



Twyford
C of E
Academies Trust

Document Title	Curriculum Policy
Committee Responsible for Policy	Curriculum Committee
Review Frequency	Annually
Last Reviewed	February 2018
Next Review Due	February 2019
Policy Author	Executive Head teacher and Associate Head teachers

Assessment of the Impact of a Policy on Equality & Diversity

Policy: Curriculum Policy	
Impact assessed by: R Lane	Date: 22/2/2017
1. What is the potential for this policy impacting a person or group with a protected characteristic differently (favourably or unfavourably) from everyone else?	
Significant. The curriculum may not present the interests and values of different groups in a balanced way. For example, the History curriculum might ignore black history or the Music curriculum might ignore female composers.	
2. How would this be evidenced?	
If the curriculum departs from the requirements of national examining bodies which are subject to rigorous monitoring and scrutiny.	
3. Is there evidence that the operation of the current policy might impact a person or group with a protected characteristic differently from everyone else?	
No.	
4. If the answer to 3 is 'Yes', please provide details and evidence.	
5. How might the new policy change this?	
6. Are there any other changes to the policy which might impact a group with a protected characteristic differently from everyone else?	
No.	
7. If the answer to 6 is 'Yes', please provide details and evidence.	
8. Policies are required to reduce or eliminate inequality and disadvantage and promote diversity. Does this assessment indicate that the Policy passes or fails this test?	
Pass	

Curriculum Policy

Trust Values

The school ethos which is captured in our 10:10 ethic emphasises a belief in the capacity of students to do and be good. This ethos is built on the premise that that all students should become aware of their own abilities and aptitudes and use these effectively. They should be disciplined in improving their skills and should be encouraged to stretch. In doing this they should gain a positive sense of their own gifts and how they can develop and apply them. The construction of the school curriculum makes a major contribution to the ethos of the school ensuring there is academic challenge for all students, irrespective of their starting points. The Trust expectation is that students will be stretched through the formal taught curriculum (which will include academic & applied opportunities), the pastoral curriculum and through the wider curriculum (e.g. extra-curricular activities, extension opportunities and via the spiritual life of the school community).

The curriculum policy defines the principles of how the curriculum is designed in Trust schools

Please also see links to the Trust policies on SMSC and on Assessment

Principles: A Stretch Curriculum in a Comprehensive Context

The curriculum has been defined in order to cater for the wide range of abilities at the school. To ensure all students are stretched – irrespective of their starting points the curriculum is differentiated into three broad bands so that by Year 9 students are positioned to make informed decisions on pursuing a curriculum pathway which is suited to their own particular gifts. In Years 7 & 8 therefore the focus is on giving students very secure foundations in core subjects as well as sampling subjects which they may wish to specialise in further at Year 9 & beyond.

The principles of the Trust curriculum are:

- It has a strong core which focusses on acquisition of strong skills in facilitating subjects
- It is differentiated to provide stretch & challenge for all students using a 3-level approach
- It is designed to ensure progression from Year 7 to Year 13
- It encompasses Wider learning & Independent learning, Spiritual, moral social and cultural education as well as classroom based lessons
- All trust schools have the same curriculum framework (e.g. skills covered & progression rates) however content may vary slightly between schools (e.g. the choice of texts within English)

The Core Curriculum

All students study English, Maths, Science and RE from Years 7 – Yr11 as compulsory subjects. This ensures students have a solid core of skills & knowledge which will enable them to progress in a range of directions. Languages and Humanities also form part of the core. All students will study two Humanities (History & Geography) from Year 7 and a large number of students will study two languages in year 8, to give a range of options further up the school.

Creative & applied subjects are also available. Emphasis is placed on Music which is a Trust specialism and on Creative technologies (applications of ICT & Computing) as well as Art, Drama & PE.

Curriculum time is broadly split as 60% EBAC subjects (maths, English, Science, Humanities and languages), 15% RE and SMSC, 25% applied and creative subjects (Art, Drama, music, singing and PE)

3-level Differentiation & pathways...

The Trust strategy in designing the curriculum is to ensure there is no compromise at the upper and lower end of the spectrum of student needs. To this end we have devised a 3 band curriculum referred to as Advanced, Higher and Core. The **advanced curriculum** is defined by the requirements of Russell

group + university entry (e.g. students following it might aspire to A-Level grades AAB or above including at least 2 'facilitating subjects' when they reach Year 13).

