

Curriculum Policy

September 2020

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Associated documents:	
Teaching and Learning Guide ECSI Guide	
Links to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, Recording, Reporting and Exams Policy • SEND Policy • Equalities Policy • Behaviour (including Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions) • Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy (secondary) • Early Years Foundation Stage Policy • Pupil Premium Policy • CEIAG Policy 	

Policy statement approved by the Standards and Outcomes Committee, April 2020

<u>Contents</u>	1
Statement of Intent	3
1. Legal Framework and Definitions	4
2. Scope of Policy	4
3. Curriculum Leadership	4
4. Curriculum Purpose	5
5. Curriculum Implementation	5
6. Curriculum Maps	10
7. Wider Curriculum	10
8. Enrichment	11
9. Intervention	11
10. Assessment	12
9. Staff Training and Support	12
11. Review	13
Appendix A: Glossary of Curriculum Language	14

Our Vision

We have one core purpose:

To have the biggest positive impact in the varied communities we serve through ensuring top drawer education for our learners. #TransformingLives

How do we ensure this across our trust?

In all we do we are:

1. Ethical to the core, ensuring that education is always front and centre
2. Futures focused system leaders – never simply followers
3. Collaborative in every endeavour
4. Resolutely learner centred.

What does this look like across our trust?

Education

We are:

1. Ruthlessly ambitious for all who learn and work with us
2. Unwaveringly inclusive – determined on eradicating barriers to educational success
3. Committed to excellent teaching
4. Determined upon academic excellence for all in our communities

5. Compassionate, ethical and caring advocates for all in our communities
6. Outwardly facing and globally conscious

Operations

We are:

1. Committed to the very best people development and empowerment
2. Determined to shout loudly and share proudly our successes
3. The best professional and technical experts (supporting education) in the sector
4. Committed to the very best understanding and management of risk

Financial

We are:

1. Providing the best possible public service for the best possible value
 2. Determined to supplement our public income with shrewd income generation
 3. Building financially sustainable models of educational improvement in our communities
 4. Demonstrably efficient in all we do
- We will work inclusively within our communities, embracing the varied localities we serve while sharing our common vision and values.
 - We will develop the very best leaders of the future, working to improve education and transform lives.
 - We will adhere unwaveringly to the 'Nolan Principles' of Public Service, which is made clear in our commitment to Ethical Leadership.

Statement of Intent

It is our core responsibility to ensure that students have access to the very best education possible. One of the most fundamental and influential aspects of a child's education is the curriculum that they have access to. The power of curriculum is immense. It has the power to not only transform an individual, but to also transform whole communities and shape their understanding of the world and their place in it. Therefore, it is imperative that the curriculum on offer within our academies is truly world class and gives students access to powerful knowledge that takes them far beyond what their own individual experience ever could. In order to achieve this, we must ensure we expose all students 'to the best that has been thought and said and engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement'. To truly transform lives, we must not only show students what is possible but inspire and instil the confidence in them to go out and do it.

All learners in our academies will experience a curriculum that

1. is **ambitious** and **enjoyable** through knowledge and skills developed from Foundation Stage to Post 16 and Adult provision.
2. is **knowledge rich**, ensuring access to a wide, global cultural capital – thus maximising lifetime opportunities.
3. is **inclusive**, nurturing and tailored towards the needs of the individual.
4. is focused on developing the very best **oracy, literacy, numeracy** and **digital** skills – enabling access to the widest learning and the very best careers possible to ensure we develop global citizens.
5. is **enriching**, ensuring all experience a rich variety of cultural, artistic and sporting activities.

6. is **broad** in terms of coverage and (at least) encompassing the breadth of the 2014 English National Curriculum.
7. celebrates the uniqueness of each educational setting in terms of **localised knowledge and skills**.
8. **develops** character, personal pride and the highest moral standards.
9. celebrates **diversity**, challenges **injustice**, promotes **equality** and encourages the creation of a better world.
10. is delivered by well-qualified, forward-thinking, skilled, passionate **professionals**.

