



# AVANTI SCHOOLS TRUST

## Approach to Curriculum

## **1 Curriculum in Avanti Schools**

### **1.1 Values and vision**

*Avanti School Learners will achieve personal fulfilment through being responsible, spiritually rooted, and highly skilled individuals well prepared to pursue their ambitions for happy and dynamic lives.*

The three key Avanti principles of educational excellence, character formation, and spiritual insight will be at the heart of our ambition and vision for our pupils and all that we aspire for them. These principles will permeate every aspect of life in Avanti schools. The school curriculum will be taught in an enriching and inclusive learning environment that supports the diverse needs of all pupils. Our ethos seeks to teach habits of mind- promoting curiosity, engendering intellectual rigour and independence of thought, reflective learning and flexible thinking as basic requirements for developing open minds capable of reaching balanced judgements. Schools will provide high quality personalised pastoral care with a focus on building resilience, and nurturing moral and ethical communities in Avanti schools. Overall curriculum in Avanti schools will be based on the expectations built into the National Curriculum with a special place given to the development of spiritual consciousness, the teaching of philosophy, religion and ethics; performing arts and mathematics. School curriculum at each key stage will be broad and balanced, and incorporate experience of linguistic; scientific; technological; human; social, moral, cultural and spiritual; physical, aesthetic and creative education. It will encapsulate all planned and incidental learning that our schools organise to promote academic success, personal reflection and growth and a social conscience. These attributes make our pupils highly skilled, well-educated, confident, broad-minded and responsible British citizens capable of making a valuable contribution to the diverse democratic society of modern Britain.

## **2 Principles underpinning Provision: Early Years Foundation Stage**

- Helping children to enjoy learning and growing through play in safe social contexts is an essential purpose of Early Years settings in Avanti schools. Teaching of 3 to 5 year olds will follow the Development Matters guidance on teaching the seven areas of learning in the EYFS
- All schools will place a stronger emphasis on personal and social development, communication and language (including the development of their home languages) as basic to children's readiness for a successful transition to the more structured learning environment of classrooms.
- Deployment of a higher staff-to-pupil ratio and extensive involvement of parents and volunteers will allow for frequent and sustained opportunities for high quality interactions in adult and child initiated learning situations.
- A greater emphasis on developing communication; language; mathematical; personal, social and emotional skills will form the basis of independent and guided learning activities.
- Learning to learn in carefully planned rich environment and a growing readiness for more formal learning in a school environment will support children to move towards the daily systematic teaching of synthetic phonics and an immersion in reading, storytelling and play with song and rhyme. Pupils' capabilities in their home languages will be promoted as an asset, and alongside learning to communicate in English, they will continue to use their home languages to clarify meaning for themselves.
- Children whose progress and development causes concern will be closely observed to identify their specific needs. Appropriate and early interventions will be put in place by the teaching team, in consultation with the senior leaders and the SENCo where necessary, to address the areas of need without delay. In such situations, parents will be involved from the outset and play an important part in supporting personalized programmes of learning to prevent transient 'hurdles' becoming barriers to the learning and development of young children.

### **2.1 Curricular provision – pupil entitlement in Avanti Schools**

- Teaching and Learning for pupils in the nursery and reception classes will provide for rich opportunities that engage them in structured and spontaneous play and purposeful interactions with children and adults. The

EYFS curriculum will be taught through setting up learning situations that stimulate independent, self-initiated as well as adult supported exploration and learning.

