in DT, and have a basic introduction to the workshop in year 7, where they will create a ‘block bot’ made from pine. They then develop skills and knowledge handling polymers and CAD/CAM machines, which is the future of design. Year 9 includes building on handling

timbers and polymers of a higher skill and learning how to solder electronics to create a mood lamp that has been designed in detail at a previous stage.

In textiles, scholars are trained to use a sewing machine and hand sew independently. From year 7 they learn basic skills to be able to design and create a pencil case, in year 8 a bag and year 9 a quilted book cover. Scholars learn the importance of working to a design brief and specification, focusing on the customers' wants and needs. They develop work in a testing section that teaches scholars how to complete key textiles techniques such as batik, tie-dye, sewing zips, embroidery, embellishment, applique, seams, buttons and many more. They then apply this theory and testing practise to a final product which they are proud to take home.

How is the DT curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

Delivered by experts, our scholars receive tailored support to become masters in product design, food preparation and nutrition and textiles. Our experts facilitate extra-curricular and intervention events that inspire young people to become the future generation of designers. Bake offs, sewing bees, talks from careers and professionals in the field and visits from successful practitioners in these subjects really show our scholars what they can achieve.

Experts in each specialism deliver powerful knowledge sessions that equip and empower scholars to be able to apply this knowledge to a practical session. These are carefully planned to the detail and are based around core knowledge that can be applied to the handling of many different materials. Scholars can be inspired by the teachers own craft and feel secure in knowing that they are receiving expert teaching. Our curriculum is planned and continuously refined throughout the rotation system to ensure scholars are being equipped with purposeful knowledge that they can use not just at school but for future education and careers.

How does the DT curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

Scholars take pride and enjoyment from creating projects where they have learnt a range of skills. They develop a passion and enthusiasm for cooking, product design and textiles. From creating savoury and sweet dishes and looking into culture and diversity in the kitchen, to working with timbers and plastics to create new and innovative products, learning about the origins of textiles products and the process that create out everyday furnishings, clothes and much more. This curriculum seeks to enable the younger generation to become designers of the future.

How does the DT curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

We focus on the substantive knowledge and powerful theory that drives our subjects to create the successful high-quality outcomes. Following a road map or research, development, design work and creating a product our curriculum seeks to teach scholars the why behind the making. Our curriculum links through other STEM subjects as we focus on experiments in food preparation and nutrition and links through Maths and engineering in DT.

Drama

What makes the Drama curriculum so special?

Our scholars are given the unique opportunity to study Drama and Theatre at CMA, an opportunity that isn't afforded to every young person in the city. Over three years we focus on mastery of key dramatic techniques, knowledge of theatre genre, devising and script work. There are also opportunities for scholars to explore design and production elements such as lighting, sound and costume. The curriculum works to introduce the basics in Y7, adapting skills in Y8 and building to a more GCSE style practice in Y9 so that scholars are well equipped to take on GCSE Drama if they wish. The vocabulary used and introduced throughout the curriculum stays the same and is revisited throughout Y7, 8 and 9, meaning that scholars can be confident in their ability and rich theatre knowledge by the end of KS3. Not only does the curriculum empower scholars to pursue Drama further in education, it allows scholars to be more equipped for life beyond education and teaches them valuable life skills.

How is the Drama curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

Drama is taught practically, so that there is opportunity to act and perform built into every lesson; scholars are continually building their confidence, communication, problem solving, leadership, teamwork and performance skills. Although practical, the Drama curriculum does not deviate from the provision the scholars will be receiving across the school and is still taught through regular retrieval practice and invigorating instruction. Teacher and peer verbal feedback happens regularly, to ensure that scholars keep progressing and can feel empowered to improve and build their character and can ultimately strive for the excellence that every scholar is capable of. The curriculum offers richness through variety; variety of scripted text, variety of theatre genres, variety of skills meaning that scholars explore a complete overview of society through many different perspectives and experiences. Extra curricular activities are a huge part of our Drama and theatre provision at CMA, with a school production every year, regular theatre trips and opportunities to work with the Curve Theatre, scholars have plenty of opportunities to build their passion for and experience of theatre and their performance skills.

How does the Drama curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

As well as subject specific knowledge about theatre genres, working with scripted text, performance skills and production elements, the Drama curriculum taps into real world issues such as the Black Lives Matter movement, peer pressure and bullying, celebrating individual differences, discrimination and prejudice, world conflict and many more. These topics help build empathy and emotional intelligence so that scholars can grow to be impressive and compassionate people in society long after they have left the school environment. The aim of the Drama curriculum is to learn the basics and the art of adaptation so that scholars can take on the experiences of others, and perspectives different to their own.

How does the Drama curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

As mentioned previously, through Drama scholars will explore a range of different issues and topics. These topics and issues are carefully considered so that scholars can use their knowledge and skills learnt in Drama in a range of different subjects across the school. For example, studying the playtext 'War Horse' in Year 7 equips scholars with useful knowledge of WW1 and exploring the perspectives of people that lived through this time. There are also many cross-curricular links with English, including Shakespearean knowledge, the structure of plays, and exploring characters intentions and emotions. There are also many links with our PSHE curriculum, where we study social issues such as racism, discrimination and prejudice, peer-pressure, bullying and many more.

English

What makes the English curriculum so special?

