

TRUST IN LEARNING (ACADEMIES)

CURRICULUM POLICY

Approval Date: March 2025	Version: 01	Review: 2 years (or sooner if required by statutory guidance)
Approval By: Quality of Education Committee	Lead: Director of School Improvement	Review date: Autumn 2027
As part of the review process, this policy/procedure has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.		

History of Policy Changes:

Date	Page	Change	Reason for Change
March 2025		New policy	New over-arching policy for the Trust

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1 Statement of Intent

This document sets out the policy for Curriculum within Trust in Learning Academies (the Trust).

The policy has been developed and implemented in consultation with the Executive Team comprising Headteachers and the School Development Team.

Trust in Learning's aim is to *inspire* the children in our schools as they experience the best educational provision possible. Our schools are places where every pupil can achieve and make progress in their learning. The curriculum intent is to *empower* pupils, creating broad and enriching experiences which build curiosity and creativity. In our trust, pupils experiencing disadvantage and pupils with additional needs are prioritised; we make every effort to overcome barriers to learning and achievement. The curriculum is therefore the vehicle to *transform* life chances by developing informed, responsible and confident young people, who have the qualifications and personal skills to embrace life opportunities.

2 Values and Principles

The curriculum is an intentional and carefully sequenced narrative that imparts powerful knowledge, constructed logically so pupils understand how different pieces of knowledge fit together and build over time. This is different from the National Curriculum, which operates as a means of giving all pupils access to a common body of essential content.

2.1 Trust values

This Trust Policy is set out with the following general values at its core:

Trust in Learning Academies is a family of schools each with a distinctive identity, collaborating to strengthen and support each other. We deliver high quality education with evidence-informed approaches to teaching, learning and the curriculum. Inclusion is at the heart of all we do. We actively listen to the voices of our pupils, staff and communities. Every school makes deliberate choices to be sustainable and globally-focused.

The Trust vision is to:

- Inspire pupils to trust in learning and achieve their full potential
- To empower pupils to have confidence in their successes to make a positive contribution to the world
- To remove barriers to learning and help transform the lives of our pupils

Any data collected, stored or managed as a result of this policy is in accordance with UK and EU law, and in line with the Trust's ethos and values.

This Policy has been framed in accordance with the guidance on best practice from the Department for Education (DfE).

2.2 Trust Curriculum Principles

We have identified 4 specific principles that underpin our Trust approach to curriculum, in order to provide equitable and meaningful education for all our pupils. These principles are designed to ensure that the curriculum builds over time, is inclusive, and is capable of fostering deep intellectual engagement. Our curriculum is:

- a) Intentional: our curriculum is well planned, coherent and carefully sequenced.

The curriculum has a clear *design and intent*. It helps to mitigate educational disadvantage and promote equity. It is meaningful and memorable for all learners, helping pupils build schemata and so access and *connect* different pieces of knowledge, seeing the bigger picture. We work towards *clear end points*, whether end of a year, key stage, or phase of schooling, so we know what pupils are expected to know and do by these points. *Purposeful sequencing*, with *interleaving* and *assessment at spaced intervals* enables cumulative learning. This means that each stage of the curriculum builds on what has come before, helping pupils to retain and deepen their understanding over time. The progression is *logical and systematic*, ensuring that prior knowledge supports the learning of new concepts.

- b) Inspirational: our curriculum is ambitious for all

We are highly ambitious for our pupils and aim to maximise their opportunities to progress in learning and for their future lives. We recognise that mastery of *numeracy, phonics, reading, and writing* are the pillars which support the curriculum from the earliest point. Our curriculum remains as *broad* as possible for as long as possible. We promote *arts, culture and creativity* to expand memorable experiences. Our curriculum includes *digital and financial literacy* that will support pupils' future success, as well as offering opportunities to use technology safely, effectively and responsibly. Our curriculum is aspirational and is rightly demanding for all pupils. Learning experiences are *inclusive* to enable all pupils to have the opportunity to succeed. By providing some element of *contextualisation* and meaningful choice in the curriculum, pupils can engage their natural curiosity, enabling greater motivation to discover and learn, building *agency* in learning, particularly for disadvantaged learners. High-leverage pedagogy allows pupils to access activities which challenge them to think and remember more.

