

Curriculum Policy

September 2020

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Associated documents:	
Homework Procedure Teaching and Learning Guide CSI Guide CEIAG & Skills for Life Programme People Development Guide Curriculum Leaders Handbook Assessment & Reporting Procedure	
Links to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, Recording, Reporting and Exams Policy • SEND Policy • Equalities Policy • Behaviour (including Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions) • Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy (secondary) • Pupil Premium Policy • CEIAG Policy 	

Our Vision

We have one core purpose:

To have the biggest positive impact in the varied communities we serve through ensuring top drawer education for our learners. #TransformingLives

How do we ensure this across our trust?

In all we do we are:

1. Ethical to the core, ensuring that education is always front and centre
2. Futures focused system leaders – never simply followers
3. Collaborative in every endeavour
4. Resolutely learner centred.

What does this look like across our trust?

Education

We are:

1. Ruthlessly ambitious for all who learn and work with us
2. Unwaveringly inclusive – determined on eradicating barriers to educational success
3. Committed to excellent teaching
4. Determined upon academic excellence for all in our communities
5. Compassionate, ethical and caring advocates for all in our communities
6. Outwardly facing and globally conscious

Operations

We are:

1. Committed to the very best people development and empowerment
2. Determined to shout loudly and share proudly our successes
3. The best professional and technical experts (supporting education) in the sector
4. Committed to the very best understanding and management of risk

Financial

We are:

1. Providing the best possible public service for the best possible value
2. Determined to supplement our public income with shrewd income generation
3. Building financially sustainable models of educational improvement in our communities
4. Demonstrably efficient in all we do

Our values

- We will work inclusively within our communities, embracing the varied localities we serve while sharing our common vision and values.
- We will develop the very best leaders of the future, working to improve education and transform lives.
- We will adhere unwaveringly to the ‘Nolan Principles’ of Public Service, which is made clear in our commitment to Ethical Leadership.

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Statement of Intent

It is our core responsibility to ensure that students have access to the very best education possible. One of the most fundamental and influential aspects of a child's education is the curriculum that they have access to. The power of curriculum is immense. It has the power to not only transform an individual, but to also transform whole communities and shape their understanding of the world and their place in it. Therefore, it is imperative that the curriculum on offer within our academies is truly world class and gives students access to powerful knowledge that takes them far beyond what their own individual experience ever could. In order to achieve this we must ensure we expose all students 'to the best that has been thought and said and engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement'. To truly transform lives we must not only show students what is possible but inspire and instil the confidence in them to go out and do it.

All learners in our academies will experience a curriculum that

1. is **ambitious** and **enjoyable** through knowledge and skills developed from Foundation Stage to Post 16 and Adult provision.
2. is **knowledge rich**, ensuring access to a wide, global cultural capital – thus maximising lifetime opportunities.
3. is **inclusive**, nurturing and tailored towards the needs of the individual.
4. is focused on developing the very best **oracy, literacy, numeracy** and **digital** skills – enabling access to the widest learning and the very best careers possible to ensure we develop global citizens.
5. is **enriching**, ensuring all experience a rich variety of cultural, artistic and sporting activities.
6. is **broad** in terms of coverage and (at least) encompassing the breadth of the 2014 English National Curriculum.
7. celebrates the uniqueness of each educational setting in terms of **localised knowledge and skills**.
8. **develops** character, personal pride and the highest moral standards.
9. celebrates **diversity**, challenges **injustice**, promotes **equality** and encourages the creation of a better world.
10. is delivered by well-qualified, forward-thinking, skilled, passionate **professionals**.

1 Legal Framework and Definitions

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Health Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2011
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- The Immigration Act 2016
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018

This policy also has due regard to DfE/Ofsted guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Inspecting the Curriculum, Ofsted, May 2019
- Statutory Guidance for Careers, DfE, January 2018

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, DfE, June 2019
- National Curriculum in England: Framework for Key Stages 1-4, last updated December 2015

2 Scope of this Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all academy leaders, academy staff and academy learners.
- 2.2 For the purpose of this policy the reference to ‘pupils’ includes all learners in our academies.
- 2.3 For a glossary of the terms used in this policy refer to Appendix A.

3 Curriculum Leadership

- 3.1 Curriculum leadership requires attention to *what* is being learned. In our academies, middle and senior leadership teams share a curricular language for talking about curriculum and teaching – Appendix A. It is important that how the curriculum is viewed is clearly understood at all levels, from the Principal to teachers, teaching assistants and the non-teaching staff in order for it to be truly embedded as the vision and mission of the academy. All of our academies establish this approach in their own versions of the ‘**Curriculum Leaders Handbook**’.
- 3.2 Curriculum leaders work to **ensure** that the curriculum is fit for purpose and secondly to **assure** that it is delivered well and leads to an excellent quality of education for all students.
- 3.3 Curriculum leaders work collaboratively within and between our academies to design a curriculum which follows tight principles about what **content** is taught and how it is **sequenced**.
- 3.4 Curriculum leaders regularly **review** the design of the curriculum and routinely **quality assure** its implementation so that it achieves its intended purpose.

