ARTS EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS
Curriculum Policy (Day School)

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1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

1.1 ArtsEd Independent School provides an exceptional education that combines academic excellence with outstanding vocational training in the performing arts – this is at the heart of the unique 'ArtsEd Curriculum'. We believe that intellectual curiosity, creativity, discipline and self-expression are essential in preparing young people for successful and fulfilling futures. Through a balanced and ambitious curriculum, pupils develop as confident, reflective, resilient and well-rounded individuals, ready for further study, training and future careers.

1.2 This is the Curriculum Policy for the Day School for years 7-11.

1.3 Pupils experience a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum that encompasses linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative learning. Through the ArtsEd Curriculum, Academic and vocational studies are carefully integrated to develop both specialist expertise and a breadth of knowledge. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all pupils, including those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

1.4 The ArtsEd Curriculum supports academic achievement, vocational excellence and personal development. Through subject teaching, vocational training, PSHE, enrichment opportunities and the wider life of the School, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and character needed to thrive as confident, responsible and engaged members of society.

1.5 The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and actively supports the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), Health Education and careers education form integral parts of the curriculum and contribute to pupils' wellbeing, future readiness and informed decision-making. Further information can be found in the School's RSHE and Careers Education Policies.

1.6 Enrichment is an integral part of the ArtsEd experience. Through curriculum design, departmental planning and regular curriculum review, pupils benefit from opportunities that extend learning beyond the classroom, deepen understanding and connect learning to real-world contexts.

1.7 The School regularly reviews and develops its curriculum to ensure it remains ambitious, relevant and responsive to pupils' needs, educational developments and the evolving performing arts sector. Consequently, curriculum provision may change from time to time in support of continuous improvement.

1.8 The School operates a two-week timetable. Minor annual adjustments may be made to reflect curriculum developments and staffing expertise. Significant changes will be communicated to parents through iSAMS.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

2.1 This policy reflects the requirements for independent schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the National Curriculum programmes of study which we have chosen to follow.

2.2 It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's guidance.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees provides strategic oversight of the curriculum and ensures that:

- The curriculum reflects the School's aims, values and educational vision.
- Pupils have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that combines academic and vocational excellence.
- Appropriate provision, support and challenge are available for all pupils.
- The curriculum promotes high standards of achievement, personal development and wellbeing.
- Effective arrangements are in place to monitor curriculum quality and outcomes.
- The School complies with relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Pupils have access to high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance.
- The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains relevant, inclusive and responsive to educational and industry developments.

3.2 HEADTEACHER

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- The curriculum reflects the School's aims, values and educational vision.
- The curriculum remains broad, balanced, ambitious and appropriate to the needs of all pupils.
- Sufficient time and resources are allocated to support high-quality academic and vocational provision.
- Effective arrangements are in place to monitor curriculum quality, pupil progress and personal development.
- Appropriate support and challenge are provided for all pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and EHCPs.
- Assessment supports pupils' learning and informs future curriculum development.
- Trustees receive appropriate information to fulfil their oversight responsibilities.
- Pupils have access to high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance.

3.3 DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

The Director of Studies provides strategic leadership of ArtsEd's academic provision across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. They are responsible for maintaining high academic standards and ensuring that the curriculum is ambitious, coherent and aligned with the school's educational vision.

The Director of Studies is responsible for:

- Providing strategic oversight of curriculum design, development and implementation across all key stages.
- Leading curriculum planning, including the development and review of curriculum blocks and pathways.
- Overseeing assessment, examinations, data analysis and the monitoring of student progress and outcomes.
- Ensuring the effective use of assessment data to inform curriculum development, intervention and school improvement priorities.
- Leading the options process and ensuring curriculum pathways meet the needs and aspirations of students.
- Holding overall responsibility for timetable construction and the effective organisation of academic provision.
- Aligning staffing resources with curriculum priorities and educational objectives.
- Monitoring academic standards and supporting departments to secure excellent student outcomes.
- Working closely with the Senior Leadership Team and subject leaders to ensure the curriculum remains broad, balanced, inclusive and fit for purpose.

3.4 SLT/PLANNING, APPRAISAL and DEVELOPMENT (PAD)

The Senior Leadership Team oversees Planning, Appraisal and Development (PAD) groups, each comprising an SLT member and a small number of subject leaders. Where possible, PAD groups include a balance of academic and vocational subjects to reflect the breadth of the ArtsEd Curriculum.

