

The Link Secondary School

Curriculum Policy

For review September 2022
Written by Hannah Wallwork

CURRICULUM POLICY

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction• Intent• Implementation• How we organise learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact• How we are ensuring our aims are achieved• SMSC and SRE
---	---

Introduction:

Professor Michael Young describes the curriculum as an entitlement to ‘powerful knowledge’ and asks if schools offer this entitlement to all¹. At The Link Secondary School, we believe this entitlement is for every student on our role. As a specialist provision for SLCN and ASC needs, we must reflect upon what powerful knowledge means for our students and ensure they can access this fundamental entitlement. Our curriculum is designed to provide ‘powerful knowledge’ for all students as both learned academic information and an acquired set of social and life skills. Whilst for some, knowledge and skills are two separate yet inextricably linked concepts, for our students they are more often one and the same thing. For many, social skills are not something naturally, gradually acquired through life, but are something which must be learned the way one may regard the learning of algebra or grammatical structure.

Intent:

Our vision is for all students to leave our school with enriched and developed **wellbeing, independence, communication and achievement**. This is what drives everything we do at The Link. Our curriculum is designed with a view to help students develop each of these aspects over their time here and ultimately we want to see:

- Students gaining up to nine external accreditations including English and Maths
- Students equipped with skills to enable them to look after themselves in the wider community

- Students leaving with the ability to complete straightforward aspects of everyday living
- Inclusive curriculum content to provide all with academic knowledge in formal and physical expressive curriculum areas
- Inclusive curriculum content to provide all KS5 students with a robust external independent curriculum offer with elements of choice
- An extensively researched and fully embedded appropriately tailored SRE curriculum which meets all new DfE requirements

All teachers are trained in their subject specialism and deliver high quality subject-knowledge driven content. In a collaborative approach to curriculum aims, all teachers have collectively reflected upon and developed a robust sense of curricular direction; demonstrated in measured long term plans and subject specific statements of curriculum intent. These statements consider how the curriculum promotes school values and in turn British values, as well as noting any rationale behind the sequencing of topics, learning, skills and ideas.

Implementation:

Our curriculum structure is tailored to each pathway:

Three classes in KS3 in which both year 7 and year 8 students are taught together:

Yates – a nurture based class who stays with the same tutor for most subjects.

Weir – a nurture based class who stays with the same tutor for most subjects, with a slightly lower level of support than Yates.

Tomlin – a class with a greater level of targeted support.

Fuller – a class with a greater level of monitored independent learning.

KS4 and 5 are taught together in three 'core groups' for subjects including English, Maths, ICT and PE. They are then taught separately in four 'X/Y' groups for all other subjects, including KS5 college placement.

Core Rowsell – a mixed group of KS4 and 5 with more targeted support.

Core Wood – a mixed group of KS4 and 5 with less targeted support.

Core Johnson – a mixed group of KS4 and 5 with greater level of independent learning practice.

4X – a mixed group of KS4 with greater level of independent learning practice.

4Y – a mixed group of KS4 with more targeted support.

5X – a mixed group of KS5 with greater level of independent learning practice.

5Y – a mixed group of KS5 with more targeted support.

All subjects come under one of the four curriculum areas:

Formal, Physical Expressive, SMSC and External Independent

How we organise learning (larger version named as Curriculum Overview):

