



Ark Victoria
Academy

**Y11 Alternative curriculum
information booklet
November 2020**



Ambitious, Resilient, Kind

Contents

1. Why are we offering this alternative curriculum?
2. Year 11 offer
3. Functional skills – what is this qualification?
4. Functional Skills Maths
5. Functional Skills English
6. Frequently asked questions

Why are we offering an alternative curriculum?

All students can thrive when the correct support and educational provisions are provided. With the right processes and systems in place, pupils are able to achieve their potential by attending university, completing an FE/HE course, getting paid employment and living more independently. On top of this, there is a legal obligation to provide education for a child, regardless of their needs in the UK.

One principle that underpins our alternative curriculum is ‘the need to support the child or young person, and the child’s parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.’ SEND Code of Practice (January 2015). Pupils with additional needs may need extra help or support, to allow them to have the same opportunities as others of the same age.

Therefore, to meet the diverse educational needs of pupils here at Ark Victoria, we want to offer a range of core and vocational subjects. We want our provision to be specifically built to offer a safe and empathetic place for pupils to learn. We will focus on academia as well as more improving independence, employability and life skills.

When pupils embark on this alternative curriculum we are committed to building the confidence, enthusiasm and employability skills that they will need to continue in education, employment or training when they leave Ark Victoria. In line with our high expectations, the pupils experience a broad, bespoke curriculum that suits their individual needs and enhances their life chances.

Curriculum

As an Ark Academy, we have a lot of flexibility with our curriculum – the subjects, learning methods, levels of study and qualifications that students pursue.

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, which emphasises the importance of intellectual study and focuses on traditional learning. We believe that this is the best way to equip our pupils for university, the professions and success in the career of their choice. We are determined that our students will compete on equal terms with students coming from the most privileged backgrounds, in an ever competitive global community so we have provided an academic and creative curriculum that gives your child the best possible chance to succeed.

Year 11 offer

In Year 11, your child will continue to study:

- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Maths
- GCSE Combined Science
- Core Physical Education
- Their 3 current Options

In addition to this your child will **also study Functional Skills L1/L2 in Maths and English.**
The Exam board is Edexcel.

Functional Skills – what is this qualification?

Functional Skills qualifications provide reliable evidence of a learner’s achievements against demanding content that is relevant to the workplace. The qualifications assess learners’ underpinning subject knowledge and their ability to apply this knowledge to different contexts. They provide a foundation for progression to employment and further technical education, and they help learners to develop skills for everyday life. In some contexts, Functional Skills qualifications will also play a part in the government’s accountability systems. Functional Skills qualifications are based on Department for Education (DfE) approved subject content and are regulated by Ofqual.

With employers in mind, reformed English and maths qualifications have been designed to better equip individuals with the skills required to succeed in the workplace. They have introduced more of a focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar without dictionaries, using times tables and working with and without a calculator. These changes will empower learners to use English and maths more confidently in the workplace. Functional Skills often contextualise maths and English which helps learners apply these skills in real life work settings.

Functional Skills level 2 qualifications are at the same level as a grade 4 or C and above at GCSE. Opening up job opportunities to individuals with a Functional Skills level 2 as well as GCSEs means that employers can widen their pool of applicants and increase their options.

You can read more about this qualification here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/functional-skills-qualifications>

Maths Level 1 Functional Skills:

Reference:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Functional-skills/Mathematics/2019/specification-and-sample-assessments/pearson-edexcel-functional-skills-in-maths-spec-l1-l2.pdf>

The Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics at Level 1 consists of one externally assessed assessment. Each assessment comprises two sections – a non-calculator section (calculator prohibited) and a calculator section (calculator permitted). The assessments are available as paper-based and onscreen, on-demand assessment.

| Assessment structure | Duration | Number of marks | Percentage of qualification |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Section A: Non-calculator | 25 minutes | 14 | 25% |
| Section B: Calculator | 1 hour 30 minutes | 42 | 75% |
| Content areas | | | |
| Using numbers and the number system – whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages | | | |
| Using common measures, shapes and space | | | |
| Handling information and data | | | |

