

The Curriculum at Madeley Academy – September 2025

Context

Madeley Academy is part of the Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust (TTMAT). We have a thriving vibrant learning environment which serves one of the most deprived communities in England; in the top quintile nationally for deprivation (0.38). The Academy is one of the most popular schools in Telford attracting over 750 applications each year. Designing our curriculum provision takes in to account that in some year groups we have up to 45% of the students categorised as disadvantaged, requiring carefully planned accessibility to the same curriculum for all our students regardless of their characteristics.

One impact of this is that we have secured an enviable record of student destinations with 65% of our Year 13 students being the first in their family to attend University and in 2025, 36% of students progressed to 'prestigious' universities which is above the National Average figure. 100% of Year 11 in 2025 secured a destination with many staying on at our Sixth Form.



Curriculum Aim

Our aim is to raise aspirations and outcomes through an ambitious curriculum which offers **all students:**

- A strong academic core
- A breadth of subjects
- A wealth of enrichment opportunities

Intent: Curriculum Philosophy and Vision

Our vision is to enable every student that attends the Academy to gain the credentials to ensure that their chances of succeeding in life are vastly improved and not determined by the social environment from which they come. Social mobility is much more likely to be achieved through obtaining the qualifications and social skills needed to navigate through the demands of modern society and being prepared to seize opportunities as and when they arise. We have a continuously improving record in creating a pathway to success for our students.

The importance of establishing a curriculum relevant to the needs of modern day Britain in a global society for young adults from the community that we serve requires a balance of academic rigour with a realistic understanding of the students' personal development and social needs.

Our curriculum provision is built around a strong academic core enhanced by a wide selection of additional subjects including a choice of 11 optional subjects at Key Stage 4 and over 22 course choices for Key Stage 5. All of the National Curriculum subjects are studied during the 3 year Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9) and all year groups experience a comprehensive Personal Development Programme encompassing RSHE, Citizenship and input from the Careers team. In addition, there is an extensive extended curriculum through our well-attended **Session 3** Programme and the 3 Challenge Days throughout the year.

We aim to balance an academic curriculum with many enrichment opportunities to enable the students to be equipped for their roles as future citizens. We have embedded additional life skills into the extended curriculum to balance the ambition for academic success with the need to be happy and respectful young people who can contribute effectively to society.

Learning in all subject areas is embedded in students' long term memory with the curriculum delivered sequentially in order to support this. This is supported by the delivery of relevant CPD across the Academy and both internal and external Quality Assurance activities. Learning becomes progressively more challenging and is assessed through regular progress point reviews as well as other assessment for learning methods.

Implementation

The Academy day runs from 8.30am to 3.15pm with Session 3 operating from 3.15pm onwards. This gives a contact time of 29 hours per week which is well above the National Average figure. The Academy is committed to an ethos of inclusion where expectations are high for all students including those with additional needs and where the full curriculum offer is accessible for all. Key Stage 3 covers Years 7 to 9 and builds the foundations of learning. Key Stage 4 covers Years 10 and 11 and embeds the learning as students move towards examinations in Year 11 and progress onto post-16 Pathways. The National Curriculum is delivered at both Key Stages 3 and 4 to all students. Key Stage 5 is the Sixth Form and students study up to 4 Level 3 courses.

Academic Core

At Madeley Academy we have a strong academic core of subjects where all students study English, Maths, Science and Humanities. Some students require a personalised approach to the curriculum and may, for example, be part of a STAR group provision which has a hybrid primary/secondary style curriculum to support transition from primary school. For these students, there is additional support for literacy and numeracy intervention in Year 7.

Typical % of time given to core subjects:

	English	Maths	Science	Hums
Year 7	20%	15%	10%	10%
Year 8	15%	15%	15%	10%
Year 9	20%	20%	15%	10%
Year 10	20%	20%	15%	10%
Year 11	20%	20%	20%	15%

Key Stage 3 - Years 7 to 9

This phase ensures coverage of the National Curriculum core and foundation subjects through a minimum of 29 learning hours per week. All subject leaders have sequentially planned their curriculum to develop students' knowledge to support progression into the next Key Stage. We endeavour to enable students to experience more than just the academic core of subjects. All students follow an exciting Citizenship Curriculum which aims to develop students' cultural capital; incorporating elements of Financial Capability with work on Careers and a focus on being part of their local and national community. The Personal Development curriculum encompasses Relationship, Sex and Health Education and there are topics and links available on the website to support parents with this programme.