Our English curriculum is so special because it is both a window and a mirror. English allows scholars to both hold a mirror up to their own selves through the rich and wonderful texts that we read, such as 'A Monster Calls', 'Jekyll & Hyde', 'The Weight of Water, 'Clap When you Land' or 'Othello', and reflect upon their own thoughts, feelings and place within the world.

But, we also show our scholars through a window out into the world of wider experiences, different customs, beliefs as well as new and enriching knowledge which will only unlock more windows and doors for them in the future. This is through texts such as 'The Woman in Black' – we read this in year 8 in order to plant seeds for future study of Gothic texts and interpolated narrative structure in Year 9 and Year 10. Or, We explicitly teach Aristotle's modes of persuasion at the start of year 8, not only so that scholars can be persuasive and enticing speakers themselves but also so that they can notice and appreciate or even be wary of rhetoric when they are consuming it outside of the classroom.

The English curriculum is built upon recurrent key questions, which are interwoven and revisited throughout the programme of study. Examples of these include:

- Why is love important?

- What makes a tragedy?
- Is there any justice?
- Why is deception crucial in drama?
- Why makes writing persuasive?

How is the English curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

Our English teachers are experts, both in their subject and in the craft of teaching. We focus on scripting powerful questions, mapping links and connections and considering precisely how we will narrate these to scholars to support them in developing increasingly complex schemata, and planning to the detail as to how we can maximise the number of scholars thinking hard and participating fully in lessons. There are plentiful opportunities for purposeful discussion in English classrooms at CMA, but scholars also engage in extensive opportunities for independent practice so that they develop fluency.

The English department spends time scripting and rehearsing our exposition to ensure that we are fully prepared to discuss traditionally taboo or 'uncomfortable' topics found in literary texts such as racism, consent, homophobia etc. This ensures that our scholars are equipped with powerful yet respectful language in order to grapple with crucial social issues of the past, present and future. Our English Language curriculum exposes scholars to a variety of media and text types, particularly non-fiction writing and rhetoric, which will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to society by being able to consume and critique the media of today.

English is the bedrock of a school's curriculum. English explicitly teachers the rules of the English language which makes scholars effective oral and written communicators. Through our explicit grammar instruction and English language lessons, scholars are equipped with the abilities to express themselves articulately through a variety of text types (such as memoir, letter, article and narrative writing) as well as verbally (through debates, rhetorical speeches and class performances). We emphasise the importance that writing is performed to be read, heard and shared, and scholars are carefully guided and instructed so as to create an environment where their voice can be heard and their ideas can inspire.

How does the English curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

The historicist approach of much of our English Literature curriculum equips our scholars with the interest and understanding of the ways our own and different communities and societies function now and throughout history at a variety of levels. For example, the social and political structures of democracy, monarchy and autocracy are crucial underpinning elements of the Year 8 curriculum and are taught explicitly and explored in depth. In addition, scholars in Year 9 begin explicit practice of critical literary theory and read texts through feminist, post-colonial and 'queer theory' lenses. This develops critical skills to examine and question social interactions, wider reading and media Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy, Castle Mead Academy exposure throughout their lives in a respectful manner and from an informed perspective. This springboards into discussions upon tolerance, acceptance, stereotypes, liberty and respect.

Poetry in Voice helps the cultural development of our scholars as the poems that they learn by heart are noteworthy and significant texts from our heritage and or are culturally iconic. They are written by influential and talented poets who are also representative of different national and international communities and cultures. The selection of poems/poets which make up the Castle Canon are consciously diversifying and, in some cases, decolonising the traditional literary canon: they are representative of the vast range of cultures in our school, our city and our country. Furthermore, Poetry in Voice highlights and celebrates the cultural influences which have and will shape media and art and our tutor time programme during 'Poetry in Voice Weeks' will help our scholars and our community to become increasingly empathetic and knowledgeable individuals. They represent our school's commitment to shape a more equitable future for our scholars.

<u>Geography</u>

What makes the geography curriculum so special?

The Castle Mead geography curriculum hangs together under six key themes, which are split evenly between physical geography (the natural word) and human geography (human activity). Environmental geography (the impact of that human activity) is threaded through almost every aspect of the curriculum.

Fundamentally, geography is about learning about the world around you: our curriculum is designed to give scholars an informed understanding of what the world is like and why it is like that. We want them to ask questions and to be inquisitive about the world they live in, and for them to be able to answer these questions thanks to the powerful knowledge they learn over time. In order for them to do this, scholars need to have an in-depth understanding of the physical and the human elements of geography: we want them to be able to make connections between different geographical phenomena. For instance, scholars will learn about the landscape of Bradgate park and how this has been formed by volcanic activity. They will then look at the impact of tourism on this area. Another example is coastlines: scholars develop increasingly complex schemata through making connections between different topics when learning about glacial deposits left on coastlines. Recognising these sorts of links is vital and these are highlighted explicitly throughout the curriculum.

How is the geography curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

The teachers in the Castle Mead geography department are experts, both in their subject and in the craft of teaching. They plan lessons to the minutest detail, scripting questions and explanations, and practising their exposition for clarity and coherence.

Knowledge booklets are the main teaching and learning resource in geography lessons. Booklets are packed full of powerful knowledge, carefully sequenced and interlinked within and across topics and themes. Each booklet chapter contains key terms to be taught explicitly, meaning scholars are constantly developing their acquisition of tier 3 vocabulary. Each chapter also includes opportunities for scholars to retrieve prior knowledge from the current topic and earlier topics, and to consolidate their newly acquired knowledge through written responses and knowledge checks.

