POLICY

for

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

Reviewed

June 2019	**September 2021**	**September 2024**
June 2020	**September 2022**	**September 2025**
April 2021	**September 2023**	

Striving for excellence, caring for all
Within a loving and caring Christian environment.

Our Vision

We are a community in which everyone is offered the opportunity to fulfil their full potential, to understand themselves and be valued for who they are. Through a stimulating and challenging learning environment, we pursue academic excellence and seek the flourishing of all. This is because we know we are all God's children.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can." ***John Wesley***

Our work and vision is based on five core values of:

Integrity Equality Respect Care Inclusion

We recognise that children are created in the image of God but also value their individuality as they explore their own God given talents and are treated with respect and dignity at all times. We understand that a curriculum is the totality of a child's experience during their entire time at school. It is not isolated to subjects or viewed solely within small timeframes. It is all-encompassing. It is for this reason that our aims and curriculum drivers (outlined below) extend well beyond the individual subjects, showing our commitment to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve in all aspects of their life. Our mission statement reflects this.

Striving for excellence, caring for all within a loving and caring Christian environment.

We believe that our broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by British and Christian values, plays a major part in delivering excellence which permeates through every element of school life.

It is important that teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment do not unduly add to teacher workload. Any monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and the curriculum, as well as assessment and record keeping, undertaken should provide us with a valuable picture of the curriculum as a whole, which in turn impacts positively on future next steps.

Our Intent- what are the aims and principles of our curriculum?

Our curriculum development journey will always be ongoing as we are constantly revisiting and revising our curriculum design in light of research and our children's needs.

Our curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced, inclusive, and ambitious. It is rooted in the belief that every child is capable of greatness and that our role as educators is to help them discover, grow, and flourish in all aspects of their development — academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally.

We see the curriculum not as a list of subjects, but as the totality of every learning experience a child encounters during their time in school. This includes the way children are taught, the environments in which they learn, the values we model, and the opportunities we provide to shape character, creativity, and curiosity.

Our curriculum is continually refined in response to educational research, pupil need, and community context. The key drivers that shape it are:

- Respect for all
- Spirituality
- Personal growth
- Success and flourishing
- Community-local and global



These curriculum drivers feed directly into our curriculum aims. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high-quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities.

Our aims:

1. To enable children to become happy, secure and enthusiastic life-long learners and achieve personal success/greatness

2. To make children the centre of everything we do, where they are challenged and supported through a broad, balanced and creative curriculum

3. To teach and support children to become fluent, accurate and independent readers for pleasure and purpose

4. To support children in developing secure skills and knowledge across a broad range of subjects

5. To build a sense of self-worth, personal responsibility and respect for one another

6. To place the school at the heart of local society, encouraging a caring and supportive partnership between children, their families and the wider community

7. To ensure that diversity, inclusion, and equity are not standalone themes, but interwoven throughout the curriculum. Every child's identity, culture, and background should be reflected, respected, and celebrated in the learning they experience.

The National curriculum

The National Curriculum outlines objectives for each year group that will provide pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be well educated citizens. The objectives set in this curriculum ensure that children are working to the national standard and being continually supported and challenged to achieve their best in every year group across school. However, the National Curriculum is just one element in the education of every child. It provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers develop exciting and stimulating lessons with the understanding that they have the freedom to extend beyond the National Curriculum specifications.

Our curriculum, as a whole, is a vehicle to helping us achieve our vision and the subject element is delivered through well-sequenced, comprehensive and engaging units. Some of these units are discrete while others are complementary and form topics within each year group. Just a few examples are…



- *Once upon a time…*
- *That's not my mummy!*
- *Into the Unknown*

They often contain: a stunning start, marvellous middle and fabulous finale. These are created through visits out, visitors into school, role play, theme days and many more creative and imaginative activities, which help deepen and strengthen learning throughout a topic, building a schema upon skills and knowledge from previous years.

What do we believe is important in our curriculum?

At the heart of our teaching is the belief that learning should be purposeful, challenging, and joyful. Our teachers use a consistent repertoire of evidence-informed strategies to ensure that every child is supported and able to flourish. We base our pedagogy on key principles from cognitive science and classroom research. This ensures that learning builds over time, key knowledge is retained, and children can apply what they know in meaningful ways.

Our lessons are structured to support working memory and to build fluency over time. Teachers use clear modelling, adaptive practice, and regular retrieval practice to help children make connections and deepen their understanding. We value oracy. Oracy is a vital component of effective teaching and learning, equipping students with the skills to articulate their thinking, collaborate meaningfully, and engage confidently across the curriculum. Embedding oracy in classroom practice supports cognitive development, improves academic outcomes, and prepares learners for success beyond school.

