



SECKFORD FOUNDATION  
FREE SCHOOLS TRUST

**POLICY  
DOCUMENT**

## Curriculum Policy

<b>Document Owner:</b>	Trust Board
<b>Responsible Trust Committee:</b>	Trust Leadership Group
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<b>APPROVED Signature (Trust Board):</b>	DATE ( )
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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
  - Sex and Relationships Education Policy
  - Self-Evaluation Policy
  - SMSC Policy
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- 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'~~ = 'Trust' = Seckford Foundation Free Schools Trust

'Free School(s)' = schools within the Trust

'SoW' = Schemes of Work

'KS3' = Key Stage 3

'KS4' = Key Stage 4

'SMSC' = Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural

## 3. Purpose of the policy

This document outlines the Curriculum Policy for the Free Schools within the Trust. This policy covers the Trust and all its Free Schools and as such there is no need for each Free School to have its own policy.<sup>7</sup> This policy outlines the values and educational philosophy of the Trust and its Free Schools.

## 4. Policy Statement

Our vision is for all our students to:

- achieve their potential through a culture of high academic, personal and social expectations and aspirations;
- have their needs met and be recognised as individuals through high quality inclusion and pastoral care systems;
- learn in a safe, healthy and stimulating environment in which every child matters and in which parents / carers and the wider community are part of the learning journey;
- enjoy an all-round education beyond academic study, so that each can discover his or her latent talents.

There are five underpinning elements to the vision of the School:

- An academic, broad and balanced curriculum (including creative subjects) based on the traditional subject areas that form the structure for delivering knowledge, skills and understanding. Every teacher is a teacher of literacy, numeracy, ICT and SMSC;
- Inclusion - Personal Education Plans are provided for every student. Those who undertake teaching in our Free Schools are expected to differentiate and cater for the needs of all students regardless of ability or need. High quality and regular CPD will be provided for all staff to assist them with this underpinning element;
- A strong pastoral system is a key focus of the work of the Free Schools. The tutor is the main focus of our student's lives and forms the main contact with parents / carers. The tutor delivers PSHE and citizenship and tracks all elements of the progress of the students in their tutor group;
- Enrichment - this element of the school day provides a more rounded learning experience beyond the traditional and allows opportunities to further spark interests in students, discover their talents and develop a love of learning for life;
- Pathways provide progression into post-16 learning. Everything we do must be geared to providing pathways for future learning and success. We will not take options away from our students by the decisions made at the age of 14.

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 Free Schools empowered as independent, co-operative, innovative and motivated young adults with the skills for and love of learning for life.

This Curriculum Policy is founded on the 6Cs to Success (Co-operation, Commitment, Confidence, Community, Challenge, Celebration) that underpin the ethos of the Trust and its Free Schools. The 6Cs to Success ensure a positive ethos based on the development of key skills and values for life.

## 4. Aims and intentions

The curriculum is an expression of the Trust's mission to be an inclusive and academic learning community that focuses on the progress and achievement of its students. We aim for a culture and ethos of challenge. We aim for curriculum excellence (see section 5.5).

This policy aims to:

- ensure consistency, coherence and continuity by making clear the expectations the Trust has of the curriculum offered within and across its Free Schools;
- promote understanding of the high standard and quality of curriculum offered to the

- students of the Free Schools;
- establish an agreed range of practice in respect the development of an outstanding curriculum;
- be used as an aid to monitoring and self-evaluation.

It is planned to provide each student with opportunities of developing knowledge, understanding and skills in a broad range of disciplines as well as confidently achieving high personal standards, within the vision of the Trust:

- We will offer high aspirations and expectations to every student, regardless of ability or need;
- We believe that all students are entitled to equality of opportunity in learning;
- Our curriculum will be inclusive, challenging, stimulating, vibrant and enjoyable. It will offer enriching activities both in and out of the school environment;
- The curriculum will provide ample opportunities for students to become progressively more responsible for their learning;
- The curriculum should allow for a continuity of education and enable all students to progress into further education, training or employment with training;
- The curriculum should further development of students as rounded members of the school, local, regional, national and international communities and should be the means of achieving greater independence without impairing the rights of others;
- Knowledge, understanding and skills are inter-related and we aim for our students to develop transferable skills;
- As we deliver the curriculum we will monitor carefully what is being achieved, and how it is being done. We will assess student learning, with the aims of recording and celebrating their achievements;
- Every learner in the formal education system, whatever his or her age or potential abilities, should experience a broad curriculum. We aim for our students to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum experience throughout their time at our Free Schools in order to ensure we do not cut off options or pathways available to students later in life.