- Pupils will participate in regular morning collective worship with the adult reciting one of the three school-day prayers. These will be normally recited and led by the teaching staff and/or the Principal in class or in whole school worship.
- Curriculum will draw on Development matters and be planned on a theme based approach, alongside a major emphasis on Language, communication and personal, social and emotional development.
- From the earliest days in school, pupils will be immersed in a rich and exciting language and literacy environment, prominent in its displays of collections of children's literature, to encourage their interest in the written and spoken word and stories.
- Pupils will be taught phonics, starting with word play, singing of rhymes and songs to promote their interest in spoken language, rhyme and rhythm. Texts from a range of children's literature and stories will provide the context of teaching and learning of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- Classrooms and learning spaces will be organised around the seven areas of learning of the EYFS curriculum, offering a range of good quality resources and ample opportunities for children to initiate their own play and set up of scenarios that interest them.
- Learning objectives for teaching plans will be drawn from "Learning Matters" produced by Early Education in order to support continuity of learning and progress of young children at different stages of development - from babies to toddlers and young children under five. Planning exemplars in the EYFS policy document provide more detailed guidance for schools. Common planning frameworks will be saved electronically in shared files across schools as central resource.
- Pupils' personal, social and emotional development will form a significant part of the EYFS curriculum. Enjoyment of learning in a safe, loving and stimulating high quality environment will be reinforced by a values based curriculum that helps pupils to understand the meaning and relevance of the six Avanti values of courage, empathy, self discipline, respect, gratitude and integrity.
- Discreet teaching of Sanskrit and Yoga as areas of learning will contribute to children's social, moral, cultural, and spiritual development.
- Pupils will have daily opportunities to engage with prayers and personal reflection by exchanging their experiences of learning and play. Typically, this would involve opportunities for sharing their achievements from the day in 'show and tell' sessions or narrating an act of someone's kindness in the playground in small or larger groups or pairs.
- Outdoor areas of learning will provide rich learning environment designed to stimulate creativity, social interactions and purposeful play and learning activities. Curriculum planning will include deliberate teaching plans for in-class and outdoor learning spaces ensuring that children have opportunities to learn and achieve the early learning goals in all seven areas of learning.
- The trust policy on induction for children starting nursery and reception classes will be followed by all schools. This involves liaising with providers of early learning settings attended by children prior to joining an Avanti school and pre-arranged home visits to meet with the child and their family to introduce them to the school, and ways in which the school might best support their transition from home to school.
- Schools will use Early Excellence tools to establish baseline assessment of children's stages of development in the first six weeks of them starting school.
- Assessment of children's learning and progress will be carried out using the developmental milestones (as in Development Matters) as benchmarks. Schools will use direct observations of children at play and their

engagement with learning tasks, activities and social interactions as the main sources of evidence for evaluating and assessing their learning and progress.

- All records of observations and assessment will be collated in individual ‘learning journeys’ as a portfolio to be shared with children, their parents and all staff involved in the children’s education and care. These records of children’s learning will be open and accessible to parents to include the evidence they may wish to add from their observations of children’s learning and development outside of school environment.
- Their final assessments will be moderated against national exemplars of achievement and moderated across all Avanti schools as well as other schools in the local authority.
- Early Years provision in schools must be staffed by qualified teachers and support staff with a minimum of level 2 qualifications in early learning and child care. Appointment of unqualified staff is not permissible.

## **2.2 Principles for curriculum organisation: Key Stages 1 and 2**

At Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum will:

- be underpinned by the ambition outlined for all our schools in the Avanti Ethos Handbook and emphasise independent thought to enable all our pupils to become reflective, articulate, and independent thinkers and lay foundations for future learning, vocation and fulfilment as young adults.
- nurture knowledge and personal conduct consistent with the Avanti ethos and six Avanti values and British values in order to prepare learners to take their places as loyal, responsible and reflective British citizens with their own sense of purpose and with the confidence and skills the new globalized world demands.
- help learners to develop their personal spirituality, as well as explore spiritual insight as a universal, inclusive principle, accessible to all, that endorses and encourages different belief systems through the teaching of the Philosophy, Religion & Ethics curriculum and collective worship,
- While continuing to embed pupil learning in the best early years’ practice, help pupils to make a gradual and seamless transition to key stage 1 curriculum that includes the subjects of the national curriculum and preparation towards the statutory end of key stage assessment.
- teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) at each key stage and ensure that the school’s curriculum framework is firmly underpinned by the requirements of the NC
- adopt thematic and cross- curricular approaches that enhance the breadth of the curriculum and links across the different areas of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to provide rich contexts for deep and ‘connected’ learning of the taught curriculum
- give eminence to learners’ individual specific needs, aptitudes and skills in the personalization of their learning.
- enrich the taught curriculum by an entitlement of wide ranging activities and opportunities provided in the field of music, arts, sport and leisure, languages and technology and extra-curricular provision out of school hours.
- Tangible evidence of teaching, learning, pupil progress and attainment must be available for all areas or subjects under study as records of written work or graphic representation of learning captured by use of multi-media devices.