The **Higher curriculum** has a conventional academic framework of English, Maths, Double Science, RE with History or Geography and/or 1 Modern Foreign Language and is designed to ensure students gain grade 4/5 or above in an appropriate range of GCSE subjects. Students who are successful in the higher curriculum are also likely to move on to Level 3 (A-Level or BTEC courses) post 16.

The **Core curriculum** is designed to ensure acquisition of sound basic skills (e.g. a GCSE pass in English & Maths plus a package of no less than 6 other GCSE passes). A second assumption of the Trust curriculum design is that students should be able to move from one curriculum band to another according to progress made.

The Core curriculum in Years 7 & 8 therefore targets literacy and numeracy support at students (usually defined as reading ages below 10) in order to move as many students onto higher programmes by the end of Year 8 as possible.

Equally the strong academic framework of the higher programmes will enable students who make outstanding progress in year 10 & 11 to move onto a wider range of advanced courses post 16.

Year 9 is seen as the start of the GCSE year in which all students start GCSE style learning. Students therefore make initial options choices in creative and practical subjects at the end of Year 8 in order to go into greater depth in Year 9 and to be able to discern which subjects they are likely to want to study at GCSE. All students take core RE & PE as well as a full tutor time programme of PSHE

Progression & Pace

The Trust curriculum has been consciously created to give continuity from Year 7 to Year 13. Common assessment objectives are used throughout the delivery in a subject starting from year 7. The banding of the curriculum allows teachers to ensure students make strong progress from their individual starting points. The pace of the curriculum should allow all students to well above national levels of expected progress between Year 7 & Year 11. Using the new number grading system at GCSE our current target setting would produce the following progression rates (which were equivalent to most students making 4 levels of progress from KS2 to KS 4)

Our school progression chart is below:

Curriculum Band	Ave Cats Band	Equivalent KS2 Entry grade	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Equivalent to
Advanced +	130-141	6C	6-	6+	7	8-	8+	A*
Advanced A*/A	125-130	5A	5+	6	7-	7+	8	A*/A
	119-124	5B	5-	5+	6	7-	7+	A
	111-118	5C	4	5-	5+	6	7-	A
Higher A/B	106-110	4A	3+	4	5-	5+	6	B
	101-105	4B	3-	3+	4	5-	5+	B
	95-100	4C	2-	2+	3	4-	4+	C
Core C/D	89-94	3A	1+	2-	2+	3	4-	C/D
	84-89	3B	1	2-	2	3-	3+	D
Nurture D-F	80-84	3C	1-	1+	2	2+	3	D/E
	Below	2	1-	1	1+	2-	2	E/F

There is a high overlap between the curriculum coverage in the lower sets following the advanced course and the top sets in the higher. This will allow students to transfer from one curriculum band to the other in any one subject. Teachers are also aware that students at the higher end of a grade boundary on entry have a greater chance of achieving 4 levels of progress than those at the lower end on entry.

Year 9 and Year 11 transition

Year 9 is seen at the school as a GCSE transition year during which all students begin to work in the style expected at GCSE. Students receive an end of year target as a number GCSE grade. The end of year targets have been set up to ensure that they have made better than expected progress from key stage 2 to Key stage 4 by the end of year 11. This system allows students to make an informed judgement at the end of year 9 as to whether a particular subject will be a strong choice for them at GCSE. Formal GCSE option choices are not confirmed until July of Year 9 and are based on the results of the Year 9 examinations.

Students in year 11 will similarly use their GCSE mock examination grades at Christmas to discern which subjects they will be eligible to study at A-Level

GCSE Options

Differentiation within the curriculum at KS3 allows students to discern which subjects they are best at and to begin to focus on these. At the end of Year 8 students will select the creative and applied subjects which they think they are most likely to consider as a GCSE option. This enables them to study these at a greater depth in the transition year and make more informed choices about their final GCSE choices from the start of Year 10.

At GCSE all students study a core of English (Literature & Language), Maths, Science & RE and most students will take 9 GCSEs. Exceptions to this are our most able students who may study an additional (10th) GCSE outside the normal timetable. Students within the Core programme will receive additional periods of curriculum support and therefore may study 7 or 8 courses. In some cases students may chose BTEC subjects as the GCSE equivalent course in an applied area.

In order to assist students in their choices the KS4 curriculum is arranged in three broad pathways which are also pitched at three levels. Details of the pathways for Trust schools can be found in the KS 4 option booklets: see linked documents.

