

**The Edge Academy Curriculum –
SAFE, READY, RESPECTFUL**

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we return after our first successful half-term of this academic year, it is a good time to update you all on some of our current developments, in particular our work on clearly defining what our aims as a school are for the students and families we serve.

I would welcome from parents/carers any feedback, comments or suggestions to the proposed school vision statement and the Edge Pledge below before we publish our finalised versions. I am open to discuss or consider all contributions from parents/carers via telephone on the school number, by email adam.smith@theedgeacademy.co.uk or in person by calling in to school to speak with me at the start or end of the school day.

I would therefore like to take the opportunity to share with you our newly developed proposed school vision and principles statement:

The Edge Academy Alternative Provision aims to be a welcoming, stable and friendly place for our students. We aim to provide the best possible environment for students to learn and develop with an understanding of the world around them. Together, we strive to bring the best out of our students, ensuring that they maximise their potential and are prepared as fully as possible for reintegration to mainstream education or for progress to further learning and life – be that post-16 study, employment or training.

Our aim is to offer what our students need to help them make the most of their potential. This requires a highly flexible approach, specialised skills and lots of experience in working with young people with additional needs.

Our challenge and motivation is to be the best Alternative Provision in Birmingham.

Whilst mainstream schools are incredible forces for good in society, helping to socialise, educate and engage the next generation, the journey through mainstream education, for some youngsters, is not a smooth one. For some students, success in the education system means we have to offer something different. At the Edge Academy we challenge students to take **SAFE** responsibility, modify their behaviour, improve attitudes to school life and make academic progress across the range and breadth of curriculum opportunities available. In addition to classroom-based learning, students are provided with enrichment opportunities throughout the academic year.

We respect that all our young people are individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds and life-experiences. We passionately believe that by assisting them to overcome their personal barriers they should be entitled and **READY** to access the full-range of opportunities available in society.

One of our core values is to place children and families first. At the Edge our families get to know the teams who support their child well and are actively supported to work in partnership with professionals. Right from the start we make sure that we are **RESPECTFUL** to spend time listening to our young people and their families to find out as much as we can, as together we develop the start of their Edge learning journey. We continually develop and adapt our support for each family, so that whilst caring for their children, we also acknowledge our responsibility to listen to and understand the needs and priorities of parents and carers.

In order to achieve the environment described above we as a school make a commitment to you in what we have titled '**The Edge Pledge**'

We WILL support students to be:

- **SAFE** – to make positive choices to keep themselves and others safe.

- **READY** – *to succeed in the world beyond school.*
- **RESPECTFUL** – *to treat and value others as equal individuals.*

We WILL ensure our students are successful by:

1. Understanding their individual social, emotional and behavioural needs, focusing on their happiness and safety by nurturing their self-esteem.
2. Teaching the importance of respecting and valuing other people and their environment.
3. Seizing opportunities within and beyond the national curriculum to support learning and enhance development.

We WILL bring the best out of our students by:

1. Helping them fulfil academic potential by re-engaging them in learning.
2. Enabling each of them to understand and adopt a healthy, active and environmentally friendly lifestyle.
3. Listening and responding flexibly so each individual can achieve their potential.

To support the redefined Edge vision and principles we are also working very hard to improve our curriculum offer to all students to offer breadth, depth and extended learning and enrichment opportunities. Our curriculum aims can be best summarised in the model below;



Together we can help shape the future direction and provision of the Edge Academy to be an even better place for its valuable young people. Please note: a more detailed curriculum document outlining our full proposed core curriculum outline can be found at the bottom of this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Adam Smith