The areas of experience will include:

- aesthetic and creative
- human and social
- linguistic and literary
- mathematical
- moral
- physical
- scientific
- spiritual
- technological

The Trust aims for its Free Schools to concentrate on the development of those skills which enhance employability and inspire a love of learning for life. All staff in all subjects are teachers of literacy and numeracy and are expected to concentrate on the development of literacy, numeracy, SMSC and ICT skills throughout the curriculum.

Teachers are expected to follow the Trust's 'Code of Conduct for Staff' and national Teachers' Standards (in relation to learning and teaching, part 1 of the national Teachers' Standards are essential expectations).

## 5. Curriculum practice

### 5.1 The 6Cs to Success:

The vision and ethos of the Trust is underpinned by the 6Cs to Success. The 6Cs provide the learning behaviour code for students as follows:

#### **Co-operation**

Students are expected to:

- work with teachers and other adults to help them to understand what it is they have to do to achieve their targets
- work appropriately with other students during learning activities to maximise progress and minimise wasted time;
- co-operate when given instructions that are for the benefit of their learning, achievement and progress.

#### **Commitment**

Students are expected to:

- attend school when expected to learn, achieve and make progress;
- be punctual to lessons and meet deadlines such as for coursework and homework when given;
- take responsibility for their own learning, achievement and progress;
- have (a) long-term life goal(s) and focus every day on what they need to do to achieve it / them;
- know and understand the grades and levels that they need to achieve their daily, weekly, termly and yearly targets and overall life goal(s).

#### **Confidence**

Students are expected to:

- with the help of appropriate staff, develop confidence in their abilities and belief in themselves and what they can achieve;
- have high aspirations and the confidence that they can achieve those aspirations;
- have the confidence to ask questions, find out more and report anything which is stopping them learning, achieving or making progress.

#### **Community**

Students are part of a learning community and are therefore expected to:

- set themselves and others high expectations and hold each other to them;
- care just as much about others being able to achieve their life goals;
- get fully involved in the life of their school, including enrichment and extra-curricular activities;
- get fully involved in the life of the community in which the school is situated;
- understand the four different scales of community: local, regional, national and international;

- understand difference in others and the importance of diversity.

### Challenge

Students are expected to:

- meet each challenge presented to them with confidence and positivity;
- undertake challenges as a means of making faster progress and achieving more;
- provide each other with appropriate learning challenges and support each other to achieve them;
- appropriately challenge behaviour which is preventing them from learning, achieving and making progress.

### Celebration

Students are expected to:

- celebrate the successes they have experienced in school and out;
- support others to be successful and celebrate when they do achieve and make progress;
- display behaviour that encourages themselves and others to strive to achieve more successful;
- have pride in the achievements of the staff, fellow students, school and wider community.

## 5.2 School day:

The school day is structured as follows:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
08.00 – 08.30	Breakfast Club
08.30 – 08.50	Tutorial
08.50 – 09.50	Period 1
09.50 – 10.50	Period 2
10.50 – 11.10	Break
11.10 – 12.05	Period 3
12.05 – 13.00	Period 4
13.00 – 13.55	Lunch / Clubs
13.55 – 14.05	Tutorial
14.05 – 15.00	Period 5 5
15.00 – 15.55	Period 6
15.55 - 16.55	Period 7 – additional sessions

	and activities
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The school day includes formal and enrichment curriculum time and extra-curricular provision.