In Key Stage 3, all students study:

Maths
PE
History

English
Citizenship
Music

Science
Art
Performing Arts

ICT
Technology
Religious Studies

Geography



The **Star Group** in Year 7 operates for the lowest ability students and supports with revisiting concepts from Key Stage 2 in order to embed the key foundations required to move forward in their learning. They have a bespoke curriculum incorporating additional Maths, English with a focus on Miskin phonics – all which have a proven impact on their own skills and progress in other subjects.

Key Stage 4 – Years 10 and 11

During this phase students continue with an emphasis on the strong academic core and have the opportunity to opt for new subjects to study. The longer learning week enables subjects to provide enrichment opportunities and to develop more depth in the students' knowledge. It gives more time to develop knowledge and understanding for students who may need further support.

All students, regardless of ability or SEND, are offered a full curriculum with a minimum of 8 subjects. No exams are taken early in this phase and all courses are GCSE, BTEC Level 2 or NCFE qualifications. 100% of students study the strong academic core of:

- English Language and Literature
- Maths
- Sciences – combined course or single Sciences
- History or Geography (above the National Average of 80%)

Students choose from a wide range of subjects when moving into this phase of their education. Examples of these subjects include Health and Social Care, Hair and Beauty, Construction and Art. All students study a Health Curriculum in Year 9 also have dedicated RSE lessons. In addition there is a focus on the Careers Curriculum with a World of Work day and Aspire to Higher Education workshops for students. The curriculum offer is strong with 13 of the available 16 national subject clusters being covered.

In Key Stage 4, all students study:

<i>Maths</i>	<i>English Language</i>	<i>Science</i>	<i>History or Geography</i>
<i>PE</i>	<i>English Literature</i>	<i>Religious Education</i>	<i>Citizenship</i>

Optional Subjects available:

<i>Art</i>	<i>Technology</i>	<i>Health & Social Care</i>	<i>Business</i>
<i>Hair & Beauty</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Hospitality & Catering</i>	<i>ICT/ Computing</i>
<i>French</i>	<i>Sport</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>Dance</i>

Key Stage 5 - the Sixth Form

The Sixth Form provides a strong curriculum for over 200 students with a wide range of traditional academic subjects on offer as well as many BTEC level 3 course combinations. All students study 4 courses in Year 12 providing breadth and choice in terms of moving forward onto further study or employment. Most students sit AS exams (or equivalent) at the end of Year 12 to provide an external benchmark of progress. Students complete a minimum of a 3.5 A Level equivalent course over the 2 year period and students can continue with 4 courses in Year 13 if appropriate.



Key Stage 5 has 22 courses on offer. Most students combine traditional A Levels with BTEC Level 3 courses with some students choosing to specialise in Level 3 Diploma courses such as Business or Sport.

Around 60% of Sixth Form students combine academic and vocational qualifications. All students undertake work experience and there are high levels of volunteering and participation in the extended curriculum. All Sixth Formers have a personalised Careers roadmap which includes visiting a University and taking part in an Employability and Higher Education Week. The Personal Development Programme is age-appropriate for Sixth Formers and combines events such as external speakers and ethical debating.

Religious, Social & Health Education (RSE) and PE (Healthy Living)

All students access core PE throughout their time at the Academy and Health Education is covered within this. Some students choose to take BTEC Level 2 Sport as a qualification in Key Stage 4. They are also popular choices in the Sixth Form. Sporting activities are also popular as part of the Extended Curriculum with the on-site Fitness Centre being heavily utilised.

Students experience the wider RSE curriculum through tutorial sessions, through cross-curricular subject areas, assemblies and dedicated lessons. The Academy runs themed challenge days each term such as 'You and Your Community' in the Autumn and 'Careers and Employability' in the Spring.

The Role of Careers

Careers education is embedded across the Academy with all students accessing relevant guidance. Key Stage 3 students benefit from the Citizenship curriculum. In Year 10, all students participate in a Careers Discovery Programme and undertake work experience. Year 11 students receive individualised career plans (AIG). The Sixth Form have on-going and personalised guidance from the in-house careers team. They participate in an Employability and Higher Education week and experience University Summer Schools. All of these embedded careers-activities support a strong record on destinations at both Years 11 and 13. Careers activities are mapped against 100% of the Gatsby Benchmarks.