## **2.3 Curriculum provision at Key Stages 1 and 2 – pupil entitlement in Avanti Schools**

### **At Key Stage 1:**

- Best principles of early years' education will be evident in the provision of teaching and learning of pupils in Year 1 with ample opportunities for practical and first hand learning in social contexts of small group and paired learning through play and more formal paper and pencil activities
- Supported by their class teachers, pupils will be ready to be taught by subject specialists for MFL, PE, music, performing arts, Yoga, computing and visual art.
- All pupils will become willing independent readers before their transition to key stage 2 at age 7 unless there are exceptional reasons why this may not be in a child's reach at that time
- Cross-curricular learning will emphasize application of key skills of communication, literacy, numeracy, problem solving, creative expression and collaboration in practical learning settings.
- Maximum teaching time, with at least 7 hours and 30 minutes a week, will be allocated to the teaching of core subjects of reading, writing – integrated with speaking and listening, and a further four hours of mathematics as discrete areas of learning. Cross-curricular practical contexts will help pupils to apply their developing communication, literacy and numeracy skills to develop mastery
- High quality and daily teaching of phonics, reading and mathematics will be priority areas of learning in year 1 along with experience of all seven areas of learning as in the EYFS to deepen earlier learning

### **At Key Stage 2:**

- With their basic literacy, numeracy, personal and social skills well on the way, pupils will enter key stage 2 equipped to access a broad and balanced curriculum, that includes all nine subjects of the national curriculum, Yoga, PRE, Sanskrit, MfL, and PSHEE.
- Challenge for the high achievers and additional support for those in need or falling behind will be provided through personalised curriculum and/or setting in English and maths in years 5 and 6 to support access to differentiated teaching and learning opportunities.
- Teams in key stage 2 will share curriculum planning and be advised by subject leaders on the quality of lesson planning, content and progression in subject knowledge, and progress within and between each year group.
- Senior leaders will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate coverage and quality of the planned curriculum, progression and continuity in pupil learning and outcomes at each point of transition between year groups and key stages.
- Continuity and progression towards transition to secondary education will be a key feature of our curriculum in years 5 and 6 to guard against regression in the rate of progress and standards commonly found amongst pupils in the year following their transfer from primary to secondary.
- Senior leaders and staff from Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 will link closely to secure subject specialist input into the curriculum, assessment and pedagogical practice between Key Stage 2 and 3.
- Senior leaders from primary and secondary phases will take responsibility for ensuring curriculum continuity between primary and secondary phases to help pupils derive maximum benefits from the allthrough experience offered by Avanti schools.