- c) Empowering: the curriculum focuses on powerful knowledge and skills

Our curriculum embeds a deep understanding, critical thinking, and the ability to engage meaningfully with complex issues. It does this through teaching *substantive knowledge* - expertly chosen core knowledge (the 'what'), and *disciplinary knowledge* - the overarching skills that enable pupils to grasp methods and processes (the 'how'). Together these hone their critical and metacognitive skills. Our curriculum is purposeful in its development of *vocabulary and oracy skills*. Through explicit vocabulary teaching we can open up powerful, new knowledge for pupils, and our deep focus on the spoken word facilitates the development of *social and emotional skills*. Curriculum schemes must be inclusive and make learning accessible for children who have experienced greater disadvantage or vulnerability, specifically developing *cultural capital*, vocabulary and oracy skills.

- d) Transformational: the curriculum develops the whole child

Our curriculum aims to develop pupils' wider skills and character so they can develop into thoughtful citizens who can make informed choices. Our curriculum delivers global and cultural breadth. It embraces diversity across ethnicity, gender, religion, language and community, helping pupils to understand their responsibilities and roles within society, and to promote mutual respect and tolerance more broadly. We also recognise the importance of fostering spirituality, providing opportunities for reflection, moral development, and a deeper sense of purpose, helping pupils to explore their beliefs and values. Our co-curriculum includes activities, visits and events in sports, music, drama, technology, art, maths, science, languages, humanities, careers, and residential trips which enable our pupils to explore and discover new interests, develop their character, and build confidence to step beyond their comfort zone, feel challenged and take on new experiences.

3 Objectives and Scope

The specific aims of this policy are to:

- Promote a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum that meets the diverse needs of all students, fostering a love for learning and encouraging lifelong learning habits.
- Ensure consistency and continuity across the schools within Trust In Learning (Academies), aligning with our shared educational philosophy and goals.
- Support the professional development of staff, enabling them to deliver high-quality teaching and learning experiences across the curriculum.

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996;
- Equality Act 2010;
- DfE (2024) Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
- The National Curriculum in England Framework Document;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015.

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy: To ensure the safety and well-being of all students within the curriculum framework.
- SEND Policy: To address and support the individual needs of students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Assessment Policy: To provide a structured approach for evaluating student progress and ensuring effective feedback mechanisms.
- Teaching and Learning Policy: to establish consistent, high-quality educational standards in pedagogy across all schools.

4 Responsibilities and Accountabilities

4.1 Responsibilities of the Trust central team

- To ensure that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- To ensure the policy is well communicated to all Headteachers.
- To ensure that the policy is regularly reviewed.

4.2 Responsibilities of the Headteacher

- To ensure the implementation of and compliance with current policy and procedures at school level
- To monitor systems, resources, impact and actions related to the policy
- To ensure the policy is well communicated and staff understand their role in its implementation
- To handle any complaints at school level which arise through this policy

4.3 Responsibilities of school leadership

- To ensure staff are inducted into the procedures surrounding this policy and any updates
- To provide training to ensure policy compliance
- To hold sessions for parents and pupils as required, to ensure the policy is understood

4.4 Responsibilities of all staff

- To uphold the whole school approach to the policy through modelling expected standards and utilising appropriate procedures
- To keep up to date with policy changes over time
- To promote a collaborative and inclusive ethos where all pupils can thrive
- To feed back to school leaders where concerns may arise in the implementation of the policy

4.5 Responsibilities of parents

- To support the implementation of the policy with the child, as appropriate
- Where a parent has feedback on the implementation of the policy, to raise this directly with the school while continuing to work in partnership with the school

4.6 Responsibilities of pupils

- To uphold school rules and expectations and thereby comply with the implementation of the policy
- To feed back on the implementation of the policy through appropriate means, such as school council, to school staff

5 Curriculum Direction

5.1 Curriculum Development

Building on the principles of alignment and flexibility, the Trust has identified key themes to shape the direction of curriculum development over the next two years. These themes are intended to ensure that the curriculum remains ambitious, evidence-informed, and responsive to both local and Trust-wide priorities.

As a Trust we are committed to an 80/20 model of curriculum alignment. This model emphasizes 80% consistency in core areas across all schools while allowing for 20% local variation to address the unique needs and contexts of each school community. This balance ensures a coherent and high-quality curriculum offer while respecting the individuality of each school and its learners.

It is essential that our schools enact the curriculum by prioritising localism, ensuring that learning reflects community needs, heritage, and opportunities, fostering engagement, relevance, and enriched educational experiences for all students.

Key themes:

1. Alignment and Contextual Flexibility

- Alignment across the Trust is desirable, promoting consistency and shared standards while recognizing the importance of individual school contexts.
- Autonomy for headteachers is valued. Where the curriculum is supporting strong progress, it is important that practices remain in place without unnecessary disruption.

