



E-ACT Ousedale  
School

Be Kind | Work Hard | Succeed Together



**Vision and Curriculum Intent - September 2025**



Paul McFadden, Headteacher

*"Thank you for taking an interest in Ousedale School, whether you are a prospective pupil, parent or member of staff. After extensive consultation with our school community, this document sets out what our vision is, what our curriculum will deliver and why it is important."*

## Ousedale Vision

*"All young people leave Ousedale ready to succeed in life. As effective learners they will acquire the character, experiences, knowledge, skills and qualifications which will enable them to thrive, and lead successful, happy lives."*

**I am delighted to welcome you to E-ACT Ousedale School, an award-winning, vibrant 11–19 academy set across two campuses in Newport Pagnell and Olney. As Headteacher, I am honoured to lead a school where pupils thrive academically and personally in a happy, respectful, and inclusive environment.**

At E-ACT Ousedale, we believe that education is about more than just academic success - it is about igniting a passion for knowledge, fostering creativity, and inspiring young people to reach their full potential. Our broad and rich curriculum nurtures critical thinking and a love for learning, ensuring that our pupils are not just educated, but truly empowered to leave a lasting, positive mark on the world.

Our GCSE and A-Level results reflect the dedication of both pupils and staff, whilst our Sixth Form consistently achieves outstanding outcomes that open doors to a wide range of future opportunities. Additionally, our passion for music education has earned us national recognition, complementing our well-rounded and enriching curriculum.

Our Ofsted inspection in January 2025 highlighted the exceptional work happening within the school. We were rated Outstanding for both personal development and leadership & management. Inspectors noted that "pupils, including those in the sixth form, attend a happy, respectful and inclusive school" and that "staff have high expectations for pupils' academic and personal achievement." They also praised our commitment to excellence, stating that "many pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve extremely highly across a broad range of subjects."

***“Pupils attend a happy, respectful, and inclusive school. They proudly embody the school’s vision of ‘be kind, work hard, succeed together.’ ” Ofsted, January 2025***

We firmly believe that education extends beyond the classroom and Ofsted (Jan 2025) recognised that “pupils are active citizens”. Our Experiences Curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to explore diverse cultures - locally, nationally, and globally - broadening their perspectives and enriching their personal development. We champion active participation in a wide array of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in leadership roles, overseas trips, music ensembles, and local community initiatives such as visits to care homes and primary schools.

We are extremely proud to have been recognised at a regional level, winning the School of the Year award at the Milton Keynes Education Awards. This accolade celebrates our ongoing dedication to delivering the highest quality education and providing an inspiring and supportive environment for all our pupils.

At E-ACT Ousedale, we hold the highest standards and expectations for both our pupils and staff. With unwavering support, we foster an environment where individuals excel academically while also growing socially and emotionally. Lifelong learning is at the heart of everything we do, driving us to cultivate curious minds and compassionate hearts.

Thank you for your interest in E-ACT Ousedale School. I look forward to welcoming you into our community and working together to ensure every pupil thrives.



# Our Curriculum Intent - The 3 Curricular Elements

## Our Ambitious and Broad Curriculum

### Our 'Character' Curriculum

#### Ambition

To build character through our character values

#### Character Values:

##### Kind

Kind to each other, ourselves, the school and wider environment

##### Hard Working

Always our best effort, a positive attitude to learning

##### Successful

Achieving our personal and collective goals and aspirations

### Our 'Experiences' Curriculum

#### Ambition

Take pupils 'beyond their own experiences'  
Broaden horizons  
Develop cultural capital

#### Wider Experiences, Cultural Capital:

- Extra-curricular
- Enrichment
- Trips/visits
- Clubs
- Pupil leaders

### Our 'Knowledge Skills' Curriculum

#### Ambition

Key concepts  
Core knowledge and skills  
Powerful knowledge

#### Knowledge, Skills, Qualifications:

- National Curriculum
- Basic skills: literacy, numeracy
- GCSEs/VQs
- A Levels/VQs
- Tutor time: PSHE/RSE/FBV/SMSC/CEIAG

## Our curriculum, comprised of the 3 curricular elements, is designed around 6 curriculum principles:

**Ambition** – all groups of pupils will have access to both academic and vocational programmes of study where challenge, achievement and progress are expected for all.