4 Curriculum Purpose

- 4.1 In establishing the purpose (intent) of our curriculum we refer to the following tight principles:
- That our curriculum is at least as broad and balanced as that of the National Curriculum.
 - That it is important for all pupils and particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds to have as broad a curriculum for as long as possible to build their knowledge of wider cultural capital.
 - That our curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of vulnerable learners and those with SEND without lowering expectation and aspirations.
 - That all of our pupils are entitled to learn at least one modern foreign language because this develops their first language and increases their cultural capital. This begins in our primary academies and develops into the full EBacc entitlement at KS4 for as many pupils as possible. (60% of KS4 in 2021 and 75% by 2022.)
 - That all pupils are entitled to read widely and often.
 - That the development of pupils’ characters is as important as the teaching of academic knowledge.

- That the curriculum prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and works to develop social, moral, spiritual and cultural knowledge and understanding rooted in the principles of Fundamental British Values.

4.2 Our Curriculum Intent:

The purpose of our curriculum is to ensure all students continually develop their academic knowledge and cultural capital so that they know and can remember more. This knowledge and these skills will help them be highly effective educated citizens who have a strong appreciation of human creativity and achievement. They will be able to access the formal (national benchmarks) examinations at the end of (Key Stage 3) Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 but more importantly they will be equipped with the ability and confidence to be able to learn, develop and adapt so that they can lead highly successful lives. The curriculum seeks to develop a love of learning across all aspects of life and not simply in formal education.

A well-planned successful curriculum considers and includes all those involved in it. All members of the academy community will have a voice in shaping the curriculum to ensure it meets our individual and collective needs.

-At KS3 students will follow a broad and balanced curriculum that includes all areas of the national curriculum whilst also considering local needs.

-KS4 will build on the knowledge and skills developed in KS3 whilst ensuring students follow a curriculum that retains breadth at the same time allowing them to pursue their passions and interests.

-KS5 will build on KS3 and KS4 allowing students to further refine their curriculum so that it best reflects their passions and interests.

5 Curriculum Implementation

5.1 We consider the following principles when deciding how to implement the curriculum intent:

- When and how to teach new core and wider content.
- When and how to teach core skills including oracy, literacy and numeracy.
- When and how to revisit and build on prior learning so that each component of learning can build to become composite learning.
- What knowledge pupils should be able use with fluency (speed and accuracy) and by what stage of their education from their starting points.
- How to sequence learning so that the proximal and ultimate functions of knowledge build over time.
- How to ensure pupils will make expected or better than expected progress as a consequence of the curriculum purpose, design and implementation.
- In order to achieve a broad curriculum, how to ensure that all pupils, where applicable, in KS4 study a minimum of eight qualifications with every bucket filled with best practice to study nine. At KS5 how most pupils should follow a programme of three qualifications with some doing four.

5.2 Our curriculum implementation:

Year 8 students where students receive extra tuition in Maths, English and Science. We also offer an adapted humanities curriculum to further develop students who are not at standard on entry or are SEND. All other sets are mixed ability in Year 7 (2020). Year 8 students were set in Year 7 last year and continue in these foundation sets.

Setting decisions are made using national assessment information and baseline assessments upon entry.

KS4 students receive personalised guidance as part of the options process and are guided to suitable options to ensure their greatest chance of academic success and personal development. A selection of students are invited to study the Youth Award qualification to aid their personal and academic development. KS4 students are streamed in option subjects where possible and are streamed in the main curriculum block for Science.

Maths and English can set independently of the other subjects in all years.

How the curriculum is adapted for SEND pupils:

Our SEND students receive the same broad and ambitious curriculum which offers excellent challenge and opportunity. All students study an MFL and can go on to study the EBacc at GCSE level if they wish and it is appropriate for them to do so.

Quality first teaching ensures that lessons are appropriately differentiated and structured so that SEND students can access and engage with the ambitious curriculum content. Lower ability sets have a smaller number of students in the classes and TA's are deployed to offer 1:1 support as required.

Resources are adapted to support SEND student during lessons and at home. During lockdown we offered SEND-focused work and this will continue as part of our blended learning strategy.

How the curriculum is adapted for EAL pupils:

Our curriculum is equally ambitious for EAL students. We expect all EAL students to study the full range of subjects on offer if they can. We have an EAL Coordinator to support students in 1:1 or small group sessions. We have an induction programme to ensure that new EAL students can settle in effectively.

We offer home language examinations for students.