SLT responsibilities include:

- Supporting and challenging subject leaders to ensure high-quality curriculum design, implementation and impact.
- Monitoring curriculum quality, consistency and compliance across departments.
- Facilitating collaboration and the sharing of effective practice across subject areas.
- Overseeing professional development and performance review processes within their PAD groups.
- Ensuring curriculum provision aligns with the school's strategic aims and educational vision.

3.5 HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Planning, implementing and reviewing an ambitious and inclusive curriculum.
- Monitoring pupil progress, engagement and achievement within their subject areas.
- Identifying opportunities for enrichment and cross-curricular learning.
- Ensuring teaching, learning and assessment support all pupils to achieve their potential.

3.6 TEACHING STAFF

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Delivering the curriculum in accordance with this Policy.

- Maintaining high expectations for all pupils.
- Creating a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment.
- Supporting pupils' academic, vocational and personal development.

4. KEY STAGE 3 ACADEMIC CURRICULUM (YEARS 7 & 8)

4.1 In Years 7 and 8, pupils follow a broad, ambitious and balanced curriculum that provides a strong foundation in both academic and vocational learning. The academic curriculum includes English, Mathematics, Science, Modern Foreign Languages, Humanities, Creative Arts, PSHE and Study Skills. Through this programme, pupils develop secure disciplinary knowledge, literacy and numeracy skills, critical thinking, creativity and independence, preparing them for future academic study and lifelong learning.

4.2 As a specialist performing arts school, ArtsEd integrates high-quality vocational training alongside the academic curriculum. All pupils participate in daily training in the performing arts, developing technical proficiency, creativity, resilience, self-discipline and collaborative skills. In Years 7 and 8, pupils study a broad programme encompassing acting, dance, singing and music, whilst following either a Dance or Acting specialism. Opportunities for interdisciplinary learning ensure that pupils experience the breadth of the performing arts, including Musical Theatre, enabling dancers to engage with acting and actors to develop their dance training. This integrated approach supports pupils in becoming versatile performers while fostering transferable skills that enhance achievement across the curriculum. External examinations in both Dance and Drama are undertaken throughout Key Stage 3 (KS3).

4.3 The curriculum is designed to meet the needs, abilities and aspirations of all pupils. Appropriate support and challenge are provided to enable every pupil to make progress and experience success. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL), Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD), or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may access personalised support and curriculum adaptations where appropriate. Further information is provided in the School's SEND Policy.

4.4 Personal development is an integral part of the Key Stage 3 curriculum. Through PSHE, Relationships Education, citizenship, tutorial programmes and wider curriculum opportunities, pupils develop the knowledge, understanding and confidence needed to make informed decisions, maintain healthy relationships, contribute positively to society, and promote their physical and mental wellbeing. Themes relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are embedded throughout the curriculum and school life.

4.5 Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of future educational and career pathways from an early stage. Careers education is delivered through the curriculum, PSHE programme, enrichment opportunities and engagement with visiting speakers and industry professionals. Within ArtsEd's unique context, pupils gain insight into opportunities within the performing arts sector alongside a wide range of academic, professional and creative careers, supporting informed decision-making as they prepare for Key Stage 4 and beyond.

5. KEY STAGE 4 ACADEMIC CURRICULUM (YEARS 9, 10 & 11)

5.1 In Key Stage 4, pupils follow a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that supports strong academic achievement alongside specialist vocational training in the performing arts. All pupils study a core programme including English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science (Combined Science Trilogy), with opportunities for pupils to access pathways that provide appropriate support and challenge.

5.2 Alongside the core curriculum, pupils select 3 option subjects from a range of humanities, languages, creative arts and additional academic disciplines.