As the expert in the room, the teacher imparts knowledge and scholars listen intently and annotate their work booklets. However, there are also plentiful opportunities for scholars to formulate their ideas through paired discussion and to be active participants in their learning through mini whiteboard activities, hinge questions and choral response.

How does the geography curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

Geography allows scholars to learn about the world around them, both locally and globally. They also learn about the impact they, as a human, have on their surroundings. In this way, scholars are prompted to think about the change they can bring about in the world to create a more sustainable way of living for our planet.

How does the geography curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

The geography department has liaised closely with the maths department to develop a consistent approach to teaching map scales in geography, so that this is in alignment with the ratio is taught in maths. Similarly, there has been co-departmental work between science and geography looking at common approach to teaching about the structure of the Earth. Developing these meaningful connections across departments, capitalising on the crossover in knowledge and the application of discrete skills, helps to ensure that scholars are developing increasingly complex schemata that span across subjects.

History

What makes the History curriculum so special?

The history curriculum at Castle Mead Academy sets out to promote both 'Discipline and Discovery', as advocated by Ben Walsh. It exists, within the wider Castle Mead curriculum, to; enlighten our young people to the stories of the past, develop a love of learning these stories and establish, through a unifying, local lens, a shared appreciation of our island's journey as well as promoting the history of the wider world. Additionally, and most importantly, it equips scholars with powerful knowledge of our past, telling both the well-told and underrepresented stories of our history. History at CMA strives to allow all our scholars to engage in the discourse and practices of educated people, so that they can gain the powers of the powerful.

How is the History curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

The 'Story, Sources, Scholarship' model enables students develop their understanding of the discipline of being an historian through engaging with a clear narrative overview of events, relevant primary sources, and the views of eminent historians. It is, therefore, a curriculum with 'scholarship at its heart'.

This model combines ideas shared by @SPBeale and @mrfitzhist and is underpinned by research (see Teaching History – TH)

In TH99 Riley suggests that a single enquiry question driving pupil's work with a collection of sources models the unfolding process of evidential reasoning.

'What's the wisdom on evidence and Sources?' in TH176 explains the importance of giving students opportunities to examine carefully curated collections of sources, ensuring that they have a clear contextual narrative within which to place them.

Further research can be found in;

- 'What's the wisdom on interpretations of the past?' (TH177) Reisman; 'Teaching students to think like historians'.
- Foster (TH142) 'Passive receivers or constructive readers?'
- Furthermore the 'Story / Source / Scholarship' approach incorporates 'Guided Reading' as part of the 'Story' element. Guided Reading is an approach to reading that scaffolds pupils' thinking in how they analyse a body of text. It also helps with note taking from a piece of text.
- Research to support this approach can be found in;
- Chang & Ku (2014) have shown that note taking from reading improves student learning. It also shows that note taking requires effort and encoding which stores the information more firmly in long term memory.
- Boyle (2013) shows that getting trained in specific note taking strategies can significantly improve the quality of notes and the amount of material remembered later.
- Reynolds (2016) shows that adding a skeleton framework for notes greatly increases engagement with note taking and the quality of notes overall.
- Further Reading
- Jenner, Making Reading Routine, TH174
- Cornell University, The Cornell Note Taking System
- Jennifer Gonzalez, Note taking: A Research Roundup

How does the History curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

By building a secure schema of disciplinary knowledge (first order, substantive, concepts) including parliament, monarchy and democracy which thread through the curriculum so that they become what Christine Counsell refers to as 'residual knowledge', a permanent reservoir which will provide a context for studies across time (and across academic years).

By providing a curriculum that develops young historians, by interleaving not only subject knowledge but also second order concepts, so that identifying causation, change and continuity, and engaging with the process of historical enquiry and historian's interpretations become established, learned processes, which become more challenging throughout the five years of the curriculum.

By modelling the process of scholarly historical enquiry so that both source enquiry and evaluation of historian's interpretations shall be embedded throughout.

By presenting content not as one master narrative but rather the exploration of constructed pasts, both British and International, for that is history.

By weaving a golden thread of "local history", including site visits that develop cultural capital, that builds cohesion across the Castle Mead population and unifies us around our shared heritage of Leicester City.

By avoiding relying on History's 'Usual Suspects' and presenting, where possible, a diverse range of voices from history and challenges 'populist narratives'.

History topics are taught via a series of short, focused enquiry questions, designed to retain focus and our students' attention over 5 or 6 weeks. They are conceptually based around the 'Big Questions' academic historians engage in eg; "How should King John be remembered?" rather than "what were the causes of the Magna Carta?"

As a result of this scholars at CMA will have have;

- secure, 'powerful' substantive knowledge, in order to be able to engage with further study and the wider world
- engage with interpretations from academic historians that will allow them to grapple with these constructed pasts
- developed as young historians
- be ready, willing and able to pit historians against each other!
- be able to question the world around them and engage in the discourse and practices of educated people . . . having gained the powers of the powerful!

How does the History curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

- Year 8 enquiry with Elizabethan England connects with English
- Development of algebra within Islamic World and Africa links with Maths.
- WWI links with English War Poetry

<u>Mathematics</u>

What makes the mathematics curriculum so special?

