



POLICY DOCUMENT

Curriculum Policy

Document Owner:	Trust Board
Responsible Trust Committee:	Trust Leadership Group
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1. Other relevant policies and documents

- Assembly Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Drugs Policy (Students)
- Educational Visits and Trips Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Inclusion Policy
- Literacy Policy
- Numeracy Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Sex and Relationships Education Policy
- Self-Evaluation Policy
- SMC Policy
- Awarding Body Specifications
- Guidance on displays and Learning Walls in Free Schools
- Lesson planning pack
- National Teachers' Standards

2. Explanation of terms used in the policy

'Trust' = Seckford Education Trust

'SMSC' = Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural

3. Purpose of the policy

The 'school' curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that our schools and centres plan for its students. As such it is a crucial framework for ensuring that every student within each SET setting attains standards of achievement that are the highest of which they are capable because they experience teaching of the highest possible standard (the 'striving for excellence' value). The curriculum and its delivery also provide the framework through which to promote our explicit commitment to a broad education. All settings within the Seckford Education Trust adopt and maintain a curriculum that is in accordance with this framework, with appropriate DfE legislation and guidance, and serves the interests of all its students.

4. Policy Statement

The SET curriculum is a knowledge-rich curriculum. This means that we offer all our Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students the opportunity to study a variety of academic subjects on the basis that these will equip students with the knowledge of the culture which will empower them to have sustained success and to be flexible in an ever-changing world (the 'providing a foundation for life'

principle). Our clear focus on vocabulary acquisition reflects our belief that independent thought can only follow once key terminology is understood.

At Key Stage 1 and 2 students broadly follow the national curriculum, with a particular focus on English, reading, vocab acquisition and mathematics. From Year 2 upwards, a knowledge-based approach to history, geography and RE is designed to improve reading comprehension and broader cultural literacy.

The SET curriculum takes a broader view of curriculum beyond that which results in SATs and GCSE results alone. The National Curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum. Whilst, as academies, (free) schools are not formally required to follow the National Curriculum, our curricular do take account of the National Curriculum. The curriculum is the progression model and curriculum across all phases and settings is at least as broad and ambitious as the national curriculum.

The SET curriculum is therefore based on four key principles:

1. subject knowledge;
2. vocabulary;
3. social equity and building cultural literacy;
4. personal education plans for every student.

Through this vision we intend for our young people to be equipped to take their place in society as valued, economically viable and responsible citizens. Our students will leave our schools empowered as independent, co-operative, innovative and motivated young adults with the skills for and love of learning for life.

4. Aims and intentions

It is the responsibility of the Trust Board to ensure that all settings develop a curriculum which is

- consistent with the principles listed in this framework along with wider trust principles (which articulate the Trust's commitment to excellence, comprehensiveness, partnership, international citizenship and curriculum breadth).
- regularly reviewed as part of whole-school self-evaluation and revised accordingly
- communicated clearly and effectively to parents through the academy website.

School and Trust leaders ensure that all relevant staff have access to the relevant training and professional development necessary to plan and deliver the curriculum effectively.

4.1 Principles of overall curriculum design:

The SET curriculum across all phases and settings,

- embodies the highest expectation of what students can achieve and provides a framework for achieving progress which is well above that produced by students on average nationally;
- is structured to allow all students, whatever their gender, ethnicity, background, starting point or learning characteristics, to make rapid progress;
- inspires, intrigues and motivates students;
- is balanced and broadly based and which incorporates the humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning;

- provides sufficient learning time to ensure excellent progress in all these areas promotes the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of all students;
- prepares students to appreciate diversity and tolerance as fundamental values within modern British society;
- prepares students effectively for the next stage of their education, employment, self-employment or training;
- ensures students develop a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves safe;
- promotes important learning skills and attitudes, including resilience, independence and enquiry;
- makes provision for highly effective personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) incorporates sex and relationship education (SRE) to students appropriate to age and key stage, taking account of DfE guidance on sex and relationship education;
- incorporates important inter-disciplinary themes, allowing all teachers to be effective teachers of reading, writing, communication, numeracy and SMSC;
- ensures that the timetabled lessons within the school day are effectively supplemented by a thorough and well-integrated extra-curricular programme accessible to, and accessed by, all students;
- balances learning within the classroom with opportunities accessible to all students outside the setting through a relevant programme of trips and visits;
- incorporates well-planned and timely opportunities for appropriate assessment.