1 Legal Framework and Definitions

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Health Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2011
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- The Immigration Act 2016
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018

This policy also has due regard to DfE/Ofsted guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Inspecting the Curriculum, Ofsted, May 2019
- Statutory Guidance for Careers, DfE, January 2018
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, DfE, June 2019
- National Curriculum in England: Framework for Key Stages 1-4, last updated December 2015

2 Scope of this Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all academy leaders, academy staff and academy learners.
- 2.2 For the purpose of this policy the reference to 'pupils' includes all learners in our academies.
- 2.3 For a glossary of the terms used in this policy refer to Appendix A.

3 Curriculum Leadership

- 3.1 Curriculum leadership requires attention to *what* is being learned. In our academies, middle and senior leadership teams share a curricular language for talking about curriculum and teaching – Appendix A. It is important that how the curriculum is viewed is clearly understood at all levels, from the Principal to teachers, teaching assistants and the non-teaching staff in order for it to be truly embedded as the vision and mission of the academy. All of our academies establish this approach in their own versions of the '**Curriculum Leaders Handbook**'.
- 3.2 Curriculum leaders work to **ensure** that the curriculum is fit for purpose and secondly to **assure** that it is delivered well and leads to an excellent quality of education for all students.

- 3.3 Curriculum leaders work collaboratively within and between our academies to design a curriculum which follows tight principles about what **content** is taught and how it is **sequenced**.
- 3.4 Curriculum leaders regularly **review** the design of the curriculum and routinely **quality assure** its implementation so that it achieves its intended purpose.

4 Curriculum Purpose

4.1 In establishing the purpose (intent) of our curriculum we refer to the following tight principles:

- That our curriculum is at least as broad and balanced as that of the National Curriculum.
- That it is important for all pupils and particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds to have as broad a curriculum for as long as possible to build their knowledge of wider cultural capital.
- That our curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of vulnerable learners and those with SEND without lowering expectation and aspirations.
- That all of our pupils are entitled to learn at least one modern foreign language because this develops their first language and increases their cultural capital. This begins in our primary academies and develops into the full EBacc entitlement at KS4 for as many pupils as possible. (60% of KS4 in 2021 and 75% by 2022.)
- That all pupils are entitled to read widely and often.
- That the development of pupils' characters is as important as the teaching of academic knowledge.
- That the curriculum prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and works to develop social, moral, spiritual and cultural knowledge and understanding rooted in the principles of Fundamental British Values.

4.2 Our Curriculum Intent:

At Bristnall Hall Academy, we are a family of supportive, caring and ambitious stakeholders who work collaboratively to ensure that every young person develops personal qualities that will help them leave the academy as successful rounded individuals equipped for a life beyond Bristnall. This is achieved through the delivery of a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum which meets the needs of every young person regardless of their starting points, background or special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Our curriculum is ambitious and allows students to access to the best possible knowledge across their subjects. We ensure we sequence our curriculum carefully to promote positive progress, building on knowledge from primary school and rigorously activating prior knowledge as an integral part of every lesson. First class training and people development opportunities underpin this philosophy to ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge to secure excellent outcomes for all our learners. We have a relentless focus on removing barriers to education to future employment; focusing on developing oracy, literacy and numeracy throughout students' time at the academy. Students read widely and we encourage this through our Teacher Reads Aloud Programme (TRAP) during form time.

As part of our commitment to develop the character of students and ensure they have the highest moral standards we have a set of values that form the basis of day-to-day life at the academy: Proud, Resilient, Articulate, Creative, Curious and Adventurous. This endeavour is further supported by an extensive, rich extra-curricular offer which all students are encouraged to attend covering activities from Debate Club to STEM Club and sports clubs to Police Cadets. Our nationally recognised careers programme is well integrated so that all students, from year 7 to 11 get access to the best possible careers advice and opportunities.

The outstanding pastoral care we offer including, dedicated non-teaching Achievement Coordinators and qualified mental health champions ensures students are well supported and flourish through their curriculum journey here at Bristnall Hall.

