

Abbey Academies Trust

Every Child Matters



POLICY

for

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

Reviewed

April 2019	April 2021	September 2023
June 2019	September 2021	
June 2020	September 2022	

Every Child Matters within a loving and caring Christian environment
Striving for Excellence, Caring for All

Our Vision

We have a vision of a community in which each person is offered the opportunity to fulfil their potential and to understand themselves to be valued for who they are. Through a stimulating and challenging learning environment, we pursue academic excellence and seek the flourishing of all members of the school community. As inclusive and caring church schools, our commitment is to help pupils become thoughtful, open-minded and compassionate human beings who have the knowledge, skills and motivation they need to bring about positive transformation in the world.

“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 drivers** for the journey are...*

- Respect
- Personal growth and success
- Spirituality
- 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 develop an environment and school ethos where individual needs are respected and diversity celebrated
6. To build a sense of self-worth, personal responsibility and respect for one another
7. To place the school at the heart of local society, encouraging a caring and supportive partnership between children, their families and the wider community

Moving from Intent to Implementation

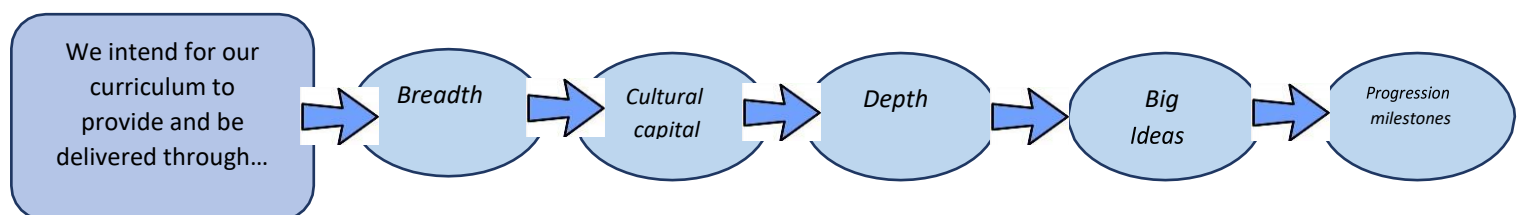
Part 1- What? How? Why?

In this policy we consider **what** children are taught in school, **how** they learn and **why** we have chosen to design our curriculum in the way we have.

The **what** part is driven by The National Primary Strategy, Excellence and Enjoyment, The National Curriculum, reading and research from professionals in the field of curriculum design and our own beliefs about what is important for the children at our schools to learn.

The **why** is in response to national, school and individual targets, and the need to address individual requirements of the whole child in order to develop positive attitudes, ensure children achieve their personal greatness and to raise standards. If we consider **how children learn** and respond to this in **how and what we teach**, we can then become successful in the **why**.

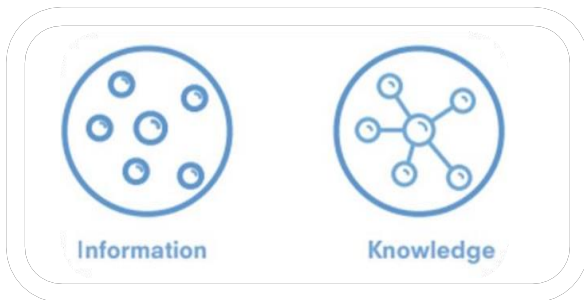
What do we believe is important in our curriculum?



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 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 milestones provide the underlying framework for the Big Ideas. For each of the big ideas, three milestones (each of which includes the procedural (how to do things) and semantic (recall of facts) knowledge pupils need to understand the big ideas) provide a progression model. 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. Therefore, each milestone is set out over two years.

How does our practice ensure we meet our aims?

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 utilises the skills, knowledge and cultural wealth of the community while supporting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

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
- 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

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

Implementation **Part 2-our approach**

Where does the National curriculum fit in?

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

Fabulous finale



This is 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.