Maths Level 2 Functional Skills:

The Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics at Level 2 consists of one externally assessed assessment. Each assessment comprises two sections – a non-calculator section (calculator prohibited) and a calculator section (calculator permitted). The assessments are available as paper-based and onscreen, on-demand assessment.

| Assessment structure | Duration | Number of marks | Percentage of qualification |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Section A: Non-calculator | 25 minutes | 16 | 25% |
| Section B: Calculator | 1 hour 30 minutes | 48 | 75% |
| Content areas | | | |
| Using numbers and the number system – whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages | | | |
| Using common measures, shapes and space | | | |
| Handling information and data | | | |

English Level 1 Functional Skills:

Reference:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Functional-skills/English/2019/specification-and-sample-assessments/pearson-edexcel-functional-skills-in-english-spec-l1-l2.pdf>

The Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills Qualification in English at Level 1 consists of one internally-set and internally-marked Speaking, listening and communicating assessment, one externally-assessed Reading assessment and one externally assessed Writing assessment. They are available as paper-based and onscreen, on-demand assessments.

| Assessment structure | Duration | Number of marks |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|
| Speaking, listening and communicating is assessed through one 3-minute talk and linked question and answer session per learner in groups of three to four and one 10-minute formal discussion together in groups of three to five learners. | 10-20 minutes in total | n/a |
| | 10 minutes | |
| Reading is assessed through a test comprised of controlled response and open response questions. | 60 minutes | 30 |
| Writing is assessed through a test comprised of two tasks. (42% of marks assesses spelling, punctuation and grammar) | 60 minutes | 36 |
| Content areas | | |
| Speaking, listening and communicating | | |
| Reading | | |
| Writing | | |

English Level 2 Functional Skills:

The Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills Qualification in English at Level 2 consists of one internally-set and internally-marked Speaking, listening and communicating assessment, one externally-assessed Reading assessment and one externally assessed Writing assessment. They are available as paper-based and onscreen, on-demand assessments.

| Assessment structure | Duration | Number of marks |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Speaking, listening and communicating is assessed through one 5-minute presentation and linked question and answer session in groups of three to four and one 15-minute formal discussion together in groups of three to five learners. | Up to 25 minutes in total | n/a |
| | 15 minutes | |
| Reading is assessed through a test comprised of multiple choice, short open response and medium open response questions. | 75 minutes | 35 |
| Writing is assessed through a test comprised of two tasks. (42% of marks assesses spelling, punctuation and grammar) | 60 minutes | 36 |
| Content areas | | |
| Speaking, listening and communicating | | |
| Reading | | |
| Writing | | |

Frequently asked questions

You will undoubtedly have many questions regarding Functional Skills. The answers below may help with some of your questions.

Is my child still sitting their GCSE exams for Maths, English and Science?

Yes, your child will sit exams for these subjects.

Is my child still sitting exams for their option subjects like I-Media, GCSE Geography, GCSE History, GCSE RS, GCSE Art and GCSE Drama?

Yes, your child will sit exams for these subjects.

Why is my child sitting Functional Skills?

Functional skills are designed to give pupils the basic knowledge they need to do well work. Just as importantly, they help you develop the ability to apply this knowledge in real-life situations.

Are their exams in Functional Skills?

All assessments will take place on the computer in exam conditions. Once the online assessment has taken place, the pupil will be presented with either a pass or a fail.

When do the Functional Skills exam take place?

The online exam can take place anytime throughout the year. Our aim is that pupils will sit their Level 1 Functional Skills exam in the spring term 2021.

Are Functional Skills equivalent to a GCSE?

Functional Skills level 2 qualifications are at the same level as a grade 4 and above at GCSE.

What exam board is the Functional Skills qualification?

The exam board that we have chosen is Edexcel.

If you have any further questions, then please ask for Mr M Nandi, Assistant Headteacher, or Miss N McPhilimey, SENDCo.