### **3 Principles for curriculum organization for Key Stage 3 and 4**

- The curriculum as a whole will be designed to promote knowledge and skills and engender excitement about learning amongst pupils. Our schools' curriculum will nurture highly aspirational, confident, independent, expert learners who both realise fully their academic potential whilst also developing them as individual members of society with attributes of social responsibility and enterprise alongside other life skills.
- The schools' values framework – Respect, Integrity, Courage, Empathy, Gratitude and Self-Discipline will be thoroughly embedded in the curriculum – most notably in PRE, collective worship, citizenship and PHSEE. As a framework it will comfortably aligned to and seen to be an expression of the Universal nature of the four fundamental British Values. The Chaitanya tradition of Gaudiya Bhakti Hinduism will be the bedrock of school ethos, pupils' personal development and spiritual explorations.
- Our secondary schools will offer a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum centred on the academic rigour of the English Baccalaureate with specialisms in mathematics and the performing arts. Within this context, the curriculum will be tailored to meet the more specific needs of a given pupil intake and groups within it.
- There will be a high degree personalisation of learning and curriculum for all pupils, but particularly so for the disadvantaged and the more vulnerable pupils to secure consistently good or better progress for them
- Aspirational target setting will be the norm for all students. Targets for pupils' progress and value added will be set for the very highest achievement across the curriculum to secure progress and attainment typical of schools at least in the top 10 to 20% of similar schools nationally.
- Our curriculum and the assessment frameworks will be underpinned around six faculties of Literacy, Numeracy, Futures (Science and Technologies), Heritage (Language and Humanities), Vitality (Sport, health, citizenship, food), and Artistry (Performing and creative arts & media).

#### **3.1 Curriculum provision – pupils' entitlement**

The schools will operate a six period day (each of one hour) with an hour after school most evenings for enrichment activities at the end of the day for a varied extra-curricular programme. Music tuition will be actively encouraged and available across a range of instruments.

#### **3.2 At Key Stage 3:**

- Each pupil will experience high quality pastoral care and support, and an academic core from the outset that results in a smooth and happy transition to the secondary school experience and access to the full suite of subjects that make up the full English Baccalaureate
- Schools will pledge continuity and progression for all students by a robust assessment of their prior attainment in English, maths and science on entry to Year 7 to ensure that no pupil stands still or regresses from their starting points. Accurate assessment of their baseline using their end of Key stage 2 scaled score, CATS 4 and FfT Proof of Progress measures will form the basis for ambitious target setting and personalized curricular decisions for each student. The additional assessment and tests administered on entry to secondary phase to enable a triangulation of their prior attainment and the future potential to achieve higher standards.
- Student groupings based on ability and attainment will be introduced for English and mathematics from Spring term onwards for Year 7 pupils to enable appropriate challenge and high quality differentiated learning that challenges and supports a high rate of academic progress for each pupil.
- High quality pupil induction will be provided to introduce them to Avanti values alongside British values, the school's faith designation as a Hindu school and what it means in terms of the school's expectations of them in terms of learning behaviours, personal values and conduct, and the school curriculum. This will include an introduction to Sanskrit, yoga, and meditation (including mindfulness).

- All pupils will have access to high quality teaching and learning over a two year key stage 3 period that prepares students for key stage 4, where they follow courses of English Language and Literature, mathematics, the three sciences of chemistry, biology and physics, design and information technology, at least one humanities subject and a modern foreign language.
- In languages, pupils will have the opportunity to study French and Spanish and Sanskrit. Yoga will be taught in PE, within drama and as an after school club. Meditation and mindfulness will be taught and experienced in daily Tutor Reflection time as well as some acts of Collective Worship.
- The school, via the Trust's bespoke philosophy, religion and ethics programme (PRE), will encourage students to understand and appreciate the value of self, of others, of family and community and of the environment. The PRE programme will focus on religious education, develop critical thinking and nurture pupils' ability to reflect around meaning in life, their own understanding of and relationship with God and how they might live an ethically and morally sound lifestyle. Pupils whose parents elect to withdraw from the PRE curriculum or collective worship will follow a planned curriculum as defined in the PRE policy during these sessions
- Pupils will have access to an extensive, enrichment curriculum which includes a range of visits, day and residential, in all year groups. Visiting speakers and interactions with other schools and employers will contribute to life and enterprise skills as well as extensive clubs and enrichment experiences such as Duke of Edinburgh Awards and CCF.