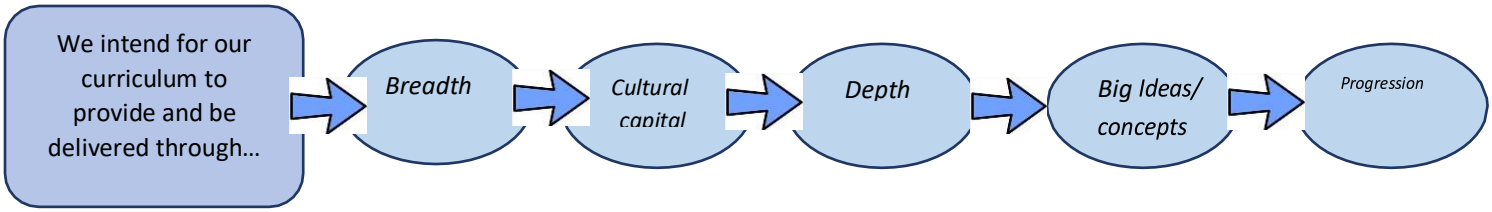
Inclusive practice underpins all that we do. Our commitment to quality-first teaching means that lessons are adapted responsively, with high expectations for all learners, including those with SEND. For example, we use flexible grouping, targeted scaffolds, and a rich blend of visual and auditory stimuli to ensure every pupil can access, participate in, and make progress through the curriculum.

Subject leadership plays a vital role in curriculum coherence. Each subject leader maintains an up-to-date curriculum narrative that outlines progression in both substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Subject leaders provide coaching, support with planning, and ensure that high-quality resources and CPD are in place to enable consistent delivery across classes and phases. Learning is not left to chance — it is carefully sequenced, coherently mapped, and enriched by opportunities to revisit and extend key concepts.

Pupil voice is central to our teaching culture. Learners regularly contribute to curriculum evaluation and review through pupil councils, surveys, and focus groups. This feedback informs subject planning and whole-school development priorities.

Ongoing professional learning underpins our implementation strategy. Our Teaching and Learning Handbook sets out a clear CPD pathway aligned to this policy. Through staff training, collaborative planning and subject development, staff continually refine their practice to meet the evolving needs of pupils. This is not a one-off training model, but a living cycle of reflection.

Curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for students to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.

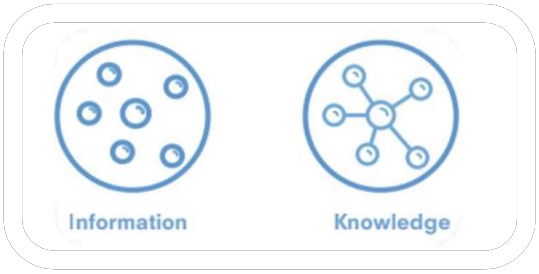


Cultural capital gives our pupils the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.

Depth there is a great deal of material to be taught, and this often results in a curriculum that is, in William Schmidt's memorable phrase, 'a mile wide and an inch deep' (Schmidt, McKnight, & Raizen,1997). It is vital to us that our children experience a curriculum that provides appropriate time for chunks of information to be synthesised into meaningful and linked knowledge.

We understand that learning is…

- A CHANGE IN LONG-TERM MEMORY
- KNOWING MORE AND REMEMBERING MORE
- INVISIBLE IN AN INDIVIDUAL LESSON
- BUILT OVER TIME



Big Ideas or concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, pupils return to the same concepts over and over, and gradually build understanding of them.

Progression Cognitive science tells us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long- term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for pupils to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding, they must first master the basics, which takes time. Our curriculum outlines the journey we undertake to improve in a subject, emphasising the importance of building knowledge progressively. By learning the core knowledge specified, they will be well-equipped to build on this as they advance through the curriculum. Effective progression requires a whole-school vision, making meaningful connections across different areas of learning. Given the opportunity cost—recognising that not everything can be taught—it is crucial to focus on what is most important for each subject. This involves carefully sequencing the curriculum to ensure that knowledge is built upon systematically over time

Implementation- Pedagogy and Practice

We recognise that every learner brings a unique perspective and way of engaging with the world. Just as no two children learn in exactly the same way, our teaching must be responsive and inclusive. To support personalised learning, we use a range of evidence-informed strategies that meet the needs of all pupils. We are committed to *Quality First Teaching*, ensuring that every child receives high-quality instruction as a foundation. Alongside this, we implement consistent, research-backed approaches that support progress for all learners.