Intent	What do we want to achieve?	SDP Targets 2021: Link Priority lessons implemented to help generalise learning TA role developed to better support learning Meaningful assessment targets developed to support learning Literacy focus across curriculum																																						
	Why?	School Vision: for all students to leave with developed: Wellbeing Independence Communication Achievement																																						
Implement	How we will do it	Personalised Curriculum				Formal Curriculum																																		
	How we will know it's working	<p>All students are closely monitored and observed. All staff collate information on students' strengths and barriers to learning in a whole-school audit. This audit is analysed for patterns and used to create the LINK PRIORITIES.</p> <p>The Link Priorities are a set of long term life targets for all students to work towards to help to prepare them for life after The Link. These targets are baselined and taught alongside the formal curriculum in all lessons and other learning environments at all times by all staff.</p> <p>1. Friendships - able to form and maintain positive relationships with peers. 2. Friendships - able to resolve conflict with others and move forward in relationships in a successful way. 3. Readiness to learn - able to focus and attend to adult led activities. 4. Learning to learn - able to accept and apply different strategies in their learning. 5. Learning to learn - able to use strategies that enable them to learn independently. 6. Communication - Functional - able to independently communicate important information to get their needs met and get help. 7. Communication - Social - able to enjoy and take part in reciprocal communication with known adults and peers. 8. Communication - Formal - able to communicate effectively and appropriately with less familiar people in a more formal setting. 9. Communication - Literacy - able to use their favoured form of written communication effectively. 10. Transfer and generalise skills - able to apply knowledge and skills they learn at school to different activities and environments.</p> <p>11. Emotional Development - able to recognise and communicate their emotions and implement effective strategies to support self-regulation. 12. Emotional Development - able to recognise and value their own abilities and barriers leading to a positive self-esteem. 13. Emotional Development - Theory of Mind - able to see a situation from another person's perspective and adjust their behaviour to support others. 14. Personal safety - able to see hidden risks by recognising less obvious intentions of others making safe choices. 15. Social expectations - able to have a good understanding of expected behaviour in different contexts both in and outside of school. 16. Problem solving - able to find solutions to different sized problems. 17. Time and leisure - able to participate in and enjoy a range of leisure and social activities. 18. Healthy lifestyle - Physical - knows how to keep self physically and is pro-active in putting these strategies into practice. 19. Healthy lifestyle - Mental Health - knows how to have good mental health and is able to fill their "emotional tank". 20. Sensory processing - Can recognise their sensory processing difficulties and actively engage in activities that help them address their sensory processing needs.</p>				<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>KS3 Class-based groups Yates, Weir</th> <th>KS3 Non-class-based groups Tomlin, Fuller</th> <th>KS4 X/Y groups Wood 4X, Rowsell 4Y</th> <th>KS5 X/Y groups Johnson 5X, Johnson 5Y</th> <th>KS4 and KS5 mixed Core groups CJ, CW, CR</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Formal</td> <td>English Science ICT Humanities</td> <td>English Maths Science ICT Humanities</td> <td>Science Humanities</td> <td></td> <td>English Maths ICT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical/Expressive</td> <td>PE DT Project</td> <td>PE Art DT Project</td> <td>DT Art</td> <td>DT</td> <td>PE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RSE/SMSC</td> <td>RSE Access Life Skills</td> <td>RSE Access</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>RSE Access</td> </tr> <tr> <td>External/Independent</td> <td>Link Priorities</td> <td>Link Priorities</td> <td>Link Priorities</td> <td>CWL - Community Work Leisure options NESCOT College Work Experience</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>All students study all curriculum areas to a lesser or greater degree depending on need</p>						KS3 Class-based groups Yates, Weir	KS3 Non-class-based groups Tomlin, Fuller	KS4 X/Y groups Wood 4X, Rowsell 4Y	KS5 X/Y groups Johnson 5X, Johnson 5Y	KS4 and KS5 mixed Core groups CJ, CW, CR	Formal	English Science ICT Humanities	English Maths Science ICT Humanities	Science Humanities		English Maths ICT	Physical/Expressive	PE DT Project	PE Art DT Project	DT Art	DT	PE	RSE/SMSC	RSE Access Life Skills	RSE Access			RSE Access	External/Independent	Link Priorities	Link Priorities	Link Priorities	CWL - Community Work Leisure options NESCOT College Work Experience	
		KS3 Class-based groups Yates, Weir	KS3 Non-class-based groups Tomlin, Fuller	KS4 X/Y groups Wood 4X, Rowsell 4Y	KS5 X/Y groups Johnson 5X, Johnson 5Y	KS4 and KS5 mixed Core groups CJ, CW, CR																																		
Formal	English Science ICT Humanities	English Maths Science ICT Humanities	Science Humanities		English Maths ICT																																			
Physical/Expressive	PE DT Project	PE Art DT Project	DT Art	DT	PE																																			
RSE/SMSC	RSE Access Life Skills	RSE Access			RSE Access																																			
External/Independent	Link Priorities	Link Priorities	Link Priorities	CWL - Community Work Leisure options NESCOT College Work Experience																																				
The real life impact	<p>The Link Priorities are broken into succinct practical steps of learning which are taught to all KS3 and 4 students in lessons which predominantly take place off site in 'real life' environments. KS5 students have a similar lesson called Community Work Leisure which is tailored to their personal choices. All students are baselined against the Link Priorities and then assessed every term by the class team.</p> <p>Areas for development are identified and appropriate intervention is put in place. Students' progress is recorded and this data feeds into EHCP reviews, parent contact and progress reports.</p>				<p>All students are placed into one of three groups, regardless of age or level; SUPPORTED, GUIDED and INDEPENDENT.</p> <p>All previous data has been collated and analysed to determine exactly how much progress is made by each group on average per subject. This data is used to create extremely specific, personalised targets for the next academic year.</p> <p>All students are baselined then assessed termly on SOLAR against Link Steps- key performance indicators based on a tailored version of the National Curriculum. This data feeds into EHCP reviews, parent contact and progress reports. It is then used to tailor the targets even further year on year.</p>																																			
Impact	<p>Lifestyle supports good mental and physical health Can manage good personal care for self and environment Can live in a small community with peers and have safe, positive relationships Can stay safe on transport and in public places Can shop appropriately for needs Can express emotion in a regulated, appropriate manner Can apply learned coping strategies to different real life contexts Gain formal employment wherever possible Attend further education</p>																																							

All students study all curriculum areas to a lesser or greater degree depending on pathway.