### **3.4 At Key Stage 4**

- The principles underpinning the entitlements for pupils at Key Stage 3 will apply in terms of assuring progression and continuity in pupils' academic progress and experience of high quality teaching, learning and pastoral care provision made by the school.
- High expectations of academic excellence and equally high standards of personal development and organization will be promoted through a pastoral system designed to secure personal development, care and well-being of each student as a young adult. Tutor time will make an important contribution to students' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development and academic progress.
- Pupils will be set by attainment levels for the core subjects of English, Maths and Science following a careful evaluation of pupils' KS3 progress and attainment to ensure provision of appropriate challenge and support to raise standards for all
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs will be high priority groups and receive close personal attention for raising achievement through a regular scrutiny of the impact of interventions, and tracking of their progress and attainment. The KS4 curriculum will be based on the English Baccalaureate for the majority with appropriate scope to personalize the curriculum to meet the needs of individual learners.
- In making adaptations to the curriculum, alternatives will be considered to compulsory MFL for at least 85% of the students along with Science combinations. All students will study at least two sciences, and one other, and most (at least 75 %+) follow triple Science
- Most students will be expected to do both English Language and Literature to GCSE, and study either History or Geography. MFL is studied by 75%+ of the cohort
- Religious study will remain mandatory for all students. The bespoke PRE curriculum embraces comparative study across the major world faiths and provides a foundation for the study of the subject at GCSE level when studied as a module alongside ethics and Christianity as another world religion.
- Collective worship, which includes personal reflection and mindful meditation, will remain a component of the curriculum for KS4 students. Pupils whose parents seek to withdraw their children from collective worship and/or PRE lessons, will follow an alternative curriculum as detailed in the PRE and collective worship policy for schools.

- PSHEE and citizenship, incorporating the fundamental British values and Avanti values will be taught during tutor periods, in addition to being integral to school assemblies and enrichment programs.
- The curriculum at key stage 4 secures the entitlement of all pupils to study the English Baccalaureate subjects by all pupils. We will expect all pupils to aspire for EBacc and expect a significant proportion to succeed with the proportions rising further as the primary phase cohorts begin to move through the all-through school. This should offer a powerful springboard for pupils to go on to study post-16 subjects and skills training where they have ambitions to move on to higher Education and/or professional accreditation of specialist skills.
- The majority of pupils will be expected to complete ten GCSE or equivalent qualifications, with the addition of a home language where relevant, e.g. Polish, Hindi, Gujarati. Pupils following the progression pathways will expect to complete a minimum of 6 to 8 GCSEs and a relatively small number with specific needs following the alternative pathways will be helped to make the choices that best fit their aspirations while preparing them well for adult life and the world of work.
- Independently brokered, impartial careers information, advice and guidance offered early on to year 9 pupils will add to the in-house support to ensure that learners become familiar with the choices and options open to them as they transit from key stage 3 to 4. A strong emphasis will be placed on personal guidance and support to help all pupils make choices that will maximise their long-term success. Maximising on flexibility within the resourcing constraints to be responsive to learners' specific needs, there will be scope, especially during year 9, for pupils to make changes to their options (that reflect their specific needs) prior to the start of the two years of key stage 4.
- All students will have access to participation in a range of activities as part of the enrichment curriculum, which includes Duke of Edinburgh Award, Princes Trust, CCF (where made available) alongside opportunities for developing leadership and enterprise capability, networking and making business and international links, mentoring and spiritual counsel. Offer curriculum choices that are inclusive, challenging, broad, balanced and appropriately differentiated to be responsive to the needs, aspirations and ambitions of a diverse pupil population.
- The option choices at Key stages 4 and 5 will provide sufficient flexibilities that are essential to achieve challenge and high expectations of all across the different pathways. Pupils are offered opportunities to opt for a balanced choice of study of academic and vocational pathways from languages, arts, and technological disciplines. The breadth and balance will choice, provides scope for a continuum of personalisation and additional support to encourage and enable all pupils to succeed and be supported through their respective journeys towards gaining qualifications for employability in their chosen careers and vocations.
- Teaching time will be deployed differentially to reflect the specific needs of cohorts to develop the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, oracy and learning to learn. Additional teaching time is allocated to the English, mathematics and science to reinforce deeper learning, including overlearning where appropriate.
- Schools will collaborate in joint working with other Avanti schools as well as local providers and employers to ensure a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' economic well-being by placing work-related learning at the centre of a broad curriculum offer from Key stages 3 to 5.
- Mentoring and career advice for year 9 pupils will help pupils to develop a clearer sense of the different pathways they might follow. Tutors and heads of year and faculties will work together to monitor individual progress and response. The bar is raised for each key stage and readiness for the higher expectations of the new key stage 3 and 4 curriculum – we will encourage all our learners to aspire and achieve EBacc. The same ambitions will apply but with a greater level of challenge and determination for all to achieve success.