- During Year 8, pupils are supported in making informed GCSE option choices, enabling them to begin their Key Stage 4 courses from Year 9. This carefully planned approach reflects the distinctive nature of the ArtsEd curriculum, where pupils balance a rigorous academic programme with intensive vocational training in the performing arts. By extending GCSE study across three years, pupils have greater opportunity to secure and deepen their knowledge, develop confidence in their subjects, and engage in a broader and richer learning experience. The School has found that this model supports strong academic outcomes while allowing pupils to fully benefit from the breadth and demands of the ArtsEd educational offer.
- The School adopts a best-fit approach when constructing GCSE option blocks. Following the options process, pupil choices are carefully analysed and option blocks are designed to accommodate the greatest number of preferred subject combinations wherever possible. Whilst every effort is made to meet individual preferences, it is not always possible to satisfy every combination of choices due to timetabling, curriculum, staffing and class size considerations. The School therefore seeks to create option blocks that best reflect the preferences of the cohort as a whole, ensuring a broad, balanced and sustainable curriculum offer.
- Once option blocks have been finalised and pupils have commenced their GCSE courses in Year 9, they are expected to remain on their chosen programmes of study for the first two weeks of the academic year. This period allows pupils to settle into courses and make informed judgements about their suitability. Requests to change subjects will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will only be approved where there is agreement between the pupil, parents/carers and the relevant teaching staff. Any proposed change must also be educationally appropriate and compatible with timetabling and class capacity. As a result, it may not always be possible to accommodate requests for subject changes.

5.3 From Year 9, pupils pursue a vocational pathway in Acting, Dance or Musical Theatre, reflecting their interests, strengths and aspirations. The introduction of the Musical Theatre pathway at Year 9 allows pupils to undertake an integrated programme of acting, singing and dance training whilst maintaining the breadth and rigour of the ArtsEd curriculum.

5.4 All pupils also complete either GCSE Drama or GCSE Dance. Through this curriculum, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required for successful progression to Key Stage 5 and a wide range of future educational and career pathways.

5.5 Vocational training (see section 6 below) remains a central feature of the ArtsEd experience throughout Key Stage 4. Pupils continue to participate in high-quality specialist training that develops technical proficiency, creativity, communication, collaboration, resilience and professional practice. Opportunities for performance, creative exploration and cross-disciplinary learning enable pupils to deepen their expertise while continuing to develop the transferable skills that support success across both academic and vocational contexts. Pupils also undertake relevant external examinations and assessments as appropriate to their specialism.

5.6 Personal development is an integral part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum. Through the PSHE programme, tutorial provision and wider school experiences, pupils are encouraged to develop confidence, independence, self-awareness and responsible decision-making. The curriculum supports pupils' physical and mental wellbeing, promotes respect for others and prepares them to contribute positively to society. Themes relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are embedded throughout the curriculum and wider life of the School.

5.7 Careers education, information, advice and guidance form an important part of pupils' preparation for life beyond Key Stage 4. Pupils are supported in exploring a broad range of post-16 pathways, including A Levels, vocational qualifications, specialist performing arts training and other progression routes. Through curriculum activities, individual guidance, mentoring, industry engagement and encounters with employers and education providers, pupils are supported to make informed decisions about their future aspirations and next steps.

5.8 During Year 10 and Year 11, pupils receive increasingly personalised guidance to support progression planning, applications, auditions and transition to their chosen post-16 destination. This process is designed to ensure that every pupil is well prepared for the next stage of their education and development.

5.9 Please refer to the Sixth Form Curriculum Policy for a detailed overview of the Curriculum Offer in Key Stage 5.

6. KEY STAGE 3 AND 4 VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS

- A defining feature of an ArtsEd education is the integration of specialist vocational training alongside a broad and ambitious academic curriculum. From Year 7, all pupils participate in a core performing arts programme encompassing acting, dance, singing and music, whilst following either an Acting or Dance pathway. As pupils progress into Key Stage 4, opportunities for greater specialisation become available, including the option to follow a Musical Theatre pathway.
- The vocational curriculum is designed to nurture artistic excellence whilst supporting pupils' personal, creative and intellectual development. Training encourages pupils to develop technical proficiency, creativity, resilience, discipline and collaborative skills within an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

- Through shared learning experiences and cross-disciplinary opportunities, pupils develop an appreciation of the interconnected nature of the performing arts. This approach fosters a strong sense of community, mutual respect and collective responsibility, while ensuring that pupils are able to learn from and contribute to the wider ArtsEd community.
- All vocational pathways provide pupils with opportunities to develop as reflective practitioners who demonstrate professionalism, curiosity and a commitment to continuous improvement. The curriculum encourages pupils to take creative risks, engage thoughtfully with feedback and develop the confidence to communicate ideas, solve problems and perform with authenticity and integrity.
- Information on each vocational pathway is outlined below, with further detail provided within the relevant Curriculum Offer sections.