5 Curriculum Implementation

5.1 We consider the following principles when deciding how to implement the curriculum intent:

- When and how to teach new core and wider content.
- When and how to teach core skills including oracy, literacy and numeracy.
- When and how to revisit and build on prior learning so that each component of learning can build to become composite learning.
- What knowledge pupils should be able use with fluency (speed and accuracy) and by what stage of their education from their starting points.
- How to sequence learning so that the proximal and ultimate functions of knowledge build over time.
- How to ensure pupils will make expected or better than expected progress as a consequence of the curriculum purpose, design and implementation.
- In order to achieve a broad curriculum, how to ensure that all pupils, where applicable, in KS4 study a minimum of eight qualifications with every bucket filled with best practice to study nine. At KS5 how most pupils should follow a programme of three qualifications with some doing four.

5.2 Our curriculum implementation:

We are committed to the principle that all students, regardless of ability, cultural background or gender, have a right to the highest quality of education we can provide.

That means that we work to ensure:

- Breadth and balance for all;
- Appropriate levels of expectation and genuine challenge;
- Relevance, continuity and progression in learning.

This is achieved by providing courses of study and teaching methods which are tailored to the wide range of needs, interests and aspirations of our students. It also means that many features of the curriculum are common to all students. For example, reading is integral to lessons across the curriculum as well as the use of knowledge organisers within subjects. In lessons, students will be challenged and long-term knowledge retention remains a common theme across subjects with knowledge checks a common theme at the start of lessons.

No student is denied access to any part of the curriculum on the grounds of ability. At KS4 and KS3 in core subjects we set students. This allows us to ensure those students who need additional support in lessons, be it through additional staff or additional scaffolding, can have that targeted support. The principles above present us with a responsibility to find ways of ensuring that all students are engaged in their learning, motivated and enabled to succeed. Teaching staff are expected to ensure that, wherever possible, students who are having difficulty are identified early and provided with appropriate support, encouragement, guidance and, if necessary, different teaching and work, so that they might continue to participate at the most appropriate level for them. The responsibility of finding means of access to the curriculum for all is as a result of our stated intention to include, not exclude.

Key Stage 3

The purpose of the KS3 curriculum is to build on the education received at primary school and prepare students for Level 2 qualifications which are chosen at the end of Year 9.

Students study the full range of core and non-core subjects at this key stage as we feel it is vital they receive a broad and balanced education for as long as possible before they specialise. A special emphasis is placed on developing numeracy and literacy skills which is supported through English and Mathematics having a greater percentage of curriculum time. Some students, who are assessed as significantly below age-related expectations for literacy and numeracy, will engage in additional numeracy and literacy sessions as part of their curriculum.

Our commitment to the EBacc begins at KS3 with these subjects getting the most curriculum time; this gives them a solid foundation to then be continued by a significant number of students at KS4. Students study one language (French or Spanish) as well as being taught History and Geography as discrete subjects throughout year 7, 8 and 9. Studying a single language ensures students can develop a greater breadth and depth of language skills in this chosen foreign language. We are committed to the arts and technical aspects of learning with students receiving lessons in Art, Music, Technology, Drama and Dance. We also have a dedicated reading lesson for students in year 7 and 8 as part of our commitment to developing students' reading.

In addition, students are given the opportunity to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities which provide opportunities to develop additional skills and attributes. A rich and varied programme of visits and extra-curricular activities is also available as part of the academy curriculum entitlement.

The academy operates a two-week timetable which includes 56 periods of 55 minutes each fortnight. The majority of lessons are double lessons which ensure curriculum time is maximised in the classroom. They can be broken down at KS3 as shown in the table below:

Subject	55min Period per fortnight
English	8
Mathematics	8
Science	8
MFL	5
Geography	5
History	5
RE	1
PSHE	1
PE	4
Computing	2
Art & Design	2
Dance	1
Music	2
DT (Graphics, Catering, Engineering, Textiles)	4

Students in years 7-9 also have a 20 minute form period at the end of each academy day where they have a structured timetable each week of a values based assembly, a rewards assembly and numeracy and guided reading sessions.