Post-16 Offer

In making their KS4 curriculum choices students are also encouraged to project ahead to KS5 (6th Form) and to consider both the subjects they may wish to pursue and the entry grades required for particular courses.

All courses offered Post-16 are Level 3 courses (A-Level equivalent) A-Level courses generally require at least a Grade 6 as the entry criteria and in some cases a Grade 7. Entry grades are usually taken from same subject at GCSE but in some cases are taken from English and/or Maths where there is no GCSE equivalent subject. Most subjects offered at GCSE are also available at A-Level.

Individual students have a free choice of subjects within the blocks provided they meet the entrance requirements for the course concerned. Students are however guided towards combinations of choices suitable for access to courses at college and university. These are arranged as 2 tiers and are referred to as (i) **General** –students study 3 A levels from year **12**, (ii) **Twyford Additional Programme** –students may study 4 courses and would be expected to complete an extended project qualification. Students wishing to follow the Additional programme will be expected to achieve at least grade 7 in all GCSEs with grades 8/9 in their A-Level choice subjects.

1. A full list of current 6th Form subject choices, the entrance grades and the option blocks can be found in the Key stage Curriculum documents and the course guides: see linked documents

Content & coverage

The content of the curriculum is agreed at school level within the set framework of skills (captured in the Assessment objectives for that course) and progression rates both of which are a set expectation for all Trust schools. The assessments set for students will also be directly comparable between schools. Regular exchanges & paired observation programmes between the schools as well as joint inset and curriculum conferences at departmental level will allow HoDs & key stage leads to exchange resources and identify new content as appropriate.

In addition to the subject specific skills defined by exam syllabuses, the trust has identified a set of thinking skills which are developed across the curriculum. The thinking skills are:

- Listen intently
- Read critically
- Write Cogently
- Speak purposefully
- Memorise accurately
- Explore analytically
- Discern logical patterns
- Form Coherent arguments
- Apply systems

Independent learning

All core subjects are expected to set lesson prep every lesson which is used as a bridge between one lesson and the next. Lesson prep should ensure that every student comes to the lesson prepared and ready to learn. Really effective use of lesson prep allows teachers to set expectations of 'low level tasks (such as memorising vocabulary or formulae, pre-reading or research) being undertaken outside the lesson in order to ensure lesson time is used effectively to do more challenging activities. In year's 7-11 Lesson prep should normally take 15 to 20 minutes and is in contrast to longer written homework's which will be set 2 or 3 times per half term. These homework's are longer pieces of work which will have been prepared for in class and are formally assessed as part of the students' grade for the term / half term. Homeworks will give students the opportunity to apply and extend their class learning. In year 12&13 students should be set at least one hours independent work for each lesson from each that day

Accessing the Curriculum

Each Department has its own area of Copia (the School's Virtual Learning Environment).Copia contains the overview of the curriculum (assessment objectives & skills) as well as lesson level resources. Students are therefore strongly encouraged to use Copia to recap on an area of any topic which they may not have understood or to access resources to support their independent learning. Departmental areas will also contain links to extension activities.

Wider Learning

Subjects will offer opportunities to undertake wider learning activities (or extended electives) which extend curriculum opportunities. In some cases these will involve 6th Form students in coaching or supporting clubs (such as Debate club or Science Club) in others wider learning may take the form of preparation for competitions (Maths Challenge, Maths Olympiad) or Youth Speaks Out)

Subjects such as PE, Music, Art & Drama will rely heavily on a programme of extra-curricular or elective activities to stretch and challenge students. All students in the lower school are encouraged to take at least 2 extra-curricular activities and to retain at least one of these in upper school.

The Pastoral Curriculum & SMSC

All students follow a compulsory pastoral curriculum which comprises PSHE taught during tutor time and a workshop programme. The programme covers topics such as community responsibility, Peer pressure, informed choices and Careers & Guidance. It also includes awareness of issues such as bullying, internet safety, and substance abuse.

The pastoral curriculum has been developed to support the Christian identity of the trust and therefore uses bible stories and case studies of iconic figures as part of its core content.

Linked documents

2. [Key Stage 4 options booklet -Twyford](#)
3. [Key Stage 4 Options booklet – William Perkin](#)
4. [Key Stage Curriculum document and Course guide - Twyford](#)
5. [Pastoral Curriculum overview](#)