The mathematics curriculum at Castle Mead is based on the following underlying principles – that there are mathematical rules that are immutable and that these can be applied again and again to different types of numbers and situations, truly developing a schema of mathematical knowledge. It is an anathema to the Castle Mead maths department that maths is considered as a set of compartmentalised 'tricks'; at Castle Mead we firmly believe that maths is not 'Magic' but is based upon a set of fundamental ideas and rules that have built over millennia by mathematicians.

The practice of learning and applying these fundamental rules is what builds a scholar's mathematical toolbox. In each academic year the curriculum moves from practising using a mathematical concept, such as proportional reasoning or equality, from a purely numerical context, to generalised situations (algebra) and then on to applied contexts through geometry and statistics. Models and representations such as bar models and double-sided counters provide supports and scaffolds that link the concept to the context as it becomes more abstract.

How is the mathematics curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

In mathematics lessons you will see both the teaching of component skills that need to be in a mathematician's toolbox as well as opportunities to use one or more skills to solve a problem.

Examples of this: a lesson on learning and practising the skill of multiplying brackets that contain algebraic expressions is a 'toolbox' lesson in which a scholar is developing a very specific skill, whereas another lesson in which areas of shapes are calculated, including those where lengths are expressed algebraically, is an example of where you would see those 'toolbox' skills being applied. Real life context will be used where appropriate but not all mathematics at key stage 3 and 4 can be directly applied to real-life. Some mathematical skills such as solving quadratic equations are not easily applied directly to a context without increasing the difficulty beyond that of the current capabilities of the scholars but are needed for potential avenues of study at a later date. You will also see a focus on mathematics as a form of communication with setting out of methods and understanding of mathematical vocabulary being emphasised in lessons.

How does the mathematics curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

Mathematics in the wider world is most commonly used as a tool within a context, to calculate, to compare, to contrast and to communicate with. Without a mathematical framework, the work of scientists, engineers, economists and architects, among many others, would be impossible. But the study of the world of numbers and relationships of pure mathematics also has a beauty and richness of its own. Nine mathematicians have been chosen as the names of the maths groups to provide a window into the great heritage of the mathematics that our scholars are learning in the present day, putting names to a few of the giants on whose shoulders they stand. The mathematicians have been chosen to span time and space from Hypatia in ancient Greece to the Iranian mathematician Mirzakhani the first female to win the prestigious Fields Medal in 2014. Introducing them to Andrew Wiles, who worked on the centuries old problem of Fermat's last theorem for many years of his career, helps them to see that the study of mathematics in and of itself is a worthwhile endeavour. But without Al-Khwarizmi, the godfather of algebra who lived over a thousand years ago in Persia, Wiles would never have been known. Mathematicians also represent every group of people who work together to build on previous knowledge to solve the pressing problems of their time. Florence Nightingale used statistics in the 19th century to transform the medical profession while Katherine Johnson was a 'calculator' for NASA in the 20th century. Fibonacci studied rabbits to produce his eponymous sequence in the 13th century while Alan Turing used the same abilities of pattern spotting and familiarity with sequences to crack German codes in the second World War.

How does the mathematics curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

In the subjects of science, geography, design technology and computer science the tools learnt in mathematics lessons are put into use. Linked content areas are mapped so that there is two-way communication between the curriculum areas e.g., map scales in geography with ratios in maths. Departments work closely together to ensure that each subject approaches these parts of their wider curriculum in a consistent way. A two-way link with the science department has been developed with science teachers being trained on how the maths department teaches algebraic manipulation to ensure that when they use formulae in physics the scholars are hearing the same language and seeing the same methods as they saw in their maths lessons. While the scientific formulae that scholars will need to know for science are specifically used in maths lessons to demonstrate the algebraic skills the students need to develop and reinforce their understanding of their use in science. The model of calculators used in lessons is also identical!

MFL

What makes the MFL curriculum so special?

The CMA French curriculum is based on the principle that anyone who is capable of acquiring a first language is also capable of acquiring a second. The principles of first language acquisition can be applied to second language acquisition by exposing scholars to frequently repeated structures both in written and spoken form and building their confidence in these structures by 'overlearning' them before they are asked to produce them. When vocabulary is first introduced, it is done through listening and reading activities to build scholars' familiarity with the vocabulary and structures before moving on to production.

To reinforce this, vocabulary and structures are recycled across topics at Key Stages 3 and 4 with the topics as the vehicle for the language rather than the language being dictated by the topic being covered.

Scholars are also taught the skills they will need to successfully complete listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks that they are likely to come across. These skills are broken down into small steps and used throughout our SOLs in order to gradually develop proficiency.

Finally, while our curriculum prioritises language-learning over linguistics, we empower our scholars with the grammatical knowledge and skills to allow them to pursue further study of French or another language of their choosing. Therefore, where appropriate grammar is taught both implicitly and explicitly to our scholars following the 'natural order hypothesis'.

How is the MFL curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

The cyclical nature of the MFL curriculum at CMA means that scholars are given the opportunity to really master the basics of the language structures which are regularly recycled through different topics, simultaneously allowing scholars to consolidate core knowledge and expand upon it.

As a department, we collaborate to ensure our scholars master the 20% of knowledge at the core of our curriculum. This is done during lesson time (or across a series of lessons) using frequent checks for understanding and re-teaching where necessary. We also frequently engage in the 'review and refine' process, whereby we assess the teaching of a particular topic or language structure to date, compare data to identify gaps in learning and refine our curriculum accordingly so that the core knowledge is prioritised for current scholars and that teaching of the same topic or language structure is improved for scholars who will be studying the same topic the following year.