Key Stage 4

All students follow a core curriculum of subjects but they are then given the opportunity to choose additional subjects to complete their timetable through an options process which takes place in the

summer term of year 9 (see below). By waiting until Year 9 before we ask students to make this important decision, it ensures students do not narrow their studies too soon and have an opportunity to experience every subject in depth before they make their options choices.

Again, our commitment to the EBacc suite of subjects continues with those getting a greater percentage of curriculum time in Years 10 and 11. This is not, however, at the expense of other subjects and we ensure we promote health and well-being through timetabled PE time, assemblies and through a detailed and extensive Ethics curriculum which is delivered through drop down days. These days build upon the extensive curriculum offer in RE and PSHE at KS3. We also have an extra-curricular programme across the key stages.

The KS4 curriculum time can be broken down as shown in the table below:

Subject	55min Period per fortnight
English	11
Mathematics	10
Science	11 (Triple science 14)
PE	2
Ethics (RE & PSHE)	Year 11 4 x drop down days Year 10 6 x drop down days
IT	1
Humanities	6
Option C	6
Option O	6

*Within the timetable triple science block, students who complete the separate sciences route get the additional curriculum time needed to complete the triple science course. We want to ensure that students can study triple Science and achieve the EBacc whilst still being able to study an Arts or vocational subject if they wish. This approach also ensures we give increasing numbers of students the opportunity to go to study A-level Sciences – an important commitment to ensure our learners can become the future engineers, doctors and teachers in our community. Also, within that block, students who do not study triple science will have the opportunity to receive additional English and/or Maths intervention as appropriate. This model allows the flexibility to give additional English and Maths support where required, whilst ensuring students who want to study additional science get the extra time required.

KS4 Options

English, Mathematics, Science and Humanities are studied by all students. A majority of students will also study French or Spanish as part of their compulsory core giving them the opportunity to achieve the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is not a new qualification, but a nationally reported measure that records achievement in English, Mathematics, Sciences, a Language and a Humanities subject.

Course Type	Subject	Exam Board
GCSE	Mathematics	Edexcel
GCSE	English Language	AQA
GCSE	English Literature	AQA
GCSE	Combined Science	AQA
GCSE	Triple Science	AQA
GCSE	Geography	AQA
GCSE	History	Edexcel
GCSE	Spanish	AQA
GCSE	French	AQA

Students will then select from one of the options below (or two if they don't study a language).

Course Type	Subject	Exam Board
GCSE	Art & Design: Fine Art	OCR
GCSE	Art & Design: Fashion and Textiles	OCR
GCSE	Computer Science	OCR
BTEC	Music	Edexcel
Level 2 Vocational Award	Dance	Eduqas
GCSE	Film Studies	Eduqas
Cambridge National Level 2	Engineering Design	OCR
Cambridge National Level 2	Sport Studies	OCR
Cambridge National Level 2	Health and Social Care	OCR
Level 2 Vocational Award	Hospitality and Catering	Eduqas
GCSE	Sociology	AQA
Cambridge National Level 2	Child Development	OCR
Cambridge National Level 2	Business: Enterprise & Marketing	OCR
GCSE	Business	OCR
Cambridge National Level 2	iMedia	OCR
GCSE	Graphics Communication	OCR

In order to allow students sufficient time to study their option subjects in enough depth, we aim to maximise the amount of learning hours students have to study each subject which has had to be carefully balanced against the amount of options we offer.

Through discussions with students and parents and carers, we will offer careers and course guidance to ensure that they make choices that are aspirational and right for them. This also enables us to quality assure the process, ensuring that it is fully inclusive and that learners are aspirational in their choices. We do our very best to accommodate the broad range of subject combinations possible. There is the possibility that any course that attracts only a small number of students may not be viable to run. In such cases we will speak to students, parents and carers as appropriate to discuss this and consider alternatives.

It is also important that, through our curriculum, our learners are information and media literate. In order to engage in a digital society, students need to be able to understand, inquire, create, communicate and think critically. As such, we want to ensure our young people leave Bristnall Hall Academy with a broad range of high-quality qualifications that are fit for the future and meeting the needs of all learners is our priority. Therefore, where opportunities can be created for students to study additional qualifications on top of their selected options, we will endeavour to support this.