All students have lessons called 'Access' run by the therapy team as well as lessons dedicated to offsite application of learning called Link Priorities, or WCL (Work, Community Leisure) for KS5.

	English	Maths	Science	ICT	PE	Humanities	DT	Art	Life Skills	RSE	Link Priorities	Project	Drama	Intervention Time	WCL	Access	College	Total
Weir	4	4	2	1	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	2	1	1		1		30
Yates	4	4	2	1	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	2	1	1		1		30
Tomlin	4	4	3	1	2	3	3	2		2	2	2		1		1		30
Fuller	4	4	3	1	2	3	3	2		2	2	2		1		1		30
Core Rowsell	4	4		1	2					2				1		1		15
Core Wood	4	4		1	2					2				1		1		15
Core Johnson	4	4		1	2					2				1		1		15
4X			3			3	2	3			4							15
4Y			3			3	2	3			4							15
5X					1		2								6		6	15
5Y							2			1					6		6	15

Impact:

The impact of our curriculum is measured and evidenced in both formative and summative forms of assessment. Using assessment monitoring software SOLAR, we use a series of levels called 'Link Steps' loosely based around National Curriculum, however using far more personalised criteria. This criteria is in the form of written key performance indicators created by our own subject specialists. This system is updated by teachers as an ongoing process and each term a progress report is generated and sent home to parents. Alongside this report is a Link Priorities report, this is a way for us to measure the progress our

students make, not only in academia but in moving closer to securing the aim we hold for all our children as set out in our whole school vision of **wellbeing, independence, communication and achievement**. We believe that student progress towards this vision is also underpinned by the work they do with our therapy team. Our therapists annually report the progress made by all students and this is also reflected in the updated annual reviews.

Overall, each individual student is closely monitored by all staff, whether this is in the form of subject based criteria, therapy reports, annual reviews, intervention progress or just the verbal discussions which form part of everyday life at The Link, particularly in structured professional and team meetings. One of the strongest indicators of the impact of our curriculum is the fact that one hundred percent of our students go on to further education.

How we are ensuring our aims are achieved:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing assessment and progress reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular reporting on Link Priorities progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key performance indicators based on NC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing number of external accreditations per pupil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong personal relationships between staff and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In depth individual therapy reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful work placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate pace to the lesson; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking time before answering questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-ended, thought provoking, challenging questions of the children; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students go on to further education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reviews of EHCP targets

SMSC and SRE:

Our SMSC curriculum area is comprised of RSE and Access. The RSE course has been designed to cover all national requirements and build on the existing knowledge of students to varying degrees. Students explore the notion of ‘identity’ and a ‘personal action plan’ which allows them to immediately relate the topics to themselves and their own lives moving forward. This is then built upon by topics covering ‘risk and safety’ and then ‘emotional well-being’ to identify how well-being may be compromised and in turn how it can be developed. This is extended further in the following topic of ‘healthy lifestyles’ which gives a practical application for the knowledge gained so far throughout the course. At KS4 this also incorporates direct learning in relation to college courses and applications. The idea of wellbeing and a healthy lifestyle both physically and emotionally is then developed further in the next topic of relationships. After looking at relationships the students go on to study personal finance and managing money, this ties into the functional numeracy learned in maths and links back to risk and safety.

Students also explore Britain and British values, looking at how the ideas they have studied fit in with our democracy, rule of law, personal liberties, rights and responsibilities etc.

The topic of SRE has recently been redesigned in response to the statutory government guidelines which came into place in September 2020. A team of staff including the Headteacher, Deputy Head for Teaching and Learning, Teacher of Humanities and RSE (Formerly Life Skills) and Science Teacher/Post 16 Tutor received external training and met regularly to collate the results of a parent audit and co-produce an RSE curriculum with cross curricular links. As our students have social needs and a high degree of vulnerability, we have ensured the program is as effective and appropriate as possible. We aim for all students to be appropriately prepared for ‘real life’ scenarios without increasing existing anxieties.