### Knowledge and Skills:

- **Key concepts** and skills are identified that enable equitable access to the full curriculum, both within and across subject areas
- **Core knowledge** – a minimum entitlement of factual and procedural knowledge and skills that all pupils will be required to know, grounded in the National Curriculum
- **Powerful knowledge** – the skills and knowledge that pupils need to build upon, challenge and contest core knowledge so they can expand beyond their own experiences and “*think the unthinkable and the not yet thought*” (Young).

**Offering new experiences** – broadening horizons and developing cultural capital through exposing pupils to the vast wealth of experiences in the wider global society: the arts, music, sport, science, technology, languages, leadership opportunities, extra-curricular pursuits and enrichment opportunities.

**Developing character** – enabling our pupils to develop the character values derived from our school motto: *Kind, Hard Working, Successful*.

**Identifying and addressing context specific need** – our pupils are unique and valued members of our community. As such they come with specific contextual needs which our curriculum will address:

- Our pupils are significantly less diverse than the national average and consequently are less exposed to the issues of multi-culturalism, diversity and inclusion in modern Britain
- We will increase pupils’ reading opportunities to recover literacy learning lost during the pandemic and remote learning (*DfE, Education Policy Institute and Renaissance Learning research*)
- We will address increasing issues of mental health exacerbated by the Covid pandemic.

**Learning is sequential** – learning is carefully planned and sequenced to:

- Teach key concepts first in any sequence of learning
- Incrementally build long-term knowledge reinforced through spaced recall and retrieval activities, particularly of key concepts
- Develop cross-curricula schema
- Prevent cognitive overload.



Our curriculum is based on 6 curriculum principles. The following tables explain for each curriculum principle what we have identified, why it is important and where each principle is being planned and/or implemented in General, and by Year Group(s) as necessary.

## Ambition

### In General

#### What?

All groups of pupils will have access to both academic and vocational programmes of study where challenge, achievement and progress are expected for all.

#### Why?

Our common curriculum at Key Stage 3 will be broad and balanced and enable all pupils to opt to study a combination of vocational and academic subjects, dependent on their interests and aspirations, at Key Stage 4 and on into the 6th Form or FE. Successful destinations for pupils take many forms, both traditional and modern, which our curriculum will enable, be those apprenticeships, further and higher education or employment with training.

### Year 7, 8 & 9

#### What?

A common curriculum at Key Stage 3 will be broad and balanced and based on the National Curriculum. All pupils will study English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, French or Spanish, PE, RS, Design, IT & Computing, Drama, Art, and Music.

#### Why?

The common Key Stage 3 curriculum will enable pupils to opt to study a combination of vocational and academic subjects, dependent on their interests and aspirations, at Key Stage 4. This will be possible because pupils will have experienced literature, the arts, sport and performing arts, science, technology, languages etc. Pupils have a right to experience and gain knowledge across this broad and balanced curriculum.

#### Where?

The Key Stage 3 curriculum, which model ensures all pupils study the same subjects with curriculum time carefully allocated to reflect the importance of the core subjects, and literacy, numeracy and scientific knowledge and enquiry.

## Ambition

### Year 10 & 11

#### What?

All pupils will study core subjects in English, Maths and Science. All pupils will access PE each week. The options subjects will offer a rich and broad pathway for pupils to choose from, with high quality academic and vocational courses accessible to reflect pupil strengths and interests. The Ebacc pathway will be available for all pupils to access as appropriate.

#### Why?

Whilst we have an ambition for pupils to access the Ebacc and maintaining a broad curriculum, as a school we will not mandate this as it may not be appropriate in reflecting the strengths or aspirations of the individual pupil. Breadth is maintained by ensuring pupils study a curriculum of English, Maths and Science, with at least 3 Ebacc subjects and 3 options available to reflect strengths, interests and aspirations.

