

Curriculum – Subject Rationales

English and Reading

“Books give a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything.”

Aristotle

At MBA we believe communication and reading are fundamental life skills that can develop engagement in learning and are essential for our Pupils to progress to future pathways and being able to negotiate the adult world. Through communication, our English curriculum strives to develop a love of learning for all our Pupils, and we are committed to ensuring reading opportunities (at the appropriate level) for every child, every day.

Pupils embark upon a reading journey; for some pupils this will be the opportunity to enjoy sensory stories and for others this will be sharing books with an adult or peer, listening to stories, or reading. It is important for our pupils to access and be exposed to texts in order to develop their skills in decoding, prosody and fluency which is carried out through our phonics programme, Little Wandle. At MBA pupils have daily opportunities to engage with reading in a multisensory way, to become familiar with stories, re-visit language and most of all, foster enjoyment in reading so that one day, they may be able to get lost in a book and all it holds.

At MBA we ensure that our English curriculum allows Pupils opportunities to capture their thinking, and structure it for a range of purposes, an essential life skill. Additionally, we support our Pupils to share their ideas, explore new ideas and vocabulary, and through this have the opportunity to access a full and enriching curriculum.

Mathematics

"Good numeracy is the best protection against unemployment, low wages and poor health". Andreas Schleicher

Each pupil should have the opportunity to take part in regular maths learning as a part of their 'My Thinking'. It is important for our pupils to access maths suited to their level of cognition and age profile. For some pupils this will be the opportunity to develop early mathematical skills through sensory experiences based on pupils' specific needs and motivations. For some pupils this will involve developing mental and written methods of solving calculations linked to everyday experiences.

All Pupils will be exposed to consistent numerical language alongside a varied maths curriculum that utilises physical equipment to demonstrate concepts in a tangible way. We provide practical opportunities to apply maths to real-life experiences to ensure that our pupils are equipped with key numerical skills that will support their transition into adulthood.

Science

“Science may set limits to knowledge, but should not set limits to imagination” Bertrand Russel

Science is a subject that captures both key skills for exploring the world and essential knowledge for accessing it. At MBA our Pupils will be exposed to opportunities to engage, inquire and investigate real-world concepts through hands-on experimentation and sensory exploration through themes accessible from, and relevant to, their personal learning journeys. We encourage pupils to be creative and explore.

Our science curriculum is skills-centred: children will be supported to learn transferrable skills for adulthood such as communication, attention, observation, problem-solving, resilience, cooperation and curiosity. This will be delivered through links to key knowledge necessary for our Pupils to progress on their path towards independence. It is our vision that all science Pupils will leave MBA with a greater understanding of themselves, their environment and the wider world.

PSHE – Learning for life

“Integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching” C.S.Lewis

At MBA Learning for Life is the planned provision through which we deliver the statutory Relationship Sex Health Education (RSHE) curriculum and is sometimes referred to as Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Throughout our school we use our Learning for Life curriculum to support the development of confidence, responsibility and making the most of our learner’s abilities. We use real-life learning opportunities to prepare our young people to play an active role, as a part of a community, as a citizen. We encourage consideration on how to achieve healthier, safer lifestyles, how to develop good relationships and respect differences between people. We prepare our learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Learning for Life is reflected in all areas of the curriculum at MBA and is central to our ethos as a school. The wider curriculum at MBA provides a safe, nurturing, caring, positive and protective homely environment promoting personal growth, development and learning. Children are taught to have the skills, knowledge and understanding to be safe and healthy and to know how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. At MBA we personalise this for our learners through their My Journey. We use Personal Learning Goals derived from their EHCP’s, the PSHE association SEND programme of studies and MBA flightpaths to plan bespoke, experiential lessons that promote and encourage independence in adulthood.

World studies

"There is a history in all men's lives." William Shakespeare

The Martin Bacon Academy History Curriculum allows pupils to gain an understanding of the past, for some pupils this may be through creative and sensory experiences. We seek to develop the pupils curiosity, allowing them to develop their understanding of why something happened and what impact it may have had. It inspires and encourages pupils to think critically about a topic, question world events and develop their own opinions.

Our Geography curriculum helps pupils to make sense of the world around them. Geography helps pupils to understand the human and physical forces and process which shape and change our world, it helps students to understand about people, places and the environment, how they are connected and their interactions. This is vital for pupils to understand in the ever more connected and changing world we are living in. The study of geography allows students to tackle the big challenges that face our world: climate change, migration and development. The aim of the Geography Curriculum is to help pupils understand the world they are living in, to equip pupils with the skills they will need to be able to do this and inspire in them a love of learning about the world.

