

## CURRICULUM INTENT

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### Beacon Academy - Curriculum Intent 2025-2026

**Vision: Enlighten, Inspire, Innovate**

#### 1. The Bedrock of Powerful Knowledge

At Beacon Academy, our curriculum is built upon the principle of "*Powerful Knowledge*", a concept championed by sociologist *Michael Young*. We believe that knowledge is powerful when it "*helps us go beyond our original experiences*" and provides "*reliable explanations or new ways of thinking about the world*". At Beacon Academy in 2025-2026, our intent remains to ensure that every student, regardless of their starting point, has access to the specialised, disciplinary knowledge that allows them to "*envisage alternatives*" for their own futures and the world around them.

#### 2. A Commitment to Breadth and Ambition

We maintain a steadfast commitment to a **3-year Key Stage 3**, following the full National Curriculum programme of study without narrowing our offer at the end of Year 8. This ensures all students encounter a wide narrative of human achievement before moving into their KS4 pathways. As *Christine Counsell* argues, "*the curriculum itself is the progression model*". By having the intent to deliver a curriculum with breadth and depth, students do not just learn to perform for exams; they achieve genuine progress through the gradual mastery of complex domains.

- **Academic Core:** Our curriculum aims to foster an aspirational culture where students are given opportunities to study more than one EBacc subject.
- **Modern Foreign Languages (MFL):** Recognising the global stage our students will enter, MFL is a cornerstone of our growth, with all students afforded the opportunity to study a language at GCSE.
- **Bespoke KS4 Pathways:** We provide a suite of academic and vocational subjects tailored to individual preferences, ensuring a "first-choice" curriculum that supports mental health and workload balance by avoiding a narrow focus on end-of-Year-11 examinations.

#### 3. Disciplinary Literacy and Cognitive Science

To bridge the gap between "*inflexible knowledge*" (rote learning) and "*flexible knowledge*" (the ability to apply learning to new contexts), we integrate insights from *Daniel Willingham* and *Ambition Institute's* work with senior leaders on development of the curriculum (Curriculum for Senior Leaders) in every subject's curriculum planning. We aim to focus on building deep understanding, moving students from surface-level recognition to the deep structure of their subjects.

Following *EEF research*<sup>1</sup>, we acknowledge the need for a focus on "*disciplinary literacy*":

- **Vocabulary Instruction:** Subjects will plan for instruction in subject-specific vocabulary to help students access academic language.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4>

- **Subject-Specific Opportunities for Reading:** Students are supported to read, understand, and critique academic texts within subject areas. That might include reading canonical texts in English lessons, to decoding technical questions and articles in science and maths.
- **Subject-Specific Talk and Key Vocabulary:** The curriculum intent for all subjects will ensure classroom discussion is high-quality and subject-specific. Misconceptions are challenged and vocabulary and pronunciation are a focus for development in our learners.

#### 4. Inclusion and Equality of Entitlement

The curriculum at Beacon Academy is an "ethical responsibility". We ensure that students in discrete groups—including those with SEND and those eligible for the Pupil Premium—have exactly the same curriculum entitlement as their peers. We do not restrict these students to narrowed pathways; instead, we provide the support necessary for them to "clamber into the discourse and practices of educated people". Our goal is to address cultural gaps and provide rich learning experiences beyond the classroom, ensuring that no student's future is limited by their background.

#### 5. Local Labour Market Alignment

Our curriculum is not taught in a vacuum; it is rooted in the opportunities of Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire...and beyond! We aim to keep our curriculum updated and work with providers to reflect the local economic landscape:

- **Manufacturing and Engineering:** This remains a dominant sector, accounting for 16.9% of local jobs—more than double the national average.
- **Health and Social Care:** This is a critical growth area, with the broader public sector now comprising approximately 29.2% of the local workforce and reporting the highest volume of vacancies.
- **Renewable Energy and Logistics:** Leveraging the Humber Freeport (which has secured over £1bn in pledges), we prepare students for emerging opportunities in offshore wind, green energy, and logistics within the UK's busiest trade estuary.

Our careers curriculum and extensive work with local post-16 providers and employers, aims to bridge the gap between the classroom learning towards the evolving economic landscape of our local labour market.

#### 6. Developing the 'Whole Learner'

Beyond academia, our curriculum is designed to ensure students are prepared for the complexities of modern life. This wider curriculum encompasses:

- **Personal Development & PSHE/RSE:** A program that fosters physical safety, social-emotional growth, and mental well-being.
- **Enrichment & Clubs:** A diverse range of extra-curricular opportunities designed to build resilience, intellectual curiosity, and "cultural capital".
- **Trips, Visits and Visitors:** A commitment to learning beyond the classroom to provide real-world context and bridge cultural gaps.
- **Fundamental British Values:** Planned to develop social and civic responsibility, global outlook, and democratic values.

Beacon Academy is proud of the coaching model of student tutoring that is part of the 'whole learner' development in the academy.