In order to boost all-round confidence, our curriculum is also based on the concept of self-efficacy – activities are design to allow scholars to experience a high degree of success in both receptive and productive tasks. A high emphasis is also placed on praise and reward in MFL lessons.

To boost confidence in spoken French in particular, scholars are taught a programme of phonics instruction at KS3 to teach them common letter-sound patterns. These are 'overlearned' as references to phonics are made throughout our schemes of work from Y7 to Y11. They are also deliberately practised through choral repetition and reading aloud.

Finally, we prioritise the teaching of authentic materials (see below) so that scholars are exposed to at least 3 pieces of authentic material per topic.

How does the MFL curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

We believe that we have a moral imperative to introduce scholars to other cultures and engender intercultural understanding and tolerance. We use two broad methods to achieve this, firstly through the explicit teaching of similarities and differences between English and French/Francophone cultures, followed by whole class discussion. For example, when teaching the topic of school, we discuss how the French and English school day differs, why RE does not form a part of the French curriculum and – something that provokes a lot of discussion – the fact that French pupils do not wear uniform! Secondly, through exposing scholars to a wide range of authentic materials such as films, poems, songs, adverts and memes. In this way scholars are able to explore another culture's art and media in a meaningful, real-world context and compare it to their own.

How does the MFL curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

In MFL we are always looking to draw links between our own subject and the rest of the curriculum. Clearly, there are strong links between the teaching of the French language and the teaching of English. The MFL and English departments collaborate to ensure that we are using consistent language to describe the building blocks of language. Furthermore, we are able to make links with English whenever our scholars explore a poem or an extract from a French literary text – once again we aim to ensure consistency of language in these instances.

We have also forged strong links with the History department. Both departments teach the concept of colonialism from Year 7 and scholars are able to draw upon their understanding of this from History when studying the French language and in turn, their historical understanding of this concept is reinforced through the study of French, both through regular references to the similarities between French and other Romance languages and also through reference to la Francophonie (the French equivalent of the Commonwealth.) The History department has also undertaken to teach the impact of the Norman Conquest on the English language in greater depth with support from the MFL department.

As a department, we have also taken the opportunity to explore key figures across the curriculum through the development of 'profiles' of important people (French-speaking or otherwise) who feature in the CMA curriculum, e.g. Eleanor of Aquitaine, William Shakespeare and Aristotle to name but a few. In this way, we hope to both develop scholars' knowledge of personal description vocabulary and reading skills, whilst reinforcing their knowledge of these key players in other subjects.

We aim to further develop scholars' reading skills by introducing texts in French dealing with topics from across the curriculum. For example, Year 9 scholars will be reading and answering questions on a text describing WW1, simultaneously reinforcing their overall knowledge of the topic from History and exploring an important part of French history. Other potential topics for developing reading skills include artistic movements such as impressionism, climate change and the Olympics.

Curriculum is forever and therefore, as a department, we are still looking to build links with other subjects, e.g. links with RE when discussing French religious festivals, and hope to enhance the intelligent interdisciplinarity of the CMA curriculum further.

Music

Our vision is to provide a broad, varied and challenging curriculum of musical and performance opportunities through a rich and varied. We seek to enrich pupils' lives through a co-curriculum which offers a range of experiences and opportunities. In turn students will reap the benefits of musicianship which include increased academic and social development, creativity, professionalism, confidence, teamwork and emotional development.

Our schemes of work and co-curriculum allow pupils to form a personal and meaningful relationship with music which can be enjoyed by twinning the development of musical knowledge and understanding with skills in performing and composing. Listening to, analysing, evaluating and appreciating music of various styles and genres allows pupils to identify "what makes music music" and celebrate our world's musical diversity. Exposure to a range of musical instruments, vocal skills and use of music technology facilitates individual and group performance and composition opportunities which pupils can take ownership of and take pride in.

PE

At Castle Mead Academy, we will enable all scholars to access physical activity and competitive sport, breaking down barriers to participation and inspiring all scholars to succeed and excel.

Our PE department extends many varied opportunities to compete in sport and physical activities that help to build character and to embed core values, such as fairness and respect. The curriculum aims to ensure that all scholars develop the ability to excel in a broad range of physical activities and are physically active for sustained periods of time. PE is a vehicle for social change, enriching lives through sporting experiences, increasing the social and cultural

capital of our scholars' and inspiring scholars to lead a healthy and active lifestyle with skills that will allow them to succeed in life after school.

What makes the Physical Education curriculum so special?

Our vision is to enable all scholars to access physical activity and sport, breaking down barriers to participation and inspiring all scholars to succeed and excel in competitive sport and physical activities. There are extensive opportunities to compete in sport and physical activities that help to build character and to embed the values such as fairness and respect. The curriculum aims to ensure that all scholars develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities and are physically active for sustained periods of time. Over KS3 and KS4 scholars will study:

- Invasion Games
- Gymnastics
- Dance
- Fitness
- Athletics
- Striking and Fielding
- Net and Ball Games

At Castle Mead, we have devised a conceptual curriculum in PE. A Concept Curriculum is an approach to curriculum design that moves away from sport-specific content and instead emphasises "enquiry questions" that span multiple lessons. A conceptual approach offers an alternative to the traditional sport and skills-based approach to physical education curriculum design and delivery. The sport and physical activity becomes the vehicle through which the concept is delivered and developed. By shifting the focus of the curriculum and success criteria of each lesson, we are doing so much more than getting scholars active, we are teaching relevant life skills, developing stronger connections to physical activity and improving the experiences within PE for every scholar.