#### Where?

The options choices process completed as pupils transition from Y9 into Y10 will enable the Ebacc to be studied whilst ensuring a minimum level of curriculum breadth.

### 6th Form

#### What?

In the 6th Form vocational and academic subjects will again be offered for all pupils to access. English and Maths is a necessary condition of funding and so all pupils not gaining a level 2 qualification at Key Stage 4 must continue to follow these subjects.

#### Why?

This reflects our aim to ensure pupils progress onto meaningful destinations, be that apprenticeships, higher education or employment with training. We also recognise that some pupils who did not achieve a broad range of level 2 qualifications at Key Stage 4 will need longer to achieve this in the 6th Form setting.

#### Where?

The options choices process completed as pupils transition from Y11 into Y12 enables pupils to pursue appropriate academic and vocational pathways at level 3 and, for some pupils, level 2.

## Knowledge and Skills

### In General

#### What?

**Key concepts** and skills are identified that enable equitable access to the full curriculum, both within and across subject areas. **Core knowledge** – a minimum entitlement of factual and procedural knowledge and skills that all pupils will be required to know, grounded in the National Curriculum.

**Powerful knowledge** – the skills and knowledge that pupils need in order to build upon, challenge and contest core knowledge so they can expand beyond their own experiences and *“think the unthinkable and the not yet thought”* (Young).

#### Why?

Within all subject domains there are foundational concepts and knowledge that pupils require in order to access the broader subject curriculum and other curriculum areas. In Maths for example, number place and value, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Without these key concepts the rest of the subject’s broader knowledge domain becomes inaccessible, so they are sequenced first within schemes of learning and curriculum plans. Core knowledge is embodied by the National Curriculum and the exam specifications. This sets out a minimum set of knowledge and skills etc. that all pupils are entitled to study and should master, especially at Key Stage 3. Powerful knowledge is linked to our context and Experiences curriculum. Leaders plan their curriculum to try and ensure pupils are exposed to and learn about knowledge they otherwise would not have access to, to learn about things that are, for many pupils, outside their daily experience.

#### Where?

The concepts and knowledge to be taught are identified and sequenced in subject curriculum plans.

## New Experiences

### In General

#### What?

Broadening horizons and developing cultural capital through exposing pupils to the vast wealth of experiences in the wider global society: the arts, music, sport, science, technology, languages, leadership opportunities, extra-curricular pursuits and enrichment opportunities.

#### Why?

Intertwined with Powerful Knowledge, is the fact that pupils come to us having experienced life from their unique and individual context. Some pupils will have encountered the works of Shakespeare, others will not; some will have been to the theatre, others will not; some will have had the opportunity to go abroad and experience a foreign language and culture in action, others will not. Building on the Powerful Knowledge taught in subject curricula, we have a responsibility to expose our pupils to the best that has been thought and said throughout human history and civilisation, and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity, culture and achievement. Our Experiences curriculum will ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to experience new things and to broaden their horizons.

#### Where?

The Experiences curriculum plans. Subjects also deliberately plan to broaden horizons in their subject curriculum and identify these in their subject curriculum plans.

## Developing Character

### In General

#### What?

Enabling our pupils to develop the character values derived from our school motto: *Kind, Hard Working, Successful* as part of the Ousedale Standard for Pupils.

#### Why?

Through consultation with our school community (pupils, staff and parents) we have arrived at these values and characteristics as being of paramount importance to our school. Consequently, our rewards and behaviour processes will actively promote, champion and reward pupils who demonstrate and embody these values, through certificates, assemblies, awards evenings, the badge system etc. Conversely, pupils who do not meet these values and breach them (impolite or abusive language, non-completion of work/homework etc.) will be sanctioned. Our school community will enjoy collective successes through being kind to ourselves and each other, and through hard work and endeavour.

#### Where?

The school rewards and behaviour system being consistently and overtly implemented throughout the school. Pupil voice will show our pupils are aware of our values and so engage in the rewards and behaviour systems.