Students at KS4 are given the opportunity to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities which provide opportunities to continue their academic progress. A rich and varied programme of visits and extra-curricular activities is also available as part of the academy curriculum entitlement.

6 Curriculum Maps

- 6.1 Every subject/phase has a curriculum map that sets out what will be taught and in what order as well as key assessment points.
- 6.2 There is one map per year group and each one links to the preceding and next year. Wherever possible the map also includes links to the relevant 'Knowledge Organiser' setting out the core knowledge for that part of the curriculum.
- 6.3 All of this information is shared with pupils, parents/carers, governors and other relevant stakeholders through the academy website.

7 Wider Curriculum

- 7.1 In our academies the curriculum is not just that which is taught in subject lessons. It is the sum of experiences that combine together to develop a child into the adulthood. To this end the experiences that pupils have in social times and during co-curricular or enrichment activity is of equal value to what they learn in 'lessons'.
- 7.2 Our academies deliver programmes of education which develop pupils' personal and social characters. See our Personal and Social Development and Character Education programmes for further detail. Make sure the title matches what you use and adapt what is listed on Page 1 of this policy accordingly.
- 7.3 Our academies believe that it is important to prepare pupils for the next stages of their education/life through an effective careers education programme which is based on the Gatsby Benchmarks. See our CEIAG policy and programme for further detail. Make sure the title matches what you use and adapt what is listed on Page 1 of this policy accordingly.

- 7.4 The curriculum has a vital role to play in developing pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes to learning. This includes teaching about mutual respect for all and an understanding of the importance of democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.
- 7.5 Pupils are taught what constitutes good behaviour and what the benefits of good behaviour are. See Behaviour Policy for further detail.
- 7.6 Social, emotional and behaviour skills are taught within the curriculum so that this together with our effective wider work supports pupils to be confident, resilient and independent, and to develop strength of character.

8 Enrichment

- 8.1 Enrichment is rooted in our academy values, forming a golden thread within and beyond the curriculum.
- 8.2 Enrichment opportunities are centred on the needs of all pupils, including the most vulnerable, and the context of the local community.
- 8.3 We deliver enrichment through a coherently planned, extensive range of rich experiences and breadth of curriculum content that is based on pupils' relative starting points; equipping them with the powerful knowledge, cultural literacy and moral compass needed to be successful within and beyond their formal education.
- 8.4 Enrichment inspires, engages and enhances every pupils' opportunity and desire to develop, widen and celebrate their talents and interests within and beyond the curriculum.
- 8.5 We actively seek to engage parents, carers and the local community as partners, encouraging them to contribute to and share in their children's personal development and success.
- 8.6 Every pupil has an Enrichment Passport in which they capture and record their participation in enrichment activities.

9 Intervention

- 9.1 Not every pupil has the same starting point and there are times when the curriculum needs to be adapted for individual learners.
- 9.2 Our academies develop a range of intervention strategies to support learners to fill knowledge gaps.
- 9.3 Pupils who are identified at assessment points as being below the age-related expected standards are given individual or small group interventions over defined periods of time. Pupils are assessed at the beginning and end of the intervention programme so that progress can be tracked.

10 Assessment

- 10.1 The curriculum is the progression model. Students have made progress if they have learned the intended curriculum. In our academies we believe that teachers should be teaching to the curriculum and not to the test. With this in mind, it is important that we respond to the important curriculum changes and the focus upon solid quality first teaching with a secure and rigorous assessment strategy which is fit for purpose.
- 10.2 Formative assessment is a form of assessment which helps capture what students do and don't know and allows teachers to address these gaps. Formative assessment can take both verbal and written forms.
- 10.3 Rigorous summative assessment is undertaken in our academies to provide valid and reliable information about how well students in our academies have learned the curriculum that we are teaching them. Summative assessments create data and information which has shared and consistent meaning.
- 10.4 In our academies staff are asked for assessment information three times per year. Anything more regular than this does not provide meaningful data about how well students have learned the curriculum.
- 10.5 Assessments are standardised both internally and externally in our academies. For our core subjects, leads meet regularly in TNGs (Team Network Groups) to standardise assessments across our academies. At KS4 this is assisted by the selection of common examination boards for the EBacc subjects.
- 10.6 See our Assessment, Recording, Reporting and Exams Policy for further detail.

