

Teaching and Learning Policy 2021

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 Trustees are also Trustees of the exempt charity; the term 'Trustee' used in this Policy also means Director. This Policy applies to all staff within the Link Academy Trust.

Vision

The Link Academy Trust believes in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children take responsibility for themselves as learners and are able to articulate what learning means for them. We are committed to raising standards for our children, while developing their aspirations to establish an ethos of continuous improvement. Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun.

The Trust believes it is the right of all pupils to be given access to a high quality, inclusive, broad and balanced curriculum which enables each learner to have high expectations and achieve high standards.

Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives.

Rational

To ensure that we provide the best teaching and learning opportunities for both children and adults we must continuously strive to ensure each school within the Trust provides the highest quality of teaching and learning through an in-depth knowledge of current pedagogy and a thirst for professional development.

Learning and teaching

In our Trust the characteristics of very good teaching and learning are:

1. Evidence of excellent progress that is personal to individual pupils and ensures they achieve to the best of their ability. Expectations and achievement are high.
2. Teaching is stimulating, enthusiastic and consistently challenging, stemming from expert knowledge of the curriculum -how to teach it and how pupils learn.
3. There are excellent relationships in the classroom that underpin teaching and learning.
4. Teaching methods are well selected and time is used very productively for whole class, independent and group work.
5. Activities and demands are matched sensitively to individual pupil's needs.
6. Well-directed Teaching Assistants reinforce and support learning very effectively.
7. Teaching and Learning is underpinned by the principles of John Hattie's Visible Learning, supported by Guy Claxton's Building Learning Power.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure there is a coherent and consistent approach which all Trust schools and their communities are aware of and put into continuous practice.
- All Trust schools deliver the entitlement for pupils to develop them to their full potential.

- To make clear the Trust's core values and ethos in order to promote this approach to the school community.

Our Trust Schools Will:

- Constantly assess what our children need in order to plan effectively to deliver the skills, knowledge and understanding they require, across the curriculum.
- Deliver teaching in a stimulating and passionate way to motivate and inspire pupils to give their best and engage fully in the learning process.
- Ensure all pupils receive an effective and individualised PSHE curriculum that supports them as responsible learners and enables them to be in a position to learn effectively.
- Through a wide range of planned and challenging experiences, give pupils relevant opportunities to understand the purpose of learning for life.
- Take account of pupil's life experiences and abilities to ensure appropriate continuity and progression in learning, not being afraid to make alterations and adaptations to suit individuals, including the use of intervention programmes.
- Use current statutory guidance and recent educational research to inform practice
- Celebrate learning and progress appropriately to the individual.
- Promote independent learning to make lifelong choices.
- Promote pupils, spiritual, moral, cultural and physical well-being so that all pupils can thrive in a safe and supportive learning community.
- Value all pupils irrespective of their ability, race, gender, age, achievement or background.
- Teach children effective learning behaviours so that they can become independent, lifelong learners.
- Encourage and provide opportunity for deep learning.

All Staff Will:

- Promote high expectations for all.
- Inspire pupils' aspirations to achieve.
- Ensure pupils acquire knowledge, skills and understanding progressively and at an appropriate pace through quality lesson planning where objectives are shared and understood.
- Develop effective rapport between staff and pupils to motivate and challenge through positive and constructive feedback ensuring pupils know how to improve.
- Allow pupils to assess their own progress with clear teacher support and marking enabling them to identify areas for improvement.
- Share strengths and expertise across the Trust.
- Have a secure subject knowledge, providing clear explanations and using skilful questioning, listening to pupils and responding appropriately.
- Ensure children take ownership of their learning through- understanding of how they learn, small step targets and opportunities to respond to the marking and dialogue with teachers.
- Provide quality and effective marking and feedback to pupils both written and verbal.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for pupils to make their own choices and be active learners.
- Use a range of teaching styles in an appropriate balance relevant to the learning.
- Use a balance of explanation, demonstration, discussion, practice, investigation and problem solving.

