

ASPIRE

PROGRAMME

NORTHGATE SIXTH FORM



Aspire Programme

For the Sixth Form

2024-2025

The Aspire Programme

Places at universities, on degree apprenticeship programmes and in the workplace are increasingly competitive. It is therefore important that young people gain the knowledge, skills and experiences that they need to thrive and be successful in life.

What is the Aspire Programme?

The Aspire Programme provides students with opportunities to take part in a number of varied activities throughout Year 12 to help equip and support you to realise your ambitions with regards to moving on at the end of your time at Northgate Sixth Form. Whether you are thinking of university, an apprenticeship or entering the workforce, this programme will help prepare you for your next steps.

Each session will have a different theme. You will attend a structured session introducing that theme and then be set a series of challenges to complete which are linked to that theme. There will be remote learning opportunities to support you in completing the challenges, made available in Teams and Stream, and you will come back together as a group to showcase the skills that you have developed. At the end of the academic year our celebration event will recognise the achievements and accomplishments of every single student who has taken part in the Aspire Programme.

The Aspire Programme will allow you to develop your skills in the following areas:

2nd December 2024	Theme 1	Introduction to Programme Career Roadmaps and Marginal Gains
12th December 2024	Theme 2	Motivation, Goalsetting, Time Management and Study Skills
20th January 2025	Theme 3	Written Communication (Personal Statement focus)
17th March 2025	Theme 3	Written Communication (CV focus)
10th February 2025	Theme 4	Debating and Structured Argument
24th February 2025	Theme 4	Debating and Structured Argument
28th April 2025	Theme 5	Interviews and Presentation Skills
12th May 2025	Theme 5	Mock Interviews
2nd June 2025	Theme 6	Teamwork and Leadership
July 2025		Celebration Event

Theme 1 – Introduction to Programme: Career Roadmaps and Marginal Gains

Here you will gain an understanding of how the Aspire Programme will be delivered as part of your timetabled Enrichment activities. Sessions are scheduled in your non-contact periods and your attendance will be required at each session.

You will begin by listening to the career pathways that some of our Alumni, and other local people, have taken and begin to see how, although qualifications will always be important, a number of other factors will greatly influence the career opportunities that you have.

Marginal Gains

Jeremy Dry, a former BBC journalist, will then get you to focus on the importance of becoming an independent learner and talk about the concept of ‘**marginal gains**’ – the idea that many small improvements in your study habits will compound over time and result in a significant overall improvement.

Challenge 1

Consider your own career roadmap, what does this currently look like and where may some of the paths take you? Draw your own road map to depict where you currently are and what the future may look like for you.

You also need to decide on what changes you are going to make in order to benefit from those ‘marginal gains’.

Theme 2 – Motivation, Goalsetting, Time Management and Study Skills

This session focuses on **motivation** and **goal setting**, and also looks at the importance of not fearing failure and considering it an essential part of the learning process.

Looking at **time management** and **stress**, you will learn how to manage your time effectively, which is a crucial skill, and also talk about the positive effect that the ‘right’ level of stress has on our performance. You will consider the importance of keeping things in perspective, what our ‘triggers’ are, how you should deal with them and also when to seek help.

Finally, we focus on **effective study skills** and exam technique. and exam technique. You will unpack a range of strategies that have been proven to be far more effective than others which are much more commonly used by students. You will look at Retrieval Practice, Active Recall, Spaced Learning and more! You also look ahead to preparation for exams.

Theme 3 – Written Communication

Good writing skills are an important part of communication and developing strong written communication skills enables you to get your ideas across effectively. Good **written communication** skills are necessary at every stage of your learning and in your career – whether it is for the UCAS personal statement as part of your university application, as a job seeker or in the workplace. The better your writing skills are, the better the impression you’ll make.

You will have the opportunity to look at the requirements of the UCAS personal statement for university applications and also learn how to write a CV. You will produce a draft of your personal statement and an up-to-date CV.

Theme 4 – Debating and Structured Argument

Good **debating skills** will help you for the rest of your life. Debating helps you to develop your critical thinking skills and allows you to practice making well thought out and reasoned arguments. It allows you to research

and question a range of evidence available on a particular topic and question the thoughts and opinions that you, and others, hold. This will help you to build the confidence to stand up for your beliefs and construct sustained and convincing arguments. You will develop techniques that help you with persuasive argument, public speaking skills, teamwork and collaboration, active listening and structured thinking under pressure.

Whether you are thinking about going onto university or out into the workplace on leaving Sixth Form, being able to confidently debate, listen and respond to a range of issues is an important skill to have. You will have the opportunity to take part in a debate with other members of your group.

Theme 5 – Interview and Presentation Skills

Interview skills are an essential tool for all young people as today's world of university places and employment is increasingly competitive. Universities and hiring managers decide who to employ based on interviews and you need to be able to persuade a prospective university or employer to offer you that place or that job. Interviewing skills are so important – they are crucial in giving you that edge to make you stand out ahead of other applicants

Presenting skills are a valuable life skill which will help you further your education and will also help you in your future career. Effective presentation skills are important because they help keep a presentation interesting, motivate the audience to listen and allow the presenter to communicate with confidence.

Presentation and public speaking skills are 'learnt' skills and by working hard at these skills everyone is capable of learning to present with clarity and confidence. You will have the opportunity to take part in interview role plays and give a presentation on a topic of your choice to the group

Theme 6 – Teamwork and Leadership Skills

Teamwork is a skill that everyone needs to have in the workplace and candidates with strong teamworking skills are sought by employers for many reasons. If you want to work well with your peers and colleagues you will need to learn how to work together with a range of people to complete tasks set.

Leadership is perhaps the most important function of management. By developing good leadership skills, this will help you in achieving your goals. There are a number of broad skill areas that are important for good leaders to develop and this session will allow you to explore some of these skill areas further.

You will take part in a series of practical challenges to allow you to develop your teamwork and leadership skills.

We're looking forward to getting started!

The Aspire Programme will assist you in acquiring the range of skills that universities and employers are looking for in young people, which will help set you apart from others in an increasingly competitive world. Embrace the opportunities that you will have on this programme and develop the skills that you need to succeed with your future plans.

Further information?

For further information about the Aspire Programme and any of the themes and challenges involved, speak to Mrs Calder in Careers – vcaldern@northgate.suffolk.sch.uk.

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