With this in mind, we have developed *The Abbey 10*—a collaboratively designed set of core teaching principles that underpin practice across the curriculum. Shared strategies such as *live modelling, cold calling*, and *"talk to your partner"* are embedded in every classroom, promoting high expectations, deep thinking, and a consistent learning experience. Behaviour routines further support active listening and respectful dialogue.



Whether in a discrete subject lesson, a cross-curricular theme, or an enrichment activity, our approach to implementation ensures that the vision of our curriculum is fully realised in every classroom, every day.

Further Quality-First Teaching Strategies

Consider Cognitive Load Theory to Optimise Learning

This includes:

- Understanding the limitations of working memory and structuring lessons to minimise unnecessary cognitive load, ensuring that students can focus on the essential aspects of learning.
- Breaking down complex information into manageable chunks, scaffolding instruction to support gradual learning progression.
- Using clear, concise instructions and visual aids to reduce cognitive overload, allowing students to process and retain information more effectively.
- Designing learning activities that encourage deep processing without overwhelming students, thus enhancing their ability to understand and apply knowledge.
- Encouraging active engagement with the material through interactive lessons that reinforce learning while respecting the cognitive constraints of each learner.

Leverage Long-Term Memory and Retrieval Practice

This includes:

- Recognising the importance of long-term memory in securing knowledge and building upon it over time, ensuring a solid foundation for future learning.
- Integrating regular retrieval practice into lessons to help students consolidate their learning and improve memory retention.
- Creating opportunities for spaced repetition, allowing students to revisit and reinforce key concepts throughout the academic year.
- Designing assessments and activities that require students to recall information from memory, thereby strengthening their understanding and ability to apply knowledge in different contexts.
- Encouraging students to connect new learning to prior knowledge, facilitating the development of well-structured and easily accessible memory networks.

Set high expectations and give every learner confidence they can succeed

This includes:

- Demonstrating a commitment to every learner's success, making them feel included, valued and secure
- Raising learners' aspirations and the effort they put into learning, engaging, where appropriate, the active support of parents and carers
- The curriculum celebrating the diversity and utilising the skills, knowledge and cultural wealth of the community while supporting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Oracy is recognised as a foundational element of effective teaching and learning.

- Pupils regularly engage in structured talk activities that promote reasoning, explanation, and reflection
- Teachers model high-quality spoken language and explicitly teach vocabulary and sentence structures
- Dialogic teaching strategies such as "talk partners", "structured debate", and "exploratory talk" are embedded in lessons
- Classroom environments promote active listening, respectful dialogue, and inclusive participation
- Oracy is planned for across the curriculum, with clear objectives and progression
- Pupils receive feedback on their spoken contributions, just as they do for written work
- Talk is used as a tool for learning—supporting problem-solving, comprehension, and collaboration
- Teachers use questioning techniques (e.g. cold calling, no opt-out, probing) to deepen thinking and ensure all voices are heard
- Group work includes roles that promote accountable talk, such as chair, challenger, or summariser
- Oracy development is supported through professional learning and shared practice across the school

Establish what learners already know and build on it

This includes:

- Setting clear and appropriate learning goals, explaining them, and making every learning experience count
- Creating secure foundations for subsequent learning
- Ensuring our curriculum is broad and balanced, helping pupils to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education
- Identifying individualised learning needs and adapting the curriculum to support pupils using available resources
- Maintaining subject focus while delivering subjects as part of a topic
- Continually exposing the children to new vocabulary
- Establishing links with Pre-schools, other agencies such as SEND teams, Health, Targeted Support and the Customer Service Team (Safeguarding), Secondary Schools and other members of the Community

Expect mass participation in lessons to ensure that all children are thinking.

This includes establishing strategies such as:

- No hands up
- Wait time
- Cold calling
- Think, pair, share
- Mini-whiteboards

Structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging and enjoyable

This includes:

- Using teaching methods that reflect the material to be learned, matching the maturity of the learners and their learning preferences, and involving high levels of time on task
- Explicit teaching to enable pupils to focus on important information without distraction
- Opportunities for retrieval to aid pupils in encoding knowledge and developing schema
- Making a creative use of the range of learning opportunities available, within and beyond the classroom, including ICT
- Experiencing a rich, creative, well-planned and well-resourced curriculum of learning activities, which promotes and achieves excellence
- Cross-curricular learning, which is vital in establishing depth in knowledge, understanding and skills

Inspire learning through passion for the subject

This includes:

- Bringing the subject alive
- Making it relevant to learners' wider goals and concerns
- Teachers having deep knowledge of the subjects they teach
- Specialists delivering some areas of the curriculum
- Developing planning through debate, collaboration and continually reviewing and reflecting upon it
- Maintaining strong links with the church and local community
- Inspiring pupils so that they are engaged and eager to learn