Quality first teaching ensures that resources are adapted accordingly so that EAL students can access the curriculum

How the curriculum is adapted for gifted pupils:

Quality first teaching and targeted People Development is used to ensure that our gifted students receive appropriate challenge and stimulation to be engaged and to progress.

Setting is employed in all year groups to ensure that able and gifted students can receive appropriate challenge.

Gifted students study an additional language upon entry at MCA and can continue to do so at KS4 should they wish to.

Further Maths/Level 2 Maths is offered to students who are able to study it.

Wider opportunities are offered to ensure that gifted students develop expertise in specific subject areas or in their general personal development. Examples include the maths challenge and debating club.

What part homework plays in our curriculum:

It is important that homework is useful and embedded in the curriculum. Teachers must ensure that it is recognised and given equal status to work completed in class.

At KS3 subject teachers set homework according to the agreed quota, rather than a prescribed timetable. At KS4 and KS5 homework is set every week to support learning and to prepare students for exams and coursework deadlines. Homework should be timely, purposeful and achievable, giving students the opportunity to embed and develop their learning.

Homework should be accessible and challenging to all. It must support the vulnerable by:

1. Giving clear instructions for focused tasks
2. Providing appropriate resources
3. Differentiating work to take into account the ability of the student
4. Taking into account the special educational needs of some students
5. Starting homework in class to assist with understanding and completion of homework.

Use of Knowledge Organisers:

Every subject at every key stage has developed and shared a knowledge organiser with students and parents. These documents are readily available on the website and are frequently referred to as part of our blended learning strategy. The KO's indicate the 'must know' and are used for planning and revision which ensures consistency of curriculum for all classes. Use of common pedagogical approaches e.g. knowledge tests refer to the content present in knowledge organisers.

Memory & recall:

Each week students must complete a knowledge test that covers prior learning and promotes memory and recall as well as linking prior to new learning.

Regular questioning is used to promote independent thinking, check learning and to allow students to explore their responses prior to written work.

Knowledge organisers should be used to help students understand what is core knowledge and what is wider learning (must know/good to know).

6 Curriculum Maps

- 6.1 Every subject has a curriculum map that sets out what will be taught and in what order as well as key assessment points.
- 6.2 There is one map per year group and each one links to the preceding and next year. Wherever possible the map also includes links to the relevant 'Knowledge Organiser' setting out the core knowledge for that part of the curriculum.

- 6.3 All of this information is shared with pupils, parents/carers, governors and other relevant stakeholders through the academy website.

7 Wider Curriculum

- 7.1 In our academies the curriculum is not just that which is taught in subject lessons. It is the sum of experiences that combine together to develop a child into the adulthood. To this end the experiences that pupils have in social times and during co-curricular or enrichment activity is of equal value to what they learn in 'lessons'.
- 7.2 Our academies deliver programmes of education which develop pupils' personal and social characters. See our Skills for Life programme for further detail.
- 7.3 Our academies believe that it is important to prepare pupils for the next stages of their education/life through an effective careers education programme which is based on the Gatsby Benchmarks. See our CEIAG policy and programme for further detail.
- 7.4 The curriculum has a vital role to play in developing pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes to learning. This includes teaching about mutual respect for all and an understanding of the importance of democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.
- 7.5 Pupils are taught what constitutes good behaviour and what the benefits of good behaviour are. See Behaviour Policy for further detail.
- 7.6 Social, emotional and behaviour skills are taught within the curriculum so that this together with our effective wider work supports pupils to be confident, resilient and independent, and to develop strength of character.

8 Enrichment

- 8.1 Enrichment is rooted in our academy values, forming a golden thread within and beyond the curriculum.
- 8.2 Enrichment opportunities are centred on the needs of all pupils, including the most vulnerable, and the context of the local community.
- 8.3 We deliver enrichment through a coherently planned, extensive range of rich experiences and breadth of curriculum content that is based on pupils' relative starting points; equipping them with the powerful knowledge, cultural literacy and moral compass needed to be successful within and beyond their formal education.
- 8.4 Enrichment inspires, engages and enhances every pupils' opportunity and desire to develop, widen and celebrate their talents and interests within and beyond the curriculum.

8.5 We actively seek to engage parents, carers and the local community as partners, encouraging them to contribute to and share in their children's personal development and success.

8.6 Every pupil has an Enrichment Passport in which they capture and record their participation in enrichment activities.

9 Intervention

9.1 Not every pupil has the same starting point and there are times when the curriculum needs to be adapted for individual learners.

9.2 Our academies develop a range of intervention strategies to support learners to fill knowledge gaps.

9.3 Pupils who are identified at assessment points as being below the age-related expected standards are given individual or small group interventions over defined periods of time. Pupils are assessed at the beginning and end of the intervention programme so that progress can be tracked.