Interweaving of the vital concepts (the "20%") throughout the curriculum is used to deepen scholars' learning. This will help them to retain information in the long-term, acquire new skills and improve existing skills and abilities. The "20%" consists of key terms and terminology, physical skills, tactics, leadership skills and theory that is vital to their understanding of the subject. These concepts are then interweaved through the curriculum planning to be frequently revisited to consolidate learning.

Castle Mead Academy's Physical Education curriculum aims to inspire all scholars to participate and excel in sport and physical activity. It provides opportunities for scholars to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. By giving scholars the opportunities to compete in sport and physical activities it enables scholars to work hard, be kind and build character, embedding our school values alongside sporting values of fairness and respect.

Aims of the department:

- Develop scholars' competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- Ensure scholars are physically active for sustained periods of time
- Engage scholars in competitive sports and activities
- Enable scholars to lead healthy, active lives.

How is the Physical Education curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

In PE lessons at CMA, we deliver our conceptual curriculum through high-quality teaching that focuses on encouraging all scholars to participate fully at all stages of the lesson. Our teachers are experts and are highly

experienced in teaching a variety of different sports and activities. Lessons start with knowledge retrieval questions, which allow scholars to consolidate prior learning and connect to new content being introduced. Teachers purposefully narrate the overarching 'Enquiry Question' and 'Big Question' for the lesson, so that purpose is clear. Modelling is a key feature in PE lessons, allowing scholars to be equipped with powerful new knowledge through observing and dissecting the expert's demonstration. As scholars progress through the lesson, they have the opportunity to engage in practice under the teacher's guidance and supervision, before moving towards independent practice where they develop fluency and mastery of their new skills in small-sided game situations.

We use an assessment model "Head Heart Hands". Head is our cognitive ability, Heart is our attributes and Hand is our practical ability. This assessment model alongside our curriculum allows us to take a more inclusive approach. It is less "elitist", allowing scholars to succeed in other areas of PE rather than just focusing on practical ability. This encourages higher level of engagement and enjoyment in PE.

How does the Physical Education curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

PE at Castle Mead Academy is not only as a participant, but also in leadership roles such as a coach, official or choreographer. The non-participant roles provide more inclusivity, learning transferable leadership skills such as communication, problem solving, organisation and dependability. These are essential in their future chosen career path.

Our extra-curricular programme, Castle Character Time, is open to all scholars who wish to participate recreationally or competitively. Scholars have the opportunity to represent the school team in a wide variety of sports for all abilities in local leagues and festivals. The PE department has worked incredibly hard to strengthen links with local professional and amateur sports teams. The links with Leicester Tigers, Rider and City offer our scholars' expert coaching and an awe-inspiring experience, which in turn helps to transition our scholars to local sports teams and regular participation.

At CMA we firmly believe that PE will be a vehicle for social change, enriching lives through sporting experiences, increasing the social and cultural capital of our scholars and inspiring scholars to lead a healthy and active lifestyle. The Castle Mead Academy PE department want to develop lifelong skills and abilities in our scholars that will prepare them for life after secondary school, providing them with skills that will allow them to succeed in life after education.

RE

What makes the Religious Education curriculum so special?

Religious Education at Castle Mead Academy is rich, diverse and challenging. The topics the scholars learn, such as RE Live, Religion in the 21st Century and The Island Project are created specifically for Castle Mead Academy. The curriculum is centred around the concept of big ideas and has been drawn from The Big Ideas Curriculum along with some inspiration from locally agreed syllabi such as the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus. This curriculum is a recent research project completed through the University of Exeter's graduate school of education and allows schools to create their own syllabus based around the concept that big ideas are common destinations or goals that we want scholars to meet that can be approached in a variety of ways, promoting transferability of knowledge. For example, Big Idea 1 is continuity, change and diversity. This focusses on common features of religion such as symbolism (continuity), the many different people within a belief that will all be slightly different (diversity) and the idea that religion is constantly changing (change). This big idea therefore underpins the Castle Mead topic of The Island project that explores similarities and differences within religion but also explores the individual scholar's world view. It is the concept that scholars learn about the context surrounding religious education to enable them to link their powerful knowledge. This extract from the Big Ideas Curriculum explains this well:

"Big Ideas perform a similar role in students' learning as concepts in that they are 'pegs' on which students can hang the myriad pieces of knowledge they acquire over the years of RE study in order to make sense of them. For example, students learning about the creation stories in Genesis will probably 'hook' them to Big Idea 5 and Big Idea

6. This takes them way beyond the customary activity of illustrating the six days of creation to an understanding that in Judaism and Christianity these stories should not be learnt in isolation but understood as the beginning of grand narratives that explain theories of the origin and destiny of the universe and where humanity stands in those narratives (BI6)" Big Ideas for Religious Education, Barbara Wintersgill 2017.

The Castle Mead Academy Religious Education curriculum allows scholars to explore the idea that we all have a worldview and the concept that 'nobody stands nowhere'. The highlight of the curriculum is the way it is related to real life. The scholars get the opportunity to explore current RE with real life examples through topics such as RE Live, where scholars explore current news stories relating to religion and learn the context around that story to learn from religion rather than just about religion.