### 5.3 Curriculum structure:

The curriculum is delivered by a one week cycle of 30 lessons in 5 year groups (Years 7 to 11) that are arranged into two Key Stages (Key Stage 3 being Years 7 - 9 and Key Stage 4 being Years 10 and 11). The weightings given to each subject in can be found in the chart below:

Subjects	Number of periods per week in each year				
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11
English (and Drama KS3)	5	5	4	4	4
Mathematics	5	5	4	4	4
Sciences	3	3	4	4	4
MFL	2	2	3	3	3
History	2	2	2	3 1 option	3 1 option
Geography	2	2	2		
Philosophy and Ethics	1	1	1		
Art	1	1	1	9 3 'open options'	9 3 'open options'
Music	1	1	1		
Drama	1	1	1		
Physical Education	1	1	1		
Design Technology	1	1	1		
Physical Education / Dance	2	2	2	2	2
Enrichment Periods	2	2	2	2	2

The curriculum was originally structured around the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects and is set up for the new Attainment 8 / Progress 8 accountability measure.

### 5.4 GCSE specifications:

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

- All Free Schools within the Trust have to follow the same specification in each subject;
- Specifications that Woodbridge School are following must be tracked wherever possible. Any subject / area that does not wish to follow the specification that Woodbridge School is following will need to have a very clear justification for doing something different and this will need to be discussed and agreed with the Trust Leadership Group (TLG) in the first instance and agreed by the Trust Board.

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

## 5.5 Curriculum excellence:

As a Trust, we strive for curriculum excellence, underpinned by three key concepts:

1. Breadth delivered through the range of subjects (our traditional, academic, broad and balanced curriculum) and depth within each subject;
2. The development of independence and resilience as skills for all our learners;
3. Ensuring we develop students' love of learning: awe and wonder and a thirst for knowledge.

Those planning the curriculum in our Free Schools are expected to focus on five broad development areas:

- Broad and balanced overall curriculum with greater depth of learning within subjects – repeating constructs building increased knowledge and understanding over time;
- Plan from the top down – the GCSE specification for each subject is the endgame so it must form the knowledge framework for the curriculum from Year 7 upwards;
- The “Brunerian Spiral” is the concept that needs to be used to plan the learning journey through the curriculum constructs needed for understanding of the subject and success / mastery at GCSE;
- The “Lesson Sandwich” approach to delivery outlined in section 5.8;
- Students producing excellence – students know what excellence is in each subject area. They are taught curriculum mastery, develop a ‘thirst for learning’ and are independent and resilient learners.

Teachers are expected to ensure that students are engaged, motivated and inspired to achieve. Teaching is expected to be to stretch the top ability and should be scaffolded, through differentiated practice, for those below the top level. Teachers should quickly identify students who find any aspect of the curriculum hard to access quickly and provide the most appropriate resources for them, whilst maintaining high expectations. Inclusion for all students is a central part of our curriculum offer, with an emphasis on Quality First Teaching.

## 5.6 Principles into practice:

Teachers will ensure that they:

- Know their students and their strengths, areas for development and potential;
- Have the highest expectations of all students to help them to develop their confidence;
- Make use of innovative learning and teaching methods
- Provide every opportunity for our students to access the curriculum and be challenged by it;
- Meet students' learning needs and challenge them to excel;
- Provide frequent and regular feedback to our students and encourage them to use this information to make progress across the curriculum;
- Plan for and use every opportunity to engage our students in their learning, target setting and assessment;
- Use constructive comments and celebration to build confidence in our students to learn from their mistakes and build upon their successes;

- Plan for and use opportunities for students to learn from their own life experiences and those of their peers, families and communities;
- Work as a community to achieve shared goals;
- Communicate regularly and frequently to keep parents / carers informed about the achievements of their children.

## 5.7 Grouping and learning:

### Grouping

- Students are placed in mixed ability tutor groups on arrival at the Free Schools. 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 reviewed every half term through the Progress Checkpoint (PCP) system. Parents / carers and students are informed of any possible changes to groups;

### Learning areas

- The Trust believes that the Free 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 Free 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.

## 5.8 Schemes of Work (SoW) and lesson planning:

It is expected that lesson planning broadly follow the principle of putting the emphasis on students to perform through the "Lesson Sandwich" approach. This means in the sandwich of broad stages that go into lessons (PLANNING – EXECUTION – FEEDBACK), teachers should focus on planning and feedback. Planning should emphasise pedagogical methods that develop active and independent learning skills of students in their lessons and which rely less on the passive absorption through didactic teaching.

## 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 Headteacher of the relevant Free 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