

Curriculum Policy

September 2020

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Associated documents:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework Procedure • Teaching and Learning Charter • CSI Guide • Personal and Social Development and Character Education programmes • CEIAG policy and programme 	
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 and Health Education Policy (primary) • Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy (secondary) • Early Years Foundation Stage Policy • Pupil Premium Policy • CEIAG Policy 	

Policy statement approved by the Standards and Outcomes Committee, April 2020

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:

At TQEA, we develop a broad and balanced curriculum that enables students to learn, recall and apply knowledge and skills across different contexts, supported by a robust and consistent approach to assessment. This will lead to successful and resilient lifelong learners who can cope in a range of changing contexts.

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:

At TQEA, the following subjects are taught at Key Stage 3:

- English and Maths: 8 hours per fortnight
- Science 6 hours per fortnight
- MFL 4 hours per fortnight (2 for French and 2 for Spanish)
- PE: 4 hours per fortnight
- Geography and History: 4 hours each per fortnight
- Food; STEM; PSHE; Art: 2 hours per fortnight
- RE; ICT; Music and Drama: 1 hour per fortnight.

At TQEA, the following subjects are taught at Key Stage 4:

- English, Science and Maths: 8 periods per fortnight
- PE: 4 hours per fortnight
- RE: 3 hours per fortnight
- PSHE: 2 hours per fortnight
- 4 Option choices of 4 hours per fortnight

*There are two years of outgoing curriculum structures where students have 5 options and have less RE, PE and PSHE time.

At Key Stage 3, Maths and MFL are blocked together and are broadly set by ability to reduce the bottom set being a sink group. English and PE are set together and these are again loosely set for the previous reason. Science, Geography and History are set by a mixed ability approach and the final block of subjects are grouped by another mixed ability approach (they are in their mixed ability tutor groups). At Key Stage 4, Maths and PHSE are grouped together and set by ability; English and PE are grouped together and mixed ability; Science and RE are set by ability (with the top set doing Triple Science).

Because TQEA is an inclusive school, the curriculum is largely unchanged for SEN students, however there are adaptations. For instance, students who arrive at TQEA and are below national average at KS2 are given a catch-up programme – regardless of funding being cut. The setting of students with SEND is particularly discussed with the SENCO and it may mean, based on individual need, that some SEND students are not set based on ability alone. All students receive a learning passport which class teachers are aware of and adapt their lessons accordingly, and there are statements which have to be reviewed termly. Some extra provision is provided for specific students, for instance we allow one EHCP student to be home schooled for 4 periods a fortnight and we do allow more practical subjects to be studied – while still maintaining high academic subjects to be taken. This has meant a careful approach to support subjects and allow us to have a broad curriculum (Music and Drama run every year despite having small class sizes, for example). Also, our vocational subjects are a small bespoke few, which best suit the needs of our students, particularly our students with SEND. Hospitality and Catering, Sport and Engineering are particularly inclusive and supportive of SEND students and they achieve well – indeed our curriculum demonstrates our inclusive approach to SEND students as their progress outcomes are higher than non SEND students (projected P8 for SEND E students is 0.24 and SEND K students is 0.57).

There are fewer EAL students at TQEA than the national average. To adapt the curriculum, we strategically place students who are EAL and often place them with high performing peers. EAL students are removed from some lessons in order to complete a catch-up programme with a dedicated member of staff who works with our EAL students. We have also had success by placing our EAL students in for their native language GCSE as an extra subject, which has resulted in them getting high grades (including 2 9s last year).

All KS2H students are directed to be eligible for the EBacc, this means that the curriculum has had to be adapted and staffing is deployed to accommodate the delivering of more MFL and Humanities subjects. This curriculum change is now embedded in the TQEA culture and we have gone from having 7% eligibility to 50%, and 65% next year. KS2H students are also directed to take Triple Science to ensure their curriculum is ambitious. We also limit the number of vocational subjects at TQEA to ensure that while we offer a broad curriculum, our vocational subjects are well chosen, and KS2H students are limited to just one.

The huge, amassed wealth of human knowledge, and what we choose to pass on to the next generation through teaching in our school (the curriculum), is at the heart of TQEA's education. Knowledge goes beyond education: it is important in its elevation of society and it combats social inequality. At TQEA, we need to know what our core knowledge is for each subject and how we teach this in a sequenced way. We identify as having a knowledge-engaged approach. There is a slight distinction between being fully knowledge-led and knowledge-engaged. Why do we declare ourselves to be knowledge-engaged? Well, we believe that knowledge drives our curriculum BUT we also appreciate that our students learn skills alongside knowledge acquisition. This involves carefully

planning what knowledge students should learn to enable them to showcase higher order skills students should be 'learning', not 'doing'. Getting students to develop skills will 'season' their learning experience and will also get them to be prepared to enter the next stage of their lives. They will be resilient lifelong learners who can cope in a range of changing contexts.

Our teaching of the curriculum is underpinned by principles similar to Rosenshine's. Through direct instruction, TQEA teachers teach new knowledge. This is stored in the long-term memory through active learning and is revisited when the teacher interleaves content. The working memory gets overloaded when students cannot recall long term memory if the knowledge is not embedded, this is why at TQEA we have carefully sequenced long-term plans that interleaves key knowledge concepts. Every lesson starts with a 'Do Now' recall short knowledge test, and we have introduced knowledge organisers across a range of subjects. This year, the expectation is that every subject has knowledge organisers for all units for at least half of their year groups. These will also be developed to be used for homework opportunities.

At the heart of our curriculum is the aim to broaden our students' cultural capital. This has meant that we develop cross curricular links within our curriculum that are meaningful and expand our students' knowledge, while also supporting cognitive load. Reading is at the core of our curriculum and it has meant that we promote disciplinary literacy and ensure each curriculum area offers robust reading opportunities. Students also read twice a week in tutor time and these are culturally significant texts that are from a wide range of authors and experiences.

6 Curriculum Maps

- 6.1 Every subject/phase 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 Personal and Social Development and Character Education programmes 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	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)	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.