6.1 THE ACTING COURSE

Philosophy and Rationale

- Acting is a discipline that develops creativity, communication, critical thinking and self-expression. Whilst it provides an excellent foundation for pupils who may wish to pursue further study or careers in the performing arts, its educational value extends far beyond vocational aspirations. The course equips pupils with the confidence, adaptability and interpersonal skills required to thrive in a rapidly changing world.
- Through practical exploration, performance and critical study, pupils learn to create, interpret and communicate meaning. They are encouraged to think imaginatively, work collaboratively and engage courageously with new ideas, developing independence as learners while contributing positively to ensemble work. Pupils learn that excellence is achieved through commitment, reflection, perseverance and respect for others.
- The study of acting enables pupils to explore a diverse range of texts, practitioners, traditions and perspectives. Through this work, they gain a deeper understanding of social, cultural and historical contexts, whilst developing the ability to analyse, interpret and respond thoughtfully to the experiences and viewpoints of others.
- Acting plays an important role in supporting pupils' personal development. By engaging with character, narrative and performance, pupils develop empathy, emotional literacy, self-awareness and confidence. They learn to communicate effectively, collaborate responsibly and act with integrity, preparing them for future study, employment and active participation in society.
- The Acting Course reflects ArtsEd's commitment to high standards, inclusivity and opportunity for all. Pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves creatively, embrace constructive feedback and develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to fulfil their individual potential both on and off the stage.
- While the Acting Course provides an excellent foundation for those considering careers in the performing arts, its impact reaches well beyond the stage. Pupils develop the confidence to express their ideas with clarity and conviction, the empathy to understand different perspectives, and the resilience to respond

positively to challenge and change. Through regular opportunities to present, collaborate, negotiate and lead, pupils cultivate the interpersonal and oracy skills that support success across a wide range of professional fields. As a result, pupils leave the course not only as stronger performers, but as articulate, reflective and engaged young people who are well prepared for future study, employment and active participation in society.

6.2 THE DANCE COURSE

Philosophy and Rationale

- The Dance course provides pupils with a holistic and forward-looking education, developing the technical proficiency, artistic understanding and creative confidence required to thrive within the evolving world of dance. The curriculum is designed to nurture versatile, adaptable and expressive performers, equipping pupils with the skills, knowledge and experience needed for further training, performance opportunities and careers within the creative industries. Through engagement with a broad range of dance styles, including Classical Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary, Tap, Modern and Commercial Dance, pupils develop a strong and diverse technical foundation whilst cultivating their individual artistic voice.
- The dynamic and rigorous nature of dance training fosters a range of highly valued transferable skills that extend far beyond the studio. Pupils develop resilience, self-discipline, organisation, collaboration and reflective practice, alongside the confidence to respond positively to challenge and feedback. They learn to manage their time effectively, work towards shared goals, communicate professionally and demonstrate commitment and responsibility in their learning. These attributes support future success not only within the performing arts sector but also across a wide range of educational and professional pathways.
- Throughout their time at the School, pupils engage critically with dance as an art form through regular theatre visits, live performance experiences, digital content and performance analysis. These opportunities enable them to become informed, perceptive audiences and thoughtful practitioners who can evaluate both their own work and that of others with insight, curiosity and independence. Choreographic projects further develop these skills by encouraging pupils to explore social, cultural and ethical themes, using movement as a means of creative inquiry, communication and self-expression.
- The Dance course aims to provide a safe, inclusive and inspiring environment in which every pupil feels valued and empowered to develop artistically, creatively and personally. Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate courage in their creative decision-making, embrace new perspectives and contribute positively to the learning of others. Through a culture of high expectations, mutual respect and support, pupils develop a strong sense of belonging and responsibility to their wider community.
- In an increasingly interconnected and rapidly changing world, the course equips pupils with the creativity, adaptability, cultural awareness and interpersonal skills needed to engage confidently with both the performing arts sector and wider society. Pupils leave the course as reflective, collaborative and self-aware

individuals, prepared to pursue their chosen pathways with confidence, integrity and a commitment to lifelong learning.