- Plan effectively to ensure a high level of progress is achieved through analysis and reflecting closely on impact of actions for individuals. Attainment and progress is tracked termly using SIMS.
- Identify and support specific learning requirements through high quality, personalised interventions that deliver targeted and accelerated progress.
- Use Quality First Teaching to identify appropriately challenging tasks which ensure consistent and good progress.
- Use assessment for learning to respond to learners needs and adapt lessons as appropriate to ensure progress.
- Be monitored as part of performance management to ensure appropriate CPD is in place and effective in its aims of continually developing teaching skills.
- Use pupils' interests wherever possible to motivate, inspire and make learning purposeful.
- Check for understanding through a range of effective questioning techniques. For example, giving opportunities for pupils to ask questions.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to learn individually, collaboratively and as a whole class, school, or Trust.
- Make the best use of parents/carers, the community, the locality and other adults and experiences.
- Promote the partnership between home and school, for example, through homework, workshops and lines of communication.
- Manage the support of other adults in the classroom by ensuring they are suitably informed and are given direction by the teacher.
- Recognise the importance of health and safety, where potential risks and hazards are identified in risk assessments, minimise and report in line with the health and safety policy.
- Recognise the importance of safeguarding, attend relevant training and keep up to date with current procedures.
- Be part of the whole Trust evaluation process and acknowledge the professional views of staff.
- Acknowledge that personal, social and emotional aspects of the curriculum are of high importance and can improve the learning capacity of pupils.
- Support extra-curricular clubs and recognise that they are vital to developing the experiences of pupils across the Trust.
- Incorporate experiences and understanding of the health and well-being of the whole child, including physical activity, good diet etc.
- Implement the Trust's behaviour policy.
- Recognise the importance of cultural diversity, multi-cultural Britain and promotion of British values. Church schools will uphold the distinctive Christian ethos and values.

Pupils Should:

- Experience a wide variety of learning situations and activities- including visits, learning styles, opportunities to learn in different groups etc. in order to develop their understanding and skills.
- Develop and display both perseverance and critical thinking within their learning- demonstrating positive attitudes to learning.
- Be able to learn from their mistakes as well as the successes showing commitment and enjoyment.

- Have an awareness of the qualities we all exhibit when learning to learn in order to make good decisions about their own learning.
- Practise, apply and master newly acquired skills as they progress through the school, with individual needs being catered for.
- Have access to, and be expected to select from a range of resources that are both appropriate and supportive.
- Have a high quality, stimulating learning environment which is interactive, visual and celebrates pupil achievement alongside supporting their learning.
- Be listened to, nurtured and respected.
- Make at least expected progress and achieve to their full potential as the whole child, both educationally and in the acquisition of life skills.

Computing and IT

Our Trust schools aim for a blended approach where computing is taught both discretely, including Online safety, and integrated into quality first teaching and learning. Teachers should seek to identify where a blended approach may have positive impact on pupil motivation, engagement and progress. Teachers will integrate computing and IT (including Microsoft Teams) into teaching and learning in order to support the whole class, groups and individuals.

Pupils will become proficient in the use of IT, Teams and online learning across the curriculum, including to support home-learning.

The Link Academy Trust commitment to blended learning ensures that each Academy is well resourced and that we continue to capitalise on the strides made during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members of the Local Boards will:

- Undertake monitoring visits.
- Learn, support and challenge all areas related to Teaching and Learning and ask questions that support reflective practice and challenge pedagogical approaches.
- Report back to the Standards & Curriculum Committee as a conduit to the Board of Trustees.

Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn.

Parents will be encouraged to:

- Work in partnership with the class teacher and the school.
- Attend parents' evenings.
- Attend workshops and information evenings.
- Regularly visit the school's website and read newsletters.
- Inform teachers of any issues that may affect their child's learning.
- Support with home learning.

Learning Environment

The Link Academy Trust recognises the importance the learning environment can have on positive learning outcomes. Purpose must be considered when making decisions concerning the learning environment so that the best outcome for the learner can be achieved.

- Working walls celebrate the process of learning and support pupils through the process of what it means to be a learner.
- Well-displayed work demonstrates to pupils, teachers, parents/carers and visitors the value that is placed on pupils' learning and learning journey.
- Pupils whenever possible should be involved in displays, and use them effectively to facilitate their own learning outcome

Homework/Home learning

Homework is considered an important aspect in promoting and extending learning. Work will be set and marked in line with each individual school policy, including integrating computing and IT for a blended approach.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The quality of teaching and learning will be monitored by:

- Trust Executive Improvement Team, Executive/Academy Heads
- Academy Trust Curriculum Hub Leads.
- External Advisors
- Local Governors

Monitoring will be carried out through:

- Lesson observations (formal/informal)
- Drop in sessions
- Book scrutiny
- Data analysis/pupil progress meetings
- Pupil conferences
- Moderations
- Learning Walks

Results of monitoring will inform:

- School self-evaluation form
- Academy Strategic improvement priorities
- Academy Trust Strategic improvement plan
- Staff appraisals

The EIT, Executive/Academy Heads will monitor its implementation throughout the year and evaluate the impact of the policy on raising standards and ensuring consistency and coherence across the school as part of the performance management cycle for teachers.

This Policy is reviewed by the Academy Heads and Standards & Curriculum committee and approved by the Board of Trustees on a two-yearly cycle.

Reviewed by the Standards & Curriculum Committee

Approved by the Board of Trustees: October 2021