Vice Principal

| <i>Our Core Purpose</i> | | <i>The Edge Curriculum INTENT</i> |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Safe | Harm Prevention  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Careful analysis of our locality, its risks to young people and the response to patterns and emerging trends identified through careful monitoring of safeguarding concerns data. ❑ The role and continual review of the safeguarding curriculum at the Edge comprising of Lifeskills (PSHE), daily tutor time programme, weekly assembly schedule, programme of visiting external delivery, themed days/events, awareness day's events to include specifically the teaching online safety in schools and Sex and Relationships education (compulsory from 2020). |
| | Risk Taking  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Positive mindset development and the nurturing of calculated positive risk taking is crucial to developing a high challenge, low threat environment where all young people feel secure learners. ❑ The importance of challenging aspirations and realistic CEIAG are crucial tools to engagement of the wider academic offer at the Edge. This is achieved through the central offer of work-related learning opportunities to all students and immersion in post-16 learning provision events and independent guidance. |
| | Positive Welfare  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The preparation of our young people to manage as adults with post-school stress and demands to support young people's mental health. The acknowledgment of relatively low-starting points of individual resilience from education experiences and the planned provision for opportunities to be successful. ❑ The role and continual review of the safeguarding curriculum at the Edge comprising of Lifeskills (PSHE), daily tutor time programme, weekly assembly schedule, programme of visiting external delivery, themed days/events, awareness days and events to include specifically the teaching online safety in schools and Sex and Relationships education (compulsory from 2020). |

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| Ready | Knowledge and Skills  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Equipping our young people to have experienced threshold concepts, subject specific enrichment and key knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy by the time they leave our school. <input type="checkbox"/> An environment that cultivates the individual growth of identified knowledge and skills and through informed planning and the opportunities to apply the acquired knowledge and skills. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring that there is depth and breadth in the Edge curriculum offer across key stages and subject sequencing to certify that we are ‘spiralling’ knowledge and skill across the years, in order to support progression. <input type="checkbox"/> An effective and inspiring experience of CEIAG provision drawing on a broad diet of post-16 learner pathways, providers, effective bespoke guidance and a core offer of work related learning opportunities for all. |
| | Assessment  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rigorous review and professional reflection to challenge why are we assessing young people and for what purpose to measure against realistic targets. <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability at classroom and subject levels for how do you use the assessment, what methods do we use to assess, how assessments are linked to personal improvement feedback and then subsequently how do such assessments impact on future teaching and learning. |
| | Progression  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Harnessing and building real value in the significant underpinning factors of literacy and reading to all progression and sequencing this as a core value of our provision. <input type="checkbox"/> Creating and sharing information to inform teachers and students themselves to know that progress is taking place for all learners in all subjects <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition and acknowledgement that progress may not be the same for all abilities and groups but is supportive a truly individualised pathway to achievement built on the concept of equity. Where FAIR does not mean everyone gets the same thing, but FAIR at the Edge means everyone gets what they need to be successful in the classroom. |
| | Cultural Capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Edge Pledge – <i>experience is not less, it is more. Education is bigger than schooling.</i> The promise to deliver or provide that is focussed, definite and our guarantee. <input type="checkbox"/> Strategically mapped and sequenced model of educational of visits in response to student council input and identified gaps in individuals’ life experiences. Central to this is the evolution to offer a high-quality two-hour enrichment session every Friday afternoon featuring a variety of “small group” on-site and off-site activities to support the holistic curriculum offer. |

Respectful



- Planning and provision in all our subject areas and from all adult roles to enhance the life experience and opportunities for our young people.
- The high-profile celebration for our young people of their local area, heritage and identity and to embrace and recognise what does it mean to be a 'Brummie'.

Tolerance & Equity



- Teaching kindness and compassion at The Edge, not only fosters the positive behaviour that creates warm and inclusive school environments, but helps children feel that they belong, leading to reduced bullying.
- Collaborative mapped provision with other agencies and voluntary organisations to enhance community cohesion.
- Recognition of the value of family learning opportunities and embracing individual differences through culture and faith.
- Fostering empathy to build trust, with trust comes respect. There is genuine power in kindness, compassion and patience. For many learners, kindness may be the one true trait that they look for in a teacher.

Kindness



- A fundamental kindness-based programme in school that embeds a discrete culture of kindness in an environment where kindness has not necessarily been seen, modelled or experienced. Our mantra of being '**relentlessly reasonable**' attempts to harness that;
 - Feelings of joyfulness are contagious, encouraging more kind behaviour by the giver and recipient.
 - Research has determined that kindness increases our ability to form meaningful connections with others and even small acts of kindness are reported to heighten our sense of wellbeing, increase energy and give a wonderful feeling of optimism and self-worth.
 - Our young people being part of projects that help others, provides them with a real sense of perspective and helps them appreciate the things in their own lives reinforcing that kindness is a key ingredient that helps children feel good.