10 Assessment

10.1 The curriculum is the progression model. Students have made progress if they have learned the intended curriculum. In our academies we believe that teachers should be teaching to the curriculum and not to the test. With this in mind, it is important that we respond to the important curriculum changes and the focus upon solid quality first teaching with a secure and rigorous assessment strategy which is fit for purpose.

10.2 Formative assessment is a form of assessment which helps capture what students do and don't know and allows teachers to address these gaps. Formative assessment can take both verbal and written forms.

10.3 Rigorous summative assessment is undertaken in our academies to provide valid and reliable information about how well students in our academies have learned the curriculum that we are teaching them. Summative assessments create data and information which has shared and consistent meaning.

10.4 In our academies staff are asked for assessment information three times per year. Anything more regular than this does not provide meaningful data about how well students have learned the curriculum.

10.5 Assessments are standardised both internally and externally in our academies. For our core subjects, leads meet regularly in TNGs (Team Network Groups) to standardise assessments across our academies. At KS4 this is assisted by the selection of common examination boards for the EBacc subjects.

10.6 See our Assessment, Recording, Reporting and Exams Policy for further detail.

11 Staff Training and Support

11.1 We build regular opportunities for staff in our academies to develop their subject, pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge through individual and group training.

11.2 Team Network Groups are subject specific and meet up to six times a year to develop curriculum plans, schemes of learning and lesson resources.

11.3 Strategic Development Groups address wider curriculum issues and also meet up to six times a year.

11.4 We encourage staff to attend webinars, training days and development activities through our ATT Institute and those offered by external organisations.

11.5 Training needs for individual staff are routinely linked to their development targets and PDCs (Professional development Conversations) take place regularly throughout the year.

11.6 We deliver bespoke training for new entrants to the professions and for those recently qualified or returning to the profession.

12 Review

12.1 The application of this policy in our academies is reviewed by the Regional Education Directors as part of the CSI (Challenge, Support and Intervention) Strategy.

Appendix A Glossary of Curriculum Language

Quality of Education	A rounded view on the quality of education an academy provides: the appropriateness of the curriculum intent (taking into consideration narrowing/flexibility), the extent to which it delivers on this intent (Impact), and how well it is delivered at subject/classroom level (implementation).
Intent	What the curriculum is building towards and how it is planned to get there taking into account the local context whilst ensuring students acquire the knowledge and skills to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life. This is set at Trust, academy and subject/phase level with each being intrinsically linked to the others.
Implementation	How the curriculum is taught at subject/classroom level.
Impact	What students have learned.
Component	Individual items of knowledge that students will learn.
Composite	Components combine together to form composites, combined they become more complex composites.
Fluency	The ability to retrieve knowledge quickly and accurately.
Cultural Capital	'It is the essential knowledge that students need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.' (Ofsted S5 Handbook 2019) In our Trust this is not a tick box for each topic or lesson but is rooted in the curricular culture of our academies.
Core Content ('Must Know')	This refers to the substance of the curriculum that students must know and remember to ensure a secure foundation in their schemata development.
Wider Content (Hinterland/Good to know)	This is the content that sits outside of the core. It might be about the bigger picture. For example, the full novel. Without acknowledging and using such wider content, the core (a small passage from a novel) may not have true meaning. Wider content is often what makes knowledge rich and memorable for students.
Substantive Knowledge	The knowledge produced by an academic subject, which is made up of established facts that are uncontested.
Cumulative knowledge	This is where knowledge is not wholly reliant on students having previously studied a 'certain' topic, which means there are many pathways to mastering the content.
Hierarchical Knowledge	This means that you cannot teach one topic until students have 'mastered' the prior knowledge - e.g. times tables before fractions.
Disciplinary Knowledge	Disciplinary knowledge refers to what pupils learn about how that knowledge was established and constructed within the discipline, its degree of certainty and how it continues to be revised by scholars, artists or through professional practice. In some subjects, this is where there is space for judgement making, argument, open-ended challenges and subject thinking.
Curriculum sequencing	This is ultimately about <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> a certain section of the curriculum serves to prepare students for future content, such that it has a <i>proximal</i>

	<i>function</i> to make the next stage possible and <i>ultimate function</i> to do an enduring job. The aim is to build a student's knowledge and skills towards agreed end points whilst equipping them with the confidence to be able to create knowledge themselves.
Proximal Function	Each bit of a curriculum has a job to do. The proximal function is how the knowledge from this lesson supports the work planned in the next few lessons/weeks.
Ultimate Function	Knowledge acquired across a curriculum is durable and has an ultimate function, a future purpose. This knowledge supports students, over time, to develop deeper conceptual understanding. It allows individuals to not only eventually enter disciplinary conversations and debates with confidence but allows students to potentially become knowledge creators themselves in the future.