

Curriculum Policy 2020

The Link Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, regulated by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). All Members of the Board of Directors are also Trustees of the exempt charity; the term 'Director' used in this Policy also means Trustee. This Policy applies to all staff employed by the Link Academy Trust.

Vision

At the Link Academy Trust we believe passionately that every child who journeys through any of our schools deserves the highest level of educational experience. As an 'ever-moving' Trust, we maintain high aspirations for ourselves and our pupils and constantly seek out experiences that support/challenge mind set and nurture growth. Our Academies are individual; they sit in the heart of communities – and we aim to embed this individuality at the very heart of our curriculum. We are committed to a belief in lifelong learning and we strive to provide children with the tools and attitudes that enable them to become collaborative, resilient, independent thinkers who recognise they can make a difference to others and the world around them.

Rationale

As a Trust we follow a process beginning with 'why', moving through the 'how' and 'what' when considering our curriculum design, development and implementation. This is an essential part of our practice, which ensures our curriculum is personal, aspirational and fully embedded in the culture, ethos and values of each Academy. Through this we ensure that pupils within our Trust experience the highest quality teaching and learning and their educational experience is linked and progressive to ensure the maximum level of personal standard is achieved.

The Curriculum

The Curriculum sits centrally to our Academies in terms of ethos and incorporates all the progressive planned activities that we organise to promote learning and personal growth/development. It not only includes the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice – each Academy has its own version of The Link 5 Star Pledge, which holds the core extra-curricular experiences central to the personal growth of our pupils. This, alongside assembly programmes underpinned by British Values, supports the implementation of 'the hidden curriculum'- that is, the things children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. Our curriculum design aims to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

- The national curriculum is taught across our Trust through each Academy's individual two, three or four year rolling programme, depending on school size and class structures.

- Each Academy has its own Curriculum Intent document, which sets out beliefs and aims for the Curriculum within their setting. Every subject then has its own Intent Statement, which starting from 'the why' sets out the aims and aspirations for that particular area of the Curriculum.
- Our Trust 'Key Skills' document sits alongside our curriculum intent document. It identifies progression within the core skills for each curriculum subject and supports the implementation of our curriculum.
- Schools across the Link Academy Trust use similar rolling programme formats, enabling a consistent approach and allowing for effective sharing of good practice and resources.
- Within the Link Academy Trust, we follow common topics; however, each school adapts these topics taught through an enquiry based approach which invites investigation, engagement and the freedom to explore lines of enquiry. Topics are intrinsically linked to the settings, contexts and environments that are unique to each of our Academies.
- We encourage learning that may be led and developed by our pupils, empowering even our youngest learners to make important decisions about their learning, take ownership and develop independence.
- Learning is designed around a 'hook' to engage and inspire our pupils which may include an experience, a trip, a special visitor or a theme day/week. It may also include investigating a 'big question' that invites enquiry (e.g. "which of Henry's wives was his favourite?"). Outdoor learning, including Forest School, is a fundamental part of each Academy within our Trust.
- In each Academy, computing, IT and e-safety is embedded in ethos, within curriculum design and taught discretely in order to enrich learning, foster life-long skills and equip our pupils with curiosity and a high ceiling in terms of possibility.
- The Trust's approach to curriculum design is founded on promoting positive emotional health, physical wellbeing and mental fitness. This is supported by The Trust Inclusion and Improvement Hub.
- Our individual Academies seek to ensure that the relationship between curriculum design and school culture, ethos and values is interlinked.

Local Board Responsibilities

The Local Board is responsible for ensuring that the Curriculum is broad and balanced and fits the needs of the children it is there to serve. It holds the Academy Head responsible for the implementation of the curriculum and through the 'Learn, Support and Challenge' monitoring system the Curriculum stays fresh and fit for purpose.

We review our curriculum plans and adapt them as necessary depending on class structures within each individual Academy.

This policy is reviewed by the Standards & Curriculum Committee on a 2-yearly cycle and must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Date approved by Trustees: 13 July 2020

Next Review Summer 2022