2. Broad, Balanced, and Ambitious Curriculum

- The curriculum must be robust and ambitious, ensuring breadth and balance across all phases.
- Schools will strive to enhance subject expertise in areas such as music, computing, and modern foreign languages to enrich the curriculum offer, while maintaining a strong focus on core areas such as reading, writing, and mathematics.
- External reviews will be conducted regularly to ensure high standards and maintain ambition.

3. Pedagogy, Progression, and Assessment

- Pedagogical understanding is critical to enacting the curriculum effectively and ensuring consistency of progression across phases.
- A shared approach to assessment and reporting will underpin alignment, enabling clear tracking of progress and standards across the Trust.

We recognise the importance and usefulness of aligning our curriculum across schools to leverage evidence-informed practices that demonstrate impact. This alignment allows us to maximize the benefits of shared resources, training, and expertise, ultimately enhancing the educational experience for all our students.

5.2 Curriculum Decision-Making

All curriculum-based decisions, including proposals to introduce new GCSE courses and adopt new primary programmes, must be made collaboratively with the School Development Team. This ensures that curriculum changes are strategically aligned with Trust-wide goals and supported by evidence of impact.

The School Development Team will support schools by assessing proposals against research-backed evidence of effectiveness and alignment with the Trust's vision. Schools will be encouraged to maintain innovative approaches where outcomes are strong while ensuring alignment in areas critical to student success and progression.

Furthermore, a clear and well-communicated rationale for curriculum decisions is essential to secure the understanding and buy-in of staff at all levels. Effective communication will remain a priority to promote shared ownership of the curriculum strategy.

5.3 Responsibilities

- **School Development Team:** Evaluate and approve curriculum proposals, ensuring alignment with Trust objectives and evidence-based practices. Share national developments, provide external review and quality assurance to maintain high standards.
- **School Leaders:** Implement the 80/20 model, maintaining consistency in core areas while adapting local variations to reflect each school's context. Ensure effective communication of curriculum changes to staff and stakeholders.
- **Teachers:** Engage in professional development, collaborate across schools, and deepen their understanding of their subject/s, pedagogy, assessment, and progression to enact the curriculum effectively.

5.4 Support and Resources

The Trust will provide access to shared resources, training sessions, and a network of expertise to support curriculum alignment. Schools are encouraged to participate in Trust-wide initiatives, contribute to the development of best practices, and engage in collaborative professional development.

5.5 Primary

Many of our schools are aligned around the following:

- **Phonics Programme:** Read Write Inc.
- **Mathematics Scheme:** White Rose Maths.
- **Humanities (Key Stage 2) Curriculum:** Opening Worlds.
- **Science Curriculum:** HEP Science (subject to review).

To ensure breadth and balance, the curriculum also prioritises expertise in areas beyond core subjects, such as music, computing, and modern foreign languages. This ambition to develop subject experts in these areas is central to creating a well-rounded and enriching educational experience.

5.6 Secondary

Our secondary schools are aligned around the choice of examination boards, although individual courses reflect the differing contexts of each school. The flexibility to offer unique courses is a strength, ensuring that the curriculum responds to the local needs and aspirations of students.

Our curriculum intent is to provide a rich, ambitious, and inclusive education that equips all students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences needed for future success. It is designed to foster curiosity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning while ensuring academic excellence and personal development.

The secondary curriculum remains broad and balanced, with alignment in key areas such as assessment practices and progression models. Schools are supported to maintain ambition in their curriculum, incorporating cultural capital and providing students with opportunities to engage in the wider curriculum.

5.7 Quality Assurance

The Trust is committed to rigorous quality assurance processes to ensure the highest standards in curriculum delivery. These include:

- Monitoring consistency of outcomes over time through data analysis.
- Conducting book scrutinies, learning walks, and pupil and staff voice activities.
- Reviewing cultural capital provision and student participation in the wider curriculum.
- Engaging with Ofsted curriculum reports and external Trust reviews.
- Ensuring effective transitions between phases, with a clear understanding of core knowledge and skills progression.

5.8 Staying Future-Focused

The Trust recognises the importance of staying up to date with emerging trends and research in education.

Participation in professional conferences, events, and webinars will enable schools to remain informed and responsive. While flexibility in curriculum design is valued, we will continue to prioritise evidence-based practices and avoid unproven fads that may detract from core objectives.

By fostering a culture of collaboration, reflection, and high ambition, the Trust will ensure that its curriculum remains impactful, coherent, and relevant to the needs of all learners.

Appendices:

Principles of School Improvement Reviews: [SDT Reviews & Visits.docx](#)

Primary Curriculum Overview: [TiLA Primary Curriculum Overview.xlsx](#)