## Context Specific Need

### In General

#### What?

Our pupils are unique and valued members of our community. As such they come with specific contextual needs which our curriculum will address:

- Our pupils are significantly less diverse than the national average and consequently are less exposed to the issues of multi-culturalism, diversity and inclusion in modern Britain
- We will increase pupils' reading opportunities to recover literacy learning lost during the pandemic and remote learning (DfE, Education Policy Institute and Renaissance Learning research)
- We will address increasing issues of mental health exacerbated by the Covid pandemic.

#### Why?

No two schools are the same, they reflect their community and the experiences of that community. There are also national challenges that all schools, communities and young people are experiencing at any given time. We have identified 3 aspects that we believe are significant to our context and have adapted our curriculum to improve knowledge, skills and outcomes in these areas.

#### Where?

PSHE curriculum plans, the Ousedale reading spine plan and literacy strategy, the staffing plan to recruit and provide counselling services for pupils.

# Learning is Sequential

## In General

### What?

Learning is carefully planned and sequenced to:

- Teach key concepts first in any sequence of learning
- Incrementally build long-term knowledge reinforced through spaced recall and retrieval activities, particularly of key concepts
- Develop cross-curricula schema
- Prevent cognitive overload.

### Why?

Research into cognitive science has shown how pupils learn best and what the significant barriers to learning are. Consequently, curricula are carefully planned and sequenced so that key concepts are taught first thus enabling the rest of the subject curriculum to be accessible. Deliberate opportunities for spaced recall and retrieval are planned to ensure pupils are 'not allowed to forget' what they have been taught, they are 'forced' to periodically recall previously taught knowledge and skills which helps to retain knowledge in long-term memory. Subject leaders are enabled through our meetings schedule to collaborate and plan for cross-curricula links as this again helps pupils to learn and commit knowledge to long-term memory, for example war-time poetry is more easily remembered if pupils are able to make links with their history curriculum. Curriculum plans also ensure that new knowledge and concepts are taught in manageable chunks to prevent cognitive overload i.e. research has shown that pupils cannot effectively process and learn material if too much of it is new and introduced at the same time.

### Where?

Subject curriculum plans are carefully crafted to maximise best learning practices and minimise barriers.



## Character Values - The Ousedale Standard for Pupils

The Ousedale Standard for Pupils sets out the *character* values which are central to our school community. They underpin our curriculum being derived from the school motto: *'Be Kind, Work Hard, Succeed Together.'* Our rewards and behaviour systems ensure the *character* values are developed, embedded and celebrated across the school.

Motto	Character Value	Definition - What it means for pupils to exemplify and display the Character Value
<b>Be Kind</b>	<b>Kindness</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We are kind, polite and considerate of the feelings and rights of other people.</li> <li>2. We act and speak toward each other respectfully.</li> <li>3. We look after ourselves, our wellbeing and others in our school community.</li> <li>4. We always take care of the school facilities and environment.</li> <li>5. We care for the wider natural environment. We recognise our role as custodians of our planet.</li> </ol>
<b>Work Hard</b>	<b>Hard Work</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We always try and give of our best knowing we could not have tried harder. Success is achieved when ambition meets hard work and effort.</li> <li>2. We do not settle for second best. We set and aim to achieve ambitious targets for ourselves, and to be the best in all we do.</li> <li>3. We do not give up when we encounter difficult challenges, we are resilient.</li> <li>4. As well as doing our best individually we work hard in partnership with others.</li> <li>5. We come to school ready to learn: we are punctual and always have our basic equipment.</li> </ol>
<b>Succeed Together</b>	<b>Success</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Success comes when we are kind and work hard.</li> <li>2. We are members of our school and wider community. We work together in partnership to achieve our personal goals and help others to achieve theirs.</li> <li>3. We lead when necessary, but always play our part in the team and community.</li> <li>4. We are rightly proud of our own achievements, but equally proud of the achievements of our peers.</li> <li>5. We celebrate success, we do not belittle others' achievements.</li> </ol>



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OPENING MINDS,  
OPENING DOORS

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