Broaden children's life chances through a robust reading curriculum and teaching of reading

This includes:

- Delivering a rigorous and dynamic systematic synthetic phonics programme with a whole-school approach to teaching early reading and writing
- Investment in high quality training and ongoing professional development
- Giving children access to high quality reading material throughout the curriculum

Broaden children's life chances through expanding their vocabulary

This includes:

- Acknowledging the different experiences that children enter school with
- Understanding that deliberately building vocabulary is one of the most important things we can do as teachers in school
- Systematically working to close the gap between the 'word poor and 'word rich' through academy wide practices

Make individuals active partners in their learning

This includes:

- Building respectful teacher-learner relationships that take learners' views and experience fully into account, as well as data on their performance
- Using assessment for learning to help learners assess their work, reflect on how they learn, and inform subsequent planning and practice
- Teaching and learning in a clean, safe, enjoyable and stimulating environment, which is cared for, and valued by all
- Producing newsletters to keep parents and carers informed about events and learning taking place within school
- Pupils being encouraged to continue their learning at home through creative homework tasks linked to their topic

Develop 'Character Education' through the enhancement of learning skills and personal qualities

This includes:

- Helping pupil to understand how they can reach 'the best they can' UNICEF Article 29
- Developing the ability to think systematically, manage information, learn from others and help others learn
- Developing confidence, self-discipline, resilience and an understanding of the learning process, including elements of executive function
- Christian teaching, worship and values establishing an ethos of co-operation and care, where everyone is willing to listen and where everyone expects the same high standard of respect and behaviour
- Us all working in partnership, valuing and respecting each other, understanding our different responsibilities and all working towards the task of continual improvement
- Recognising that each person is unique and has equal rights within a setting of tolerance and understanding

To effectively develop spirituality

This includes:

- The curriculum acting as a vehicle to enable pupils to cultivate spirituality
- Over time, children will develop a growing foundation of spiritual awareness through carefully chosen experiences and reflections
- Developing spirituality through a whole school vision, creating a culture that values and promotes spiritual growth
- A carefully sequenced curriculum to ensure spiritual opportunities are not left to chance

Develop creativity within learning

This includes:

- Staff and pupils being given the encouragement, guidance and support to think and perform creatively
- Teachers developing the confidence to think creatively and where appropriate have the courage to go beyond the basic parameters of Government strategies.
- Using ICT to support teaching and engage pupils
- Pupils using and being offered a variety of ways to record their learning
- Pupils participating in role play and drama used to develop knowledge and understanding through speaking and listening
- Pupils participating in outdoor learning
- Pupils being given opportunities to participate in learning out of the classroom through activities such as performances, theatre and concert visits, clubs, sport and art enrichment

Creating a Learning Culture

We believe that an exceptional learning culture is built on both the physical space and the emotional climate of the classroom. Every environment in our school — from corridors to classrooms — should reflect our ethos of care, respect, and aspiration. Spaces are welcoming, orderly, and purposeful, designed to promote curiosity, independence, and high expectations.

The **Accelerated Learning Cycle** underpins our classroom approach, ensuring consistency and intention in daily routines. We focus on three core aspects:

- **The physical environment** – calm lighting, good ventilation, appropriate temperature, hydration, and thoughtful organisation
- **The emotional environment** – positive relationships, self-esteem, a culture of safety and belonging
- **The learning environment** – high-quality resources, accessible displays, and meaningful use of ICT to support engagement

Achieving Personal Success/Greatness- helping children to develop their character

We foster a climate in which every child feels safe to take risks, try new things, and grow through challenges. All children are supported to see themselves as capable learners, with mistakes viewed as essential to progress. Success is recognised in many forms and learning is always positioned as a journey.

Class Management

Consistency in routines, behaviour expectations, and transitions is essential to calm and focused classrooms. Pupils feel secure when boundaries are clear and upheld fairly across the school. These expectations are embedded through visible routines and shared practice, supported by clear policies and regular reflection.

Caring for our Environment

Classrooms are well-resourced and maintained with care. Subject leaders oversee the organisation and relevance of resources, ensuring they are clean, attractive, accessible, and purposeful. Children are taught to value their learning environment, take responsibility for shared spaces, and care for the resources and equipment they use. We are a **'Respect and Take Care' school**, and environmental stewardship is part of our learning culture. Pupils contribute to keeping the school tidy, support recycling, and develop respect for the world around them.

