



## Curriculum Policy 2024-2026

The Link Academy Trust (the 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 Trust.

### Trust curriculum vision

At the Trust we believe passionately that every child who journeys through any of our schools deserves the highest level of educational experience. Our Academies are unique and sit in the heart of communities; we aim to embed this individuality at the very heart of our curriculum. The following curriculum vision statement was developed collaboratively in order that trust vision is aligned, but is added to by school leaders to communicate their own vision and individuality:

*Empowering our pupils sits at the very heart of our curriculum design. We are passionate that every child who leaves any of our schools does so with a complete sense of self; with an ability to make informed decisions that reflect their own values and beliefs; a knowledge of where they sit in the world and the impact they can have. Curiosity is nurtured at every turn as we recognise that we are preparing our children for a future that will be vastly different to our current reality – a child who understands themselves will be well equipped to make choices that impact positively on themselves, others and their environment.*

*Building and reflecting our communities is an integral part of our thought process and we look to ensure our pupils recognise where they sit and the impact they can have on a local, national and global scale. Tolerance and an ability to recognise the views of others sit centrally to our curriculum ethos. In teaching children explicitly to articulate their views with respect, we recognise that every small moment and interaction can support them in developing a responsibility for their choices; where this sits with their own values and their impact on the world around them.*

*Our curriculum seeks to develop ambitious attitude for every pupil to place them in a position whereby their future choices are theirs to make. In considering a clear progression in skills, knowledge and experience, we equip children to be aspirational and the best possible version of themselves.*

### Rationale

As a Trust we begin with 'why', moving through the 'how' and 'what' when considering our curriculum design, intent and implementation. This is an essential part of our practice, which ensures our curriculum is personal, aspirational and leading the culture, ethos and values of each Academy. The following diagram was generated collaboratively by leaders and underpins the rationale behind an effective curriculum.



## Trust Curriculum Principles

Trust curriculum principles are essential in bringing alignment to our schools whilst enabling leaders to design a curriculum which is relevant to their unique setting, making local decisions. Our curriculum principles set out the highest possible expectations for excellence and are steeped in our values of belonging, curiosity and collaboration.

- Strong curriculum intent – design, coverage & appropriateness.
  - Effective curriculum intent requires consideration of **what** is taught from the earliest starting points.
  - An effective curriculum will be broad and ambitious, founded in the National Curriculum and Early Years curriculum.
  - Effective curriculum intent will encompass the wider curriculum, including character development, personal development, learning behaviours, attitudes, British Values and more. Schools should embed wider cultural expectations with their curriculum intent.
  - An effective curriculum will engage and inspire pupils, developing cultural capital with intentional design, including through wider opportunities above and beyond what children may ordinarily experience. Drivers such as the 5 Star Pledge will anchor experiences into curriculum design sequentially.
  - An effective curriculum will be relevant to the needs of today at an individual, local and national level, equipping pupils with the knowledge skills and dispositions for future challenges of life-long learners.
  - Careful curriculum thinking is necessary to ensure that the right curriculum components (content necessary for all children to make progress) are chosen intentionally and embedded in order that

they are committed to memory, enabling all pupils to perform increasingly complex tasks (composites) over time.

- An effective curriculum will be progressive. Content will be planned progressively which will enable all children to acquire knowledge and skills sequentially, building understanding for mastery cumulatively and securely over time.
  - An effective curriculum will be cohesive and purposefully designed so that concepts are connected across the curriculum in order that all children make strong links, leading to retention and recall of intended learning.
  - An effective curriculum will be designed so that all pupils remember the content they have been taught long term through systematic, intentional revisiting and recall of knowledge and skills.
  - An effective curriculum will be relevant and accessible for all learners, designed to flex and adapt to meet the diverse needs of all pupils.
  - An effective curriculum will be appropriate for individual school contexts and relevant to local communities.
  - Subject specific statements of intent are driven by trust collaboration for quality assurance and alignment in Trust message. The Trust agreed 'Curriculum Statement' format delivers guidance for consistency of approach whilst allowing adaptation and evolution, e.g. [Maths curriculum statement format example](#).
- Careful curriculum Implementation – delivery, teaching, pedagogy & assessment.
    - Effective implementation considers **how** the intended curriculum is taught, delivered and checked from the earliest starting points, including carefully selecting and embedding the best pedagogy and assessment strategies for learning.
    - Effective implementation of the curriculum will be evidence informed, and research driven including EEF. [Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF](#)
    - Decisions relating to the most effective pedagogy will be driven by school leaders, including selecting and embedding the most effective strategies to teach the intended content.
    - Effective and careful implementation will ensure that lesson activities focus pupils' thinking on learning goals, avoiding cognitive overload.
    - Core/critical aspects of learning – those which are most important for children to retain and build upon – will be clearly identified and organised across the curriculum. Decisions about what is the core/critical knowledge will be made based on what children need to know and remember before they can move on.
    - Core/critical learning will be assessed for each subject/area in order to evaluate the impact of the taught curriculum.
    - The intended curriculum will be measured and assessed, ensuring that pupils' knowledge and understanding is tracked, and gaps are identified and addressed with timely intervention.
    - Regular, consistent and well-timed assessment will be embedded in curriculum implementation, including the trust 'Assessment Strategy'.
    - Effective implementation of the intended curriculum will lead to fluency. Fluency describes the degree of proficiency, rather than a definable activity type. Fluency (automaticity) requires that effective retrieval strategies are built into practice (alongside other research-based learning sciences). Effective strategies will be built into curriculum implementation and planning so that core components across the curriculum are learnt and built upon.
    - Adaptation, including ordinarily available inclusive provision (OAIP), will be a key feature of curriculum design, ensuring that all pupils can access the intended curriculum and succeed, in particular those with SEND or who encounter disadvantage. This will be in line with relevant frameworks such as the SEND Code of Practice.
    - Adaptation for mixed-age classes will be a key feature of curriculum design in accordance with individual school structures. As and when a structure needs to change, curriculum implementation will be amended.

- Trust curriculum guidance will be used as a framework to support individual schools. [Link Academy Trust Curriculum Guidance](#)
- Clear curriculum impact - attainment and progress, reading & end points.
  - Leaders will understand, explain and evidence the impact of the intended curriculum (that which has been designed). They will know what knowledge and understanding all pupils have gained against expectations (the intended curriculum) and, therefore, if the intended curriculum is effective.
  - Assessment will effectively measure how well the intended curriculum is implemented. The most effective strategies which ascertain if pupils have remembered the intended curriculum will be embedded in practice, e.g., book looks, pupil voice, low stakes diagnostics, ongoing formative and summative assessment.
  - Strong outcomes are the result of effective curriculum intent and implementation. Knowledge is generative, allows comprehension and empowers learners. Excellent outcomes change lives and create choice.
  - An effective curriculum will prepare all pupils for their next steps, including future learning and employment.

### **Local Academy Committee Responsibilities**

The Local Academy Committee 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 principles; through the 'Learn, Support and Challenge' monitoring system the curriculum remains current and fit for purpose.

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

This policy is reviewed and approved by the Standards & Curriculum Committee on a 2-yearly cycle.

*Date approved by Trustees: 13 July 2020*

*Approved by Standards & Curriculum Committee: March 2024*

*Next Review Spring 2025*

**Approved by Standards & Curriculum Committee: 26 March 2025**

**Next Review: Spring 2026**