11 Staff Training and Support

- 11.1 We build regular opportunities for staff in our academies to develop their subject, pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge through individual and group training.
- 11.2 Team Network Groups are subject specific and meet up to six times a year to develop curriculum plans, schemes of learning and lesson resources.
- 11.3 Strategic Development Groups address wider curriculum issues and also meet up to six times a year.
- 11.4 We encourage staff to attend webinars, training days and development activities through our ATT Institute and those offered by external organisations.
- 11.5 Training needs for individual staff are routinely linked to their development targets and PDCs (Professional development Conversations) take place regularly throughout the year.

11.6 We deliver bespoke training for new entrants to the professions and for those recently qualified or returning to the profession.

12 Review

12.1 The application of this policy in our academies is reviewed by the Regional Education Directors as part of the CSI (Challenge, Support and Intervention) Strategy.



Appendix A Glossary of Curriculum Language

Quality of Education	A rounded view on the quality of education an academy provides: the appropriateness of the curriculum intent (taking into consideration narrowing/flexibility), the extent to which it delivers on this intent (Impact), and how well it is delivered at subject/classroom level (implementation).
Intent	What the curriculum is building towards and how it is planned to get there taking into account the local context whilst ensuring students acquire the knowledge and skills to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life. This is set at Trust, academy and subject/phase level with each being intrinsically linked to the others.
Implementation	How the curriculum is taught at subject/classroom level.
Impact	What students have learned.
Component	Individual items of knowledge that students will learn.
Composite	Components combine together to form composites, combined they become more complex composites.
Fluency	The ability to retrieve knowledge quickly and accurately.
Cultural Capital	'It is the essential knowledge that students need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.' (Ofsted S5 Handbook 2019) In our Trust this is not a tick box for each topic or lesson but is rooted in the curricular culture of our academies.
Core Content	This refers to the substance of the curriculum that students must know and remember to ensure a secure foundation in their schemata development.
Wider Content (Hinterland)	This is the content that sits outside of the core. It might be about the bigger picture. For example, the full novel. Without acknowledging and using such wider content, the core (a small passage from a novel) may not have true meaning. Wider content is often what makes knowledge rich and memorable for students.
Substantive Knowledge	The knowledge produced by an academic subject, which is made up of established facts that are uncontested.
Cumulative knowledge	This is where knowledge is not wholly reliant on students having previously studied a 'certain' topic, which means there are many pathways to mastering the content.
Hierarchical Knowledge	This means that you cannot teach one topic until students have 'mastered' the prior knowledge - e.g. times tables before fractions.
Disciplinary Knowledge	Disciplinary knowledge refers to what pupils learn about how that knowledge was established and constructed within the discipline, its degree of certainty and how it continues to be revised by scholars, artists or through professional practice. In some subjects, this is where there is space for judgement making, argument, open-ended challenges and subject thinking.
Curriculum sequencing	This is ultimately about <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> a certain section of the curriculum serves to prepare students for future content, such that it has a <i>proximal</i>

	<i>function</i> to make the next stage possible and <i>ultimate function</i> to do an enduring job. The aim is to build a student's knowledge and skills towards agreed end points whilst equipping them with the confidence to be able to create knowledge themselves.
Proximal Function	Each bit of a curriculum has a job to do. The proximal function is how the knowledge from this lesson supports the work planned in the next few lessons/weeks.
Ultimate Function	Knowledge acquired across a curriculum is durable and has an ultimate function, a future purpose. This knowledge supports students, over time, to develop deeper conceptual understanding. It allows individuals to not only eventually enter disciplinary conversations and debates with confidence but allows students to potentially become knowledge creators themselves in the future.