How is the Religious Education curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

The way in which the Religious Education curriculum is enacted allows the scholars to appreciate the richness of the subject. This is created through fostering a safe space for discussion, debate and sharing of opinions and experiences. The Religious Education Curriculum relies on this sharing of experiences to enrich the learning of all scholars and allow them to see the differences and similarities between themselves.

Religious Education at CMA is unique in that it deals with the opinions and life experiences of scholars, information that is historical or factual, global awareness of issues, language interpretation For example, Sanskrit or Arabic and the skills of analysis, evaluation, description and fact retrieval. This makes Religious Education a holistic subject that is all encompassing and even more so through our enriching curriculum offer. The curriculum also gives opportunity to learn a rich substantive knowledge base that explores a wide variety of concepts such as the key facts around the 6 major world religions, the core ideas of alternative beliefs like humanism, Jainism and Jehovah's Witnesses and the wider world concepts such as genocide, stewardship and the afterlife.

How does the Religious Education curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

The Castle Mead Academy Religious Education curriculum equips scholars with knowledge that empowers them beyond their own experiences and beyond CMA. Without this subject, scholars would be less equipped to deal with differences between themselves, less able to articulate their own viewpoint without causing offence and as a result less able to access the world beyond Castle Mead Academy. The subject allows them to explore their opinions but also learn to be considerate of others and at the same time analyse and evaluate information. Religious Education is multidisciplinary meaning that if a scholar is religious and therefore has good knowledge of their own theological thinking, they will be challenged by philosophical arguments or issues relating to the human and social sciences or if a scholar is non-religious but is aware of the news, they will be challenged by the theological.

Within the curriculum we study ideas such morality and philosophical theory, which allows scholars to think in ways that they have not been required to before. Challenging their own ideas and coming to justified and well thought through conclusions. They are encouraged to challenge one another, debate issues and be tolerant of the different world views they come across throughout their time in Religious Education at Castle Mead Academy.

How does the Religious Education curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

In the Religious Education curriculum, we never focus on one faith per topic. This allows scholars to make connections between topics as faiths will reoccur in different topic areas. Topics will have a faith that is the 'depth' area of the topic and a secondary faith that is the 'encounter' area of the topic, which is used as a comparison. The curriculum is also structured to allow scholars to build upon their ability to articulate their viewpoint so that by the end of Key Stage 3, scholars know their own worldview and can express their opinion on different matter from that perspective. This means they can use this skill throughout the topics to make connections with their own worldview also. As a multidisciplinary subject, RE will always promote the making of meaningful connections as theology, philosophy and human and social sciences will be woven through lessons, topics and years.

We also use intelligent interdisciplinarity through working with subjects such as English who may teach similar themes or ideas such as Hedonism or Poetry in Voice's study of poets such as Rumi.

Science

What makes the science curriculum so special?

Elon Musk states that "[it] is important to view knowledge as a sort of semantic tree – make sure you understand the fundamental principles, i.e. the trunk and big branches, before you get into the leaves/details or there is nothing for them to hang onto". In this regards our science curriculum at CMA works to equip scholars with such knowledge, onto which they can hang their everyday experiences in the natural and man-made world, in order to make sense of it, making the abstract mysteries of the world concrete, allowing scholars the ability to understand what happens in the world around them, why it does so, and what impact their actions and those of others have on the world around them, and beyond. Ideas and skills that they can then apply on a day-to-day basis in their personal and professional lives through to adulthood, to potentially change the world. The curriculum at CMA is really special in its emphasis on not denying scholars knowledge and experience just because of their age. Scholars are exposed to a high level of rigour from Year 7 onwards, meaning that they access knowledge and concepts normally reserved for higher levels of study at earlier points in the learning journey, as we believe experiences these provide give scholars contexts and understandings onto which they can hang other knowledge that they are exposed to and make it easier for them to understand. For example, if we allow scholars to observe the effects of caffeine on the heart rate of water fleas, an experiment normally reserved for A Level Study, we can use this truly novel experience for them to hang on knowledge and understanding around all sorts of areas of biology, from cell biology, to microscopy skills, to understanding of the functioning of the nervous system, all of which are important areas of our 5 year study programme in Biology.

How is the science curriculum enacted in a way that honours its beauty, richness and distinctiveness?

'Knowing stuff makes a difference' – The point of science experiments and investigations is to find something out. We conduct these investigative thought processes that come together to apply reasoning in our everyday lives. Without fundamental substantive & disciplinary scientific knowledge, you wouldn't know how to proceed in lots of everyday situations that enable us to understand the world around us. The CMA science curriculum looks to equip scholars with such knowledge in a progressive, gradual way, examining everything from the building blocks of life, through to the laws of physics that govern the Universe, through the lens of the fundamentals of science, how they interact with each other, and the manner in which they can be applied in real world situations, and ones in which scholars find themselves in during their day to day lives, and also looking into their future as well.

Scholars make use of custom-made department work booklets that act as a guide throughout their entire 5 years of study, acting as 'personal textbooks' that they collate information in and use to demonstrate to themselves the vast amount of knowledge they consume and learn during their time with us, giving them a real source of pride in their learning and understanding.