A Wealth of Enrichment Opportunities

The Extended Curriculum operates daily as **Session 3** and offers around 25 activities per week with over 300 students attending activities between 3.15pm and 4.15pm. Revision and support workshops run across Year 11 and the Sixth Form also many intervention sessions are available for younger students at the Academy such as Handwriting Club.



We aim to develop Cultural Capital in the students through a wide range of experiences including numerous trips, the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, the National Citizenship Scheme, theatre visits, invited speakers and Arts Nights. Subject areas aim to enrich their classroom learning with visits and speakers which have included/will include some of the following:

- Year 7 participated in a poetry workshop with a local poet
- Year 8 have visited Blists Hill Museum
- Year 9 have started the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme
- Year 10 History students experienced the world heritage site of Ironbridge while Geography students visited Rhyl for a coastal study
- Year 10 students have all visited Staffordshire University and undertaken work experience
- Year 11 participated in Positively You resilience workshops
- Sixth Form experiences included the Ethical Debating Society, a Healthtec Day and a trip for all students to Coventry University



Accessibility of the Curriculum

All students study the same curriculum apart from the small Star Group in Year 7 where there is an increased focus on English and Maths to close gaps.

We are committed to ensuring equality of access to the complete curriculum for all students through effective allocation of resources, reducing barriers and the sharing of information and strategies with staff. Schemes of learning are effectively sequenced to allow small steps to develop and embed knowledge. These sequences of work are further detailed in session plans that are supported by Communication Passports for individual SEND students to support their access to the full curriculum. The Academy is committed to an ethos of inclusion where expectations are high for vulnerable students and where barriers to participation are reduced to enable the full curriculum offer to be accessible for all. Many of our students have several different categories of SEND and 34% of Pupil Premium Students have additional SEND. 74% of the combined SEND and PP Grouping are stated as having SEMH. Consistently, 45% of students in the Academy are classed as 'disadvantaged' therefore the curriculum is designed to be as inclusive as possible.

Strategies such as maintaining the average class size at 25 students has had an impact on accessibility of the curriculum. This has been supported by the Governors and funded from various income streams. The Academy has invested in Academic Coaches who perform specialist teaching assistant roles with the aim of making the curriculum accessible to different groups of students including weak readers, SEND students or those lacking resilience. A Nurture provision is in place to support students in accessing the curriculum, giving emotional support whilst still focusing on their studies.

Students with Cognition and Learning Needs are setted appropriately in the foundation subjects where the lower sets are smaller. These groups are supported by specialist teaching assistants and the curriculum is suitably planned and differentiated. All Schemes of Learning within the Academy identify a ***focused*** pathway which builds in more recap and editing time to support students in developing their knowledge. Key staff are trained in phonics in order to support literacy development.

The suitability of texts and the reading ages of non-fiction extracts are pitched appropriately and number work takes into account the specialist guidance available on the students' Communication Passports and links work with the English and Mathematics departments. The weakest readers have literacy intervention using schemes such as ***Accelerated Reader*** to enable them to develop their reading skills to have better access to the wider curriculum. **Students with Communication Needs** have adaptations to the curriculum in line with their individual requirements. This may include using verbal feedback to support written feedback and the use of alternative software such as reading software to improve the accessibility of the curriculum. Suitable reading techniques are employed to develop students' literacy skills in line with the guidance on their Communication Passports and supported by the Literacy Coordinator.

The **students with Sensory and Physical Needs** are given adaptations, for example where they sit in the classroom in relation to the teacher/whiteboard and which font sizes and colours are used in resources. Equipment is provided to ensure that all students can access the full curriculum, including specialist magnifying glasses in Science, tactile map pieces in Geography, braille markings on scientific beakers and specialist harnesses for physically disabled students in the Fitness Centre. Risk assessments are put in place and additional staffing is made available where necessary to support students accessing the full range of curriculum activities in the widest sense. This includes the Extended Curriculum with sports clubs and Academy visits eg Field trips. Kinaesthetic learning activities are built into the curriculum to ensure all students gain a variety of learning activities.