### **3.5 At Key Stage 5**

- Pupils will choose from a range of A-levels as well as BTEC courses. Given the length of the school day and Avanti policy to promote breadth in the curriculum, pupils will be encouraged to study three subjects through to Alevel over two years. Higher-attaining pupils will be encouraged to extend and challenge themselves. All

courses will be taught by specialists capable of delivering high quality teaching within their disciplines and prepare pupils for the best universities and institutions of higher and further education. Preparation for university and graduate careers will start early with expert help to make successful applications at the most competitive universities.

- Opportunities for developing leadership, critical thinking, independent personal study, and team work will come through a well-planned programme of academic projects, extra-curricular societies, leading of learning events for younger years in the school, and long and short-term placements in professional environments at businesses and workplace organisations. Group facilitating subjects (English, mathematics, sciences, history, geography and languages) will be promoted (a coherent progression from the planned key stage 4 curriculum). Furthermore, in keeping with our specialisms, further mathematics, the performing arts, the sciences will also be offered for this group.

### **3.6 Provision of curriculum enrichment for all**

- All schools will provide for curriculum enrichment during and out of school time for all pupils. This will include a range of cultural and social events that offer interactions with people they will never otherwise meet and learning of skills they may not otherwise have a chance to develop.
- For all our primary and secondary pupils, the curriculum will be enriched with many memorable learning experiences that include educational visits, wide ranging programmes of extra-curricular activities linked to the schools' offer, clubs, competitive sport, and outdoor learning opportunities gained in residential trips provided from an early age in reception. Every pupil will have access to a residential activity experience during their time in school.
- Older pupils will be given opportunities for participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, Cadets CCF, Prince's Trust, many sports teams (and fixtures) as well as enterprise projects form part of the enrichment programme.

### **3.7 Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE)**

- A structured programme of PSHEE curriculum will be taught to all pupils in tutor groups each week. PSHEE in our schools incorporates an integrated programme of two areas of study – Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Citizenship. It comprises both the formal curriculum (lessons) and the more informal as detailed in the enrichment programme of a broad range of activities, many designed in direct response to pupils' interests and specific needs.
- Preparation for work, relationship education, knowledge of cultures and the likely impact of diverse lifestyle choices, will be taught as part of a coherent programme. Teaching will be complemented by external specialists who are invited to lead workshops, performances and productions, organise seminars, and address extended assemblies. In addition to contributing to our strong values-based approach to education, the PSHEE teaching will promote the physical and mental well-being and resilience of pupils.
- In order to help our young people overcome the negative impact of any disadvantage, schools will invest in professional mentoring and coaching for academic success and higher personal aspirations. Supported learning and personalised pathways for work-based learning will be encouraged to help young people to grow a stronger sense of self-worth, and become responsible citizens of our diverse society. We believe that our schools can and must exert a strong influence on changing lives of young people by helping them to gain qualifications and skills that will make them economically independent. Only then can they become successful adults capable of leading personally fulfilling and happy lives.