“You cannot simultaneously cherish peoples’ cultures while discarding their beliefs” Alex Acutain

As our Pupils at Martin Bacon Academy develop and grow it is our responsibility to teach them about the wider world and its views. Through educating our Pupils on others' beliefs, we explore the historical factors of religion and look at the sociocultural elements. We teach them the beliefs and boundaries of different religions in a safe and supportive environment so that they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and respect to navigate the wider world. At MBA we teach the philosophical aspect of PRE to Pupils, not only to interrogate a subject but to interrogate subjects from different points of views. Whilst not all our Pupils believe in a religion, all our Pupils have different ethics and PRE affords Pupils a time to understand and communicate their ethics on situations whilst being guided by other Pupils and teachers.

Creative Arts

“Music education opens doors that help children pass from school into the world around them - a world of work, culture, intellectual activity, and human involvement. “ Gerald R. Ford

The creative arts, including dance, drama, music and visual arts, are all powerful modes of expressions through which pupils explore and construct a sense of self, achieve their aspirations and provide a unique way of understanding and responding to the world. It is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject which uses creativity and imagination to experiment, invent and create, and provides visual, tactile and sensory experiences. We provide our pupils with meaningful arts experiences through high quality teaching where we value integrity and innovation and are committed to finding meaningful ways to engage our learners. We use the arts discreetly and intrinsically to solidify abstract concepts and make them more accessible. Using process-based activities to encourage problem solving. We work to ensure that our learners understand the vocational value of the Creative Arts and can recognise future opportunities in this field.

Music is an essential part of being human. Listening to it, reacting to it, performing it, all enhance our individual and collective lives and bring joy and pleasure. We do not have to be ‘good’ at music, but for our physical and mental well-being and health we need to engage with and in it. This may be singing in or out of tune, quietly to ourselves or belting it out for others. It may be listening to and enjoying music from around the world and across many genres, either privately with our ear-buds in or collectively at a stadium concert. It may be playing an instrument that we want to play on our own, in a private rehearsal room for our own pleasure or satisfaction, or it may be playing in concert with others in a band or more traditional orchestra for the and enjoyment of other. It does not matter how we engage with Music as long as we do engage with it, because Music makes us better, happier people, emotionally and psychologically.

Design and Food Technology

The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences". Loris Malaguzzi

Practical subjects, such as food or design technology, support pupils to develop functional, vocational and fine motor skills. Through Design Technology pupils will learn to create products, such as clocks, pencil cases or bird boxes either in the classroom or the DT room where appropriate. Pupils will learn to use equipment safely, as well as learning to follow instructions whilst creating their work.

Food Technology at MBA provides many opportunities for cross curricular learning, reading recipes and weighing items, for example. Pupils will work either in the classroom or the Food Technology room, learning to use equipment safely. Pupils will be given the opportunity to taste and cook foods, some of which they may not be familiar with.

As pupils move through the school there will be opportunities to achieve accreditation through these subjects, whilst developing skills that will help prepare them for adulthood.

Physical Education – My Body

“Intelligence and skill can only function at the peak of their capacity when the body is healthy and strong.”

John F. Kennedy

At MBA our PE curriculum provides a gateway for pupils to become confident in a way which supports their physical, mental, and social health and fitness throughout life, as they prepare for adulthood. This is accomplished through the delivery of a skill-based curriculum that includes a distinctive broad, inspiring, and sequential journey, where pupils learn what constitutes a healthy active lifestyle and how sport contributes towards physical, social, and mental well-being. As a result, pupils’ participation in regular physical exercise beyond school years is more likely to be sustained which will lead to wholesome long-term health. This educated mind-set (along with the pupils’ enjoyment, the opportunity to develop vital communication and teamwork skills and the vital life lessons experienced) make it a subject with true value.

Computing

“The Purpose of computing is insight, not numbers” Richard Hamming

Through the teaching of Computing at MBA, we equip pupils to participate in a rapidly changing world where work and leisure activities are increasingly transformed by technology. We want to enable them to find, explore, analyse, exchange and present information in a safe and effective way. Increased Computing capability promotes initiative and independent Pupils. Our curriculum offers opportunities to learn skills about digital media, internet safety, programming, the use of word processing tools and familiarising pupils with using the internet for research. Through Augmentative and Alternative Communication, we can give some pupils a voice. We know that Computing skills are a major factor in enabling children to be confident, creative, and independent pupils. It is our intent to enable all children in the school to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to be autonomous and safe in the digital age.