The curriculum is accessible to **students with SEMH Needs** related to the level of information in their relevant Communication Passports. The strong pastoral system within the Academy focuses on overcoming barriers to learning. The use of a Nurture provision supports students with emotional issues whilst still accessing the curriculum. The Academy has a culture of achievement with many positive rewards built into the curriculum to boost self-confidence and esteem. Areas of the curriculum such as Sport, aim to develop resilience through team-work and in promoting healthy lifestyles. The Extended Curriculum includes activities like Mindfulness sessions and Zumba to support students' wellbeing. This compliments the strong RSE programme containing topics such as Mental Health and Promoting Healthy Relationships.



Disadvantaged students (PP) have access to the same curriculum and opportunities; there is equality of provision and access to this provision for all. This can require practical steps, for example subsidising trips or providing equipment through the Pupil Premium funding. All students are issued with free reading books in Year 7 and are encouraged to make use of the library.

There are a range of cultural capital activities embedded in the curriculum for all students and expectations are that all students will access these. The Academy aims to raise aspirations through the curriculum by linking subjects to careers and by promoting role models through the curriculum. There is also a focus on developing vocabulary through the curriculum - both subject and non-subject-specific vocabulary.

The Academy runs a comprehensive STEM programme for all year groups including workshops and visits. The extensive calendar of enrichment activities runs from career taster sessions in Year 7, to a University visit in Year 8, onto targeted visits for chosen career routes including NHS, Animal Science, Physics and Engineering in Year 10. Students are also offered the opportunity to take part in a youth leadership course, Inter-academies STEM competitions, and challenge days.

In the Sixth Form students are encouraged to access national projects such as the Nuffield Research Programme and activities supported by the Social Mobility Fund to enrich their experiences. All Sixth Formers undertake work experience and many carry out extended volunteering. Madeley Academy is a NCS Champion School and students are encouraged to apply for the Sixth Form Bursary and also University Bursary Schemes where relevant.

Impact

The Academy is heavily oversubscribed for both Year 7 and Sixth Form entry and is the only school locally offering vocational curriculum courses such as Level 3 Construction, GCSE Hair & Beauty and Hospitality & Catering which are all valued by the students.

The vast majority of students complete a full programme with the average number of courses studied is 8 GCSEs. The breadth of the curriculum is demonstrated by the optional / open basket subjects scoring consistently well in terms of the overall Progress 8 score. Students with additional needs (SEND) and disadvantaged students access the full curriculum including all optional subjects and also activities in the extended curriculum.



In the Sixth Form in 2025, 36% of the students went onto 'prestigious' universities and 100% of the students who wanted to progress into Higher Education did so. This is well above National Average and is against a local backdrop of only 26% of students across the region going to University. A high percentage (65%) of students are the first in their family to go to University underlining the impact of their education on social mobility. The Sixth Form value added data has been in the top 5% in the country for the last 8 years demonstrating that students consistently outperform their targets in both academic and vocational courses. Sixth Form retention of Year 11 students is high; the same as our success rate data of 98% in 2025. In 2025, Year 11 destinations were strong with 100% of students being placed which is above the local and national average figures.

Behaviour in the Academy is very good with an emphasis on developing an ethos of respect and kindness. Achievement is celebrated through a raft of rewards including Headteacher's lunches, a range of award systems, badges, certificates, Annual Achievement assemblies and weekly Star Students. Attendance is above the National Average and exclusions are very low, all supporting an environment where students are motivated to succeed and enjoy coming to school. Students feel safe within the Academy and incidents of racism and bullying are low and dealt with swiftly.

Participation in extra-curricular activities is high with 93% of students attending at least one activity per week. Participation is consistent for all student groups including Disadvantaged students and those with additional needs (SEND). All year groups enjoy an annual Sports Day, challenge days and a wide range of enrichment activities. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education through six Progress reports per year, Parents' Evenings and events such as Arts Night, Celebration Evening and the Parental Information Events for each year group. The pastoral system is strong and parents are able to contact Personal Tutors with any concerns that may arise. Borrowing of books has increased 300% in the last 3 years with no disadvantage gap evident. The number of students taking Music lessons has also increased by 40% over the past 3 years – again with no disadvantage gap evident.

Destination data is consistently strong and reflects the high levels of aspiration of our students. All students with an EHCP are placed and progress data is very positive. Overall attendance data for 2024-25 is positive and above local and national levels. The increases in both reading and numeracy ages of those in the Star Group supports this adaptation to the curriculum.

Our impressive outcomes on all fronts reflect our core values, highlighting the determination and commitment of staff and students. As a child-centre Academy, we focus on children being happy, confident and independent learners.

JF September 2025