Creating a Learning Culture

The Learning Environment

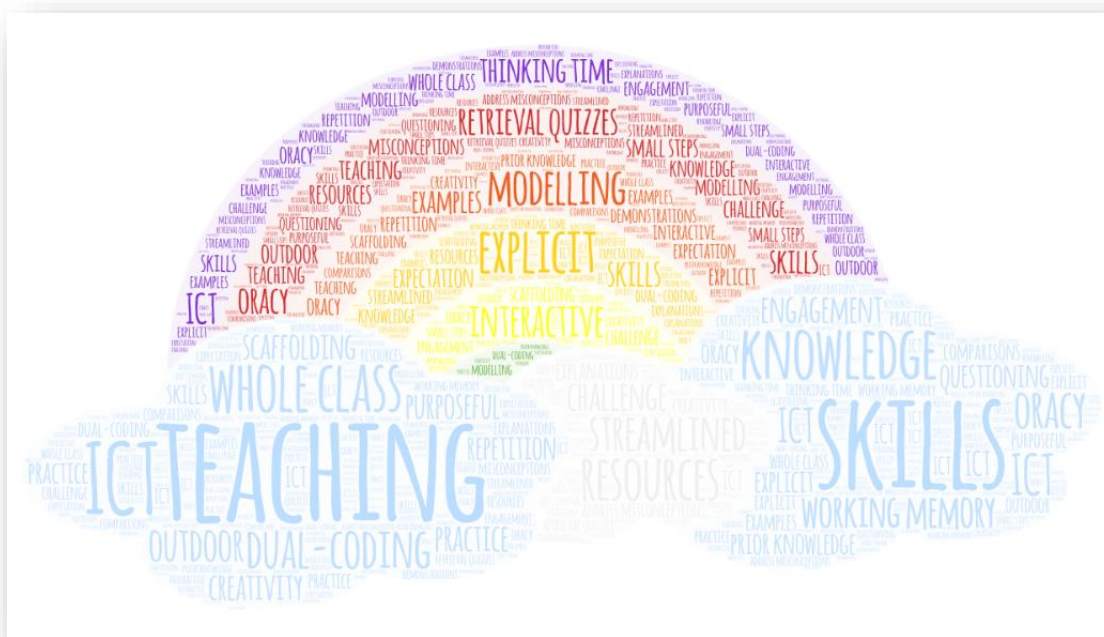
We see the physical environment and routines as vital to effective Learning and Teaching, to promote high standards and independent learning. The Accelerated Learning Cycle creates an all-embracing teaching and learning environment which includes:

1. The physical environment:	2. The affective environment:	3. The learning environment:
Temperature	Good relationships	Physical organisation
Lighting	High self-esteem	Resource provision
Nutrition	Positive behaviour strategies	Resource accessibility
Hydration	High expectations	Display
Ventilation	Promotion of positive well-being	Use of ICT

Teaching Strategies (Quality First Teaching)

Each of us is unique in the way we experience life and respond to events. There are as many different ways of learning as there are children in our classroom. Because of this we need to use a range of teaching methods to try and ensure 'personalised learning'. We are committed to 'Quality First teaching', where we meet the needs of every child.

The strategies used in our schools are:-



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

All children must feel they succeed in order to grow in confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Because of this tasks set must be challenging but achievable. If children have self-worth they will also be able to make constructive use of failure in an atmosphere of security and valuing. They also need to feel it is acceptable to get it wrong and 'have a go'. Our schools are a 'safe place to make mistakes'. We recognise achievement in many ways – see our Behaviour Matrix.

Class Management

When children are secure in their knowledge of routine, organisation and rules they will happily work within those parameters. When these are not in place it leads to confusion, lack of focus and unsettled behaviour, making increased demands on the teacher as the children are constantly requiring direction. Transition between classes and settling into a new class is eased and can be seamless if there is consistency of approach throughout the school. All staff have access to policy documents, and adherence to these plays a large part in this.

Resources and the Curriculum

Resources are monitored by subject leaders. Materials in all areas should be well organised, be of good quality, be clean, tidy, attractive, accessible and well labelled. As far as possible materials should be near the appropriate working area. Stocks should be checked and replenished regularly. Children should be taught and shown by example that resources are finite and that we all have a duty to care for equipment and not misuse, damage or waste it. Books and other equipment represent a considerable investment of money.

The effective implementation of the National Curriculum calls for a wide range of equipment to be used. Much of this is stored within school however there are also many outside sources for the loan of books, artefacts and equipment. Each classroom has access to supplies and children should be aware of where appropriate equipment is kept.

Caring for our Environment

We are a 'Respect and Take Care' School and the whole school community is encouraged to respect the school environment. Everyone should be encouraged to take responsibility for their environment both within and around the school. Everywhere should be kept tidy and litter free at all times and there are opportunities

for recycling in school. The school should be checked daily and any lost property should be put in the lost property box. Nothing should be left on the cloakroom floor. All equipment must be returned to its appropriate place and all kit bags hung on pegs or placed in lockers.