How does the science curriculum equip scholars with knowledge that provides them with new ways of thinking about the world and has the capacity to take them beyond their own original experiences?

The intent of the science curriculum is to prepare scholars to be able to contribute to a society that is continually changing due to advances in Science and Technology: to give scholars the skills to be able to question, investigate and analyse, to draw their own conclusions, evaluate and make decisions that will affect them and others in both a theoretical and practical context. The structure of the science curriculum is made so that earlier topics provide the foundational, fundamental knowledge and skills which continue to be developed and consolidated throughout the course of study. Scholars come to grips with the fundamentals of scientific disciplines, their interactions and then their application in real world contexts.

The hierarchical curriculum allows scholars to be exposed to detailed areas of climate science, for example in Year 11, and successfully draw on previous studies around atomic structure, chemical bonding, energy transfers and other concepts to make the science of this accessible to them. But they are also given the opportunity to explore such

concepts in wider contexts beyond the remit of science, in areas such as political and sociological impacts as well. In doing so the curriculum also links to KS2 curriculum understanding and introduces new key terminology, basic equipment, health and safety and enquiry skills that can be used at KS3 to prepare pupils for successful study at KS4.

How does the science curriculum reflect intelligent interdisciplinarity, to allow scholars to explore meaningful connections?

The science curriculum at CMA works to be cohesive with important other disciplines across the school, ensuring that shared substantive basis, disciplinary processes and curriculum skills are taught within our subject in a manner that supports learning across the school in other subjects. Having teachers who understand the explicit links with and the skills taught in our lessons that mirror those taught in areas of maths, history, geography and design and technology is important in ensuring that means of delivery chosen with our subject compliment those used in these subject areas.

Department teachers work with other curriculum areas of the school to become upskilled in their knowledge and skills in areas such as maths, history and geography to bring in and developed scholar expert knowledge from these areas to support understanding in our subject as well. Whether that be ensuring that our methodology for tackling scientific formula is coherent and supports that being used by the maths department, or whether that being ensuring our teachers spend time learning about the impact of the Reformation on the development of scientific ideas and breakthroughs in the 16th and 17th century, such interdisciplinary foci ensure that we provide scholars with a truly rounded experience in science.

Appendix B - The enactment of our curriculum vision

The enactment of CMA's Curriculum Vision: **"We will provide for all our scholars access to the best which has been thought, said, written and created in every field of human endeavour so that they are knowledgeable, critical, enriched and well poised to lead fulfilling lives."**

Knowledgeable	Critical	Enriched	Well poised for life
Special focus on the EBacc subjects English language and literature for all Modern Foreign Language for all High proportion of triple scientists Aspirational targets within an academic curriculum Curriculum maps and SOWs which shows learning beyond the specification Knowledge organisers to master the minimum Academic knowledge is the focus in each subject Reading is valued and encouraged - texts across genre and historical periods Developing vocabulary, increasing sophistication with language Recitation of speeches and poetry Key historical memorial dates acknowledged in lessons and assemblies (e.g. war, holocaust) Regular low stakes assessments within lesson to memorise knowledge Active teaching of memorisation and retention skills Curriculum sequenced for spacing and interleaving Strong independent learning culture Well stocked library and allocated time to use Assemblies e.g. Holocaust Memorial Day and Remembrance	Critical thinkers through debates in classroom e.g. debating euthanasia in RE Evaluating evidence to inform opinions e.g. study of scientific theories vs evidence (theory of evolution) Evaluation of sources and developing an understanding of reliability, in humanities Showing and evaluating methods in solving problems in mathematics PSHE – consideration of sensitive issues e.g. consent British Values and Prevent as a priority Community awareness - guest speakers e.g. Police Stop the Clock programme e.g. anti-bullying, mental health, online safety Bespoke programme of support for individual scholars Developing resilience and reflection through an understanding of metacognition Self-reflection – post data drop and mentoring Exposure to exam conditions in preparation for the rigour of exams Strong Behaviour for Learning policy and practices – reflection time Informal discussions and group work – talking, discussing, thinking Assemblies e.g. Knife Crime and Anti-bullying	Valued arts provision Music Scholarship for DA scholars Music clubs and lessons – Choir/Orchestra All scholars learning a language Leadership opportunities Junior UKMT Maths Challenge Scholar homework clubs Castle Character Time Show performances Extracurricular experiences through sport and sports competitions Trips to France Geography field trips Art gallery and theatre trips Trips – both curriculum and rewards Exposure to ideas from different cultures and religious groups through the PSHE and RE curriculum KS2 open evenings to showcase the school and inform the community about what we offer Visits to universities STEM opportunities and visitors	British Values across the curriculum Castle Credo ethos across the school Scholar leadership opportunities Scholar volunteers at events e.g. parents' evenings and open evenings Scholar Voice opportunities Stop the clock activities and several curriculum lessons – public speaking opportunities Interviews with visiting professionals and speakers in assemblies e.g. Barclays life skills Working with employers Careers programme throughout Years 7-11 Uniform policy helps scholars to learn how to dress smartly and present themselves well Formal presentation evening – how to dress, how to conduct self Thorough transition programme at KS2 Nurturing and supportive pastoral team and form tutors Working as part of a team – group activities External support for school e.g. Ed Psych, counsellor, school nurse, CAMHS and other agencies Inclusive practices for all SEND, NTE, new arrivals etc. Reading Ambassadors provide peer support to develop a love of reading