4.2 Principles of subject curriculum design:

With support from the Trust, Strategic Leads, School Leaders are responsible for determining the scope, content and sequencing of the curriculum in that subject, School leaders will ensure that there is a designated curriculum leader for every subject in each school and both the SLT Line Managers and the Subject Leader will be able to explain a clear justification for the selection of the content taught and the structure and organisation of the curriculum.

In each subject the Subject Leader will ensure that the curriculum in their subject will:

- enable students to remember more of the component knowledge which provides the building blocks of that subject;
- teach explicitly key vocabulary and tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary;
- ensure students know how to use and deploy this knowledge to answer increasingly sophisticated questions;
- provide a wide range of opportunities for students to demonstrate what they can do with this knowledge, including where relevant in oral presentation, written work and practical activity.

5. Curriculum practice

5.1 Systems and structures:

Supported by Trust personnel, each school and setting will ensure that Trust systems and structures which determine the effective delivery of the curriculum:

- encompass high quality, impartial guidance which helps students to make informed choices about which courses suit their academic needs and aspirations at relevant times;
- ensure every student undertakes a range of courses which allows the demonstration of excellent progress, as measured against relevant national accountability measures;

- incorporate appropriate mechanisms for deciding when students may need to undertake a reduced curriculum, or to access courses through an alternative provider;
- ensure that all students embarking on key stage 4 have an appropriate core academic curriculum;
- encourage students where possible to maintain foreign language learning across all key stages up to and including key stage 4 (please see the trust's International Policy for further detail);
- exploit collaborative working and common approaches across the Trust, for example by sharing curriculum materials or adopting common examination courses wherever possible;
- incorporate necessary curriculum content or methodology where a particular common approach has been agreed across the Trust, for example the use of the Frayer Model;
- ensure that detailed curriculum information exists for every area of the curriculum and that this is broken down into accessible schemes of work which is useful to the teachers delivering it.

5.2 Communicating curriculum information:

The following information must be clearly set out in the school's agreed curriculum and published on the school website:

- the Trust's approach to the curriculum;
- the content of the curriculum for each subject in relation to each academic year;
- in relation to key stage 1: the names of any phonics or reading schemes in operation;
- in relation to key stage 4: a list of the courses provided that lead to a GCSE qualification and list of other courses offered at Key Stage 4 and the qualifications that may be acquired;

5.3 GCSE specifications:

The choice of GCSE specification is governed by the following rules:

- All schools within the Trust have to follow the same specification in each subject

An agreed list of the specifications for study for students will be published separately.

5.4 Grouping and learning:

Grouping

- Students are placed in mixed ability tutor groups on arrival in Year 7. The information used for these decisions is gathered from feeder schools, meetings with parents / carers and students and initial diagnostic testing;
- The progress of students is formally reviewed termly and by each school's Senior Leadership Team through the Progress Checkpoint (PCP) system. Parents / carers and students are informed of any possible changes to groups.
- Students are placed in sets across the Core and Ebacc subjects from Year 8; sets are kept under constant review.

Learning areas

- The Trust believes that the school environment is a critical factor in developing a culture of high achievement and learning;
- It is expected that all classrooms and learning and public areas in the schools will have strong, stimulating and inspiring displays that support the curriculum offered in that area or at that time of the school year. The responsibility for this sits with the Subject Leaders;

- Learning areas (classrooms, labs, workshops, PE areas, studios) should be organised in such a way that supports the learning in that area and takes full account of the health and safety of the students and adults who are working in that area.

6. Complaints

Any complaints about this policy from outside the Trust should be made in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Policy. Any other complaints should be brought to the attention of the Head of School of the relevant school in the first instance.

Complaints that are in the public interest and relate to suspected malpractice may be appropriate to raise under the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

7. Compliance and performance monitoring

The Trust will review this policy every two years and ensure that practice across all schools is in line with this policy. Any review will take into account the most up-to-date legislation and guidance.

The Trust has identified a range of Assurance Methodologies as tools by which compliance with policies can be tested. Those most relevant to this policy include:

- External Audit
- Internal Audit