Staff CPD (Continuing Professional Development)

We recognise that we too are life-long learners. In order to move forward we must often stand back, review and consider different ideas and methods. This may do little more than raise awareness but it also helps to broaden our outlook and promote positive thinking. It is often said that no-one has a new idea - they are recycled, shared or simply stolen! However, through professional development we ensure that they are never lost. In acknowledging this we:-

- attend courses, meetings and workshops
- keep abreast of new development
- plan in-service days
- liaise with governors/trustees
- share with all colleagues
- work with 'experts' across our Trust, Teaching School Alliance, family of schools and outside sources

The SLT are committed to:

1. Disseminating CPD materials effectively and ensuring a coordinated approach for embedding excellent learning and teaching in school
2. Deploying staff resources to optimum effect and devoting the necessary time needed to make best use of initiatives
3. Establishing learning communities to exchange best practice on learning and teaching and maximise the impact of initiatives within the school and across other schools

Curriculum planning

Each year group in our Trust has an overarching curriculum map which outlines the curriculum for the year. Medium plans clearly outline the carefully sequenced units within each subject and short-term plans and/or teaching slide across the curriculum include aspects of learning and teaching found to be successful.

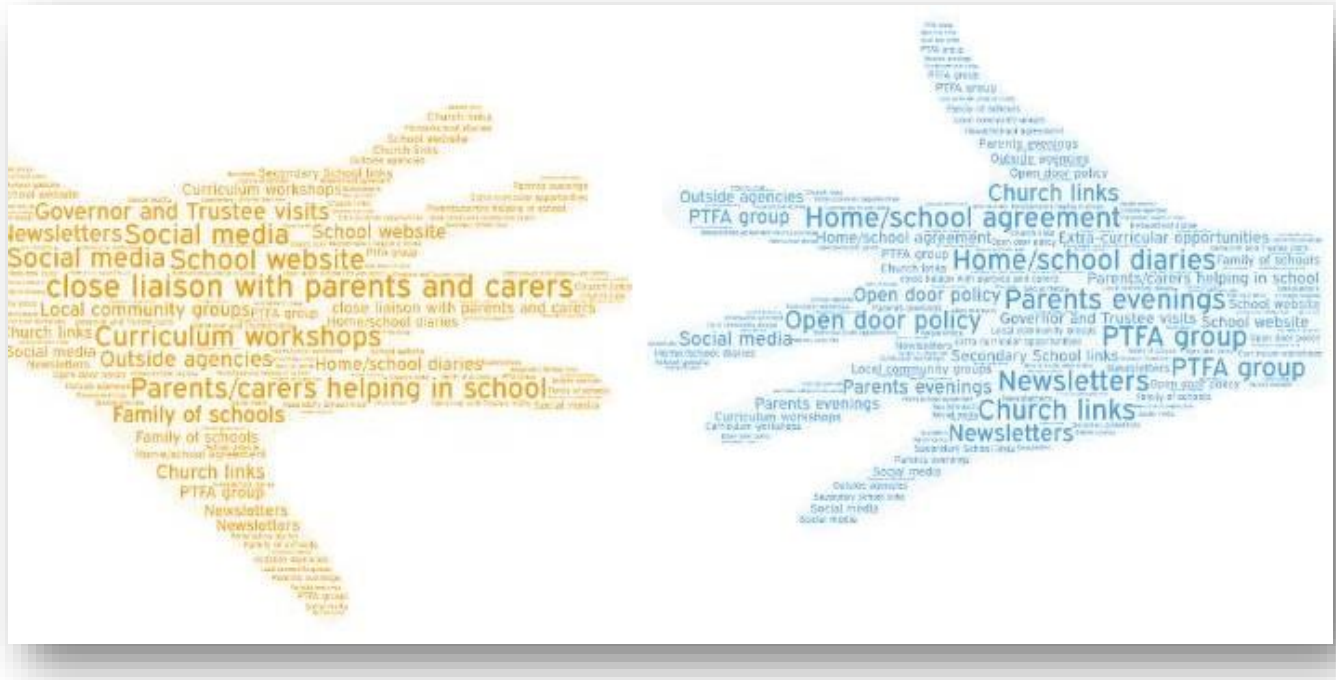
Key aspects of our planning include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Scaffolding | Ownership by learner / learning objectives and outcomes |
| • Small steps to support working memory | retrieval quizzes |
| • Opportunities for rehearsal | Modelling |
| • Flexibility | Possible misconceptions |
| • Illustrations, examples, analogies | Challenge |
| • Examples and non-examples | SEND |
| • Able and talented | Oracy |
| • LSA support | Sustainable/Eco work |
| • Cross-curricular links | Homework |
| • ICT | Links to Christian Values |
| • Links to Unicef | Outdoor learning opportunities |
| • Thinking skills | Curricular target setting |
| • Creativity | |

School Community

In order for children to learn effectively they must be supported not just by the school but by their family and community. We recognise the need for real partnership if we are to maximise children's development.

We practice this through:



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

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
- 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

This policy is to be read alongside:

- Assessment policy
- Staff well-being 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):

- 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.