6.3 THE MUSICAL THEATRE COURSE

Philosophy and Rationale

- In Year 9, pupils may continue within their chosen Acting or Dance pathway, or audition for admission to the Musical Theatre pathway. Pupils specialising in Musical Theatre undertake an integrated programme of study that combines singing technique, vocal ensemble work, acting, ballet, jazz and tap, alongside performance workshops that bring together all three disciplines. This broad and rigorous training equips pupils with the versatility required of contemporary musical theatre performers whilst supporting their development as creative and reflective artists.
- The Musical Theatre course provides pupils with a holistic and ambitious education, developing the technical, artistic and interpretative skills required to succeed within this dynamic and evolving discipline. Through sustained training across acting, singing and dance, pupils learn to communicate meaning through performance, develop their individual artistic voice and cultivate the adaptability needed to respond successfully to a wide range of creative challenges.
- The interdisciplinary nature of Musical Theatre encourages pupils to make meaningful connections between different performance disciplines, fostering creativity, curiosity and collaborative learning. Pupils are encouraged to take creative risks, explore new ideas and engage confidently with diverse styles, genres and performance traditions. Through rehearsal and performance, they develop an understanding of the commitment, discipline and professionalism required to achieve excellence within the performing arts.
- Alongside technical and artistic development, the course nurtures a wide range of transferable skills that support success both within and beyond the performing arts sector. Pupils develop resilience, self-discipline, organisation, communication, leadership and teamwork through collaborative creative processes. They learn to work effectively with others, respond constructively to feedback and demonstrate responsibility for their own progress and contribution to the wider ensemble.
- Through practical performance, performance analysis and engagement with professional work, pupils develop as thoughtful practitioners and informed audiences. Opportunities to evaluate performances, reflect on their learning and consider a diverse range of artistic perspectives encourage critical thinking, cultural awareness and independent enquiry. These experiences help pupils to understand the role of the performing arts in reflecting and shaping society.
- The Musical Theatre course aims to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which all pupils feel valued and empowered to fulfil their potential. Pupils are encouraged to develop confidence in their abilities, respect for others and a strong sense of belonging within the ArtsEd community. Through shared creative experiences, they learn the importance of empathy, integrity and collective responsibility in achieving shared artistic goals.

- While the course provides an excellent foundation for further training and progression within Musical Theatre and the wider performing arts industry, its educational value extends far beyond vocational preparation. Pupils develop strong communication and oracy skills, confidence in presenting to different audiences, adaptability, problem-solving skills and emotional intelligence. As a result, they are well prepared for a wide range of future pathways, equipped to contribute positively and confidently in higher education, employment and wider society.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.1 The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Trustees work collaboratively to ensure that the curriculum remains broad, balanced, ambitious and appropriate to the needs of ArtsEd pupils. Curriculum provision is regularly reviewed through departmental self-evaluation, curriculum mapping, assessment and outcomes data, pupil voice, lesson visits, and ongoing quality assurance activities.

7.2 Heads of Department are responsible for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of their curriculum areas through regular review and evaluation processes. Opportunities for curriculum enrichment, inclusion, personal development and progression are considered through departmental meetings and curriculum reviews to ensure that the curriculum continues to meet the needs and aspirations of all pupils.

7.3 Trustees receive regular reports on curriculum provision, pupil outcomes, personal development and strategic priorities, enabling them to provide appropriate oversight and challenge in support of the School's educational aims and values.

8. REVIEW

8.1 This Policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team and submitted to the Trustees for approval.

8.2 The Policy may be reviewed earlier in response to changes in legislation, regulatory requirements, inspection frameworks, or significant developments in the School's curriculum provision.

9. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

9.1 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**: explains how the School promotes pupil safety, wellbeing and preparedness for life beyond school.
- **Sixth Form Curriculum Policy**: explains the ArtsEd offer for Years 12 and 13
- **Teaching and Learning Policy**: sets out the School's approach to high-quality teaching, learning and curriculum delivery.
- **Assessment and Examinations Policy**: outlines the principles and procedures for assessment, feedback, recording, reporting and public examinations.
- **SEND Policy**: details the School's arrangements for identifying, supporting and monitoring pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

- **PSHE and RSHE Policy**: outlines the provision for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, Relationships, Sex and Health Education, and pupils' personal development. Including the School's provision for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG).
- Equality Information and Objectives: sets out the School's commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and equitable access to educational opportunities for all pupils.

10. LINKS TO DEPARMENTAL CURRICULUM MAPS

(hyperlinks to follow)

1. Drama
2. Dance
3. Musical Theatre
4. English
5. Mathematics
6. Science
7. History
8. Geography
9. MFL
10. Visual Arts
11. Music
12. Film Studies
13. Classical Civilisation
14. Statistics