Staff CPD (Continuing Professional Development)

Professional growth is embedded in our culture. Staff are learners too, continually refining practice through CPD, coaching, and collaboration across our Trust and wider networks. CPD is responsive, evidence-informed, and aligned with whole-school priorities. Senior leaders ensure that time and support are in place for training to translate into impact. This will include:

- attending courses, meetings and workshops
- keeping abreast of new development
- planning in-service days
- liaising with governors/trustees
- sharing best practice with all colleagues
- working with 'experts' across our Trust, with local hubs such as LEAD Teaching School Hub, local schools and other outside sources

Curriculum planning

Curriculum planning is carefully sequenced and informed by evidence. Each year group follows a long-term map, with medium-term plans including small-step progression, scaffolding, vocabulary, and challenge. Planning is shaped by assessment, prior learning, and pupil need.

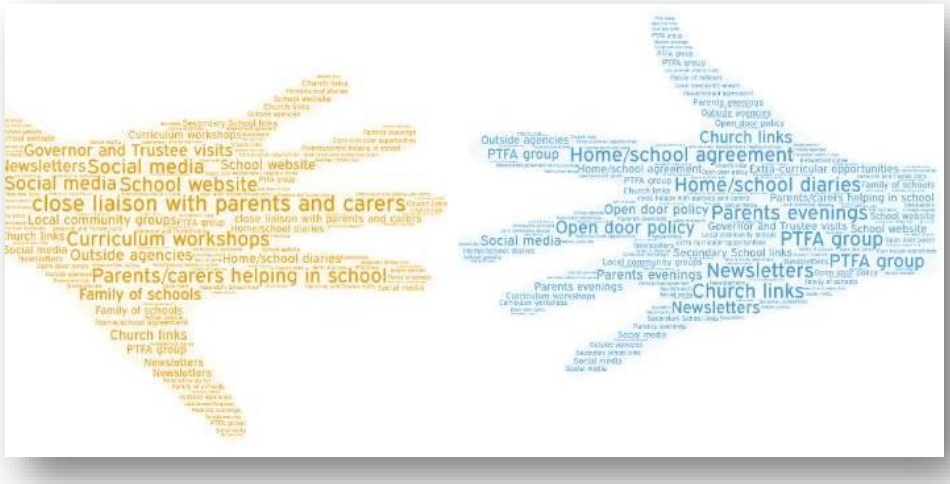
Key planning principles include:

- Clear sequencing to support working memory and long-term learning

- Adaptation to meet the needs of all
- Explicit vocabulary and oracy development
- Integration of spirituality, creativity, and outdoor learning
- Cross-curricular connections and alignment to Christian values, UNICEF values and British Values

School Community

We recognise that children thrive when schools and families work in partnership. Through regular communication, workshops, and creative homework tasks, we build strong links between home and school — ensuring that learning continues beyond the classroom and every child is supported to flourish.



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Impact

The curriculum content that our pupils engage in is strong with clear knowledge and skills embedded and as a result children achieve their best. Pupils' work across the curriculum is of a consistently high quality.

Pupils attainment and achievement is monitored through:

- making accurate assessment of a pupil when they enter school
- consistent and accurate tracking of pupils
- setting challenging targets for pupils
- identify trends in data and acting upon this to raise our pupils' attainment further
- Pupils receiving accurate and helpful feedback from teachers on their progress and ways of improving their work
- Self and peer assessment

To ensure that pupils work across the curriculum is of a consistently high quality, a variety of structures and mechanisms are in place:

- Dynamic, imaginative leadership, encouraging everyone in the school to think deliberately about the curriculum and engage in debate about it
- Appraisal and Professional Development meetings
- Monitoring **(in a variety of forms**) by Executive Head Teacher, Head of School, SLT, Team Leaders, Subject Leaders
- Subject Leaders self-evaluation and acting upon findings
- Whole school staff meetings and Key Stage meetings
- SLT meetings
- Trustees/Governors
- Analysis of assessment data
- Questionnaires
- Academy Improvement Plan

- SEF
- SIAMs

This policy is to be read alongside:

- AAT Teaching and Learning Handbook
- Assessment policy
- Staff well-being policy
- Feedback policy
- SMSC policy
- Spirituality across the curriculum policy
- Character Education Statement
- Curriculum Statements
- Monitoring and Evaluation policy

As a RRS (Rights Respecting School – UNICEF) this policy upholds the following articles from the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child):

As a RRS (Rights Respecting School – UNICEF) this policy upholds the following articles from the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child):

- Article 2: Everyone has equal rights whatever their race, religion, ability, whatever they think or say or whatever their family.
- Article 28: Every child has the right to an education
- Article 29: Every child has the right to be the best they can.