

# Gateacre School Curriculum Policy: July 2023

## Introduction and Rationale

We believe that ‘powerful knowledge’ can ‘enable students to acquire knowledge that takes them beyond their experiences’ (Young et al., 2014). We believe this is particularly important in disadvantaged contexts in relation to social justice. It is our belief that it is the educational right of the child to receive a comprehensive education committed to academic excellence – regardless of background or social standing. Our knowledge-based curriculum attempts to provide young people with a school experience that enables them to be socially mobile, for this is at the core of what social justice is: enabling all people, regardless of socio-economic background, to be provided with the opportunities to succeed in life.

This policy aims to set out the principles, approach and ‘non-negotiables’ that guide curriculum intent, implementation and the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the impact of the curriculum at our school. The intention of this policy is to both ensure consistency of quality for our students by providing a strong curriculum framework rooted in cognitive science and to develop staff pedagogical content knowledge.

## Our Principles

- Irrespective of their starting points, every student has full access to our school’s curriculum.
- Every student, irrespective of their starting points, is provided with opportunities to learn rich content and develop skills that allows them to achieve examination success this facilitates broad choice when moving to the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- The curriculum intends to provide every student with deep and broad knowledge of all subjects they study so that they are may work towards ‘knowing more and remembering more’ in those subjects. There is the implicit understanding throughout the design of our curriculum that this looks different, and will be achieved differently, in each subject specialism.
- The curriculum will form a well-sequenced narrative that builds declarative

(and substantive), disciplinary and procedural knowledge.

- We actively encourage our staff to improve and refine their existing subject 'content' knowledge through active engagement with the latest academic thought, publications and research, such as those produced by the EEF. We also actively encourage our staff to seek opportunities to enhance their understanding of how this content knowledge feeds into their knowledge of how to deliver it in the classroom – pedagogical content knowledge – through subject associations and the like Geographical Society; Chartered College of Teaching.
- Our CPL (Continuous Professional Learning) Programme delivers knowledge of evidence-based research strategies or theories that curriculum teams can utilise in the design and implementation of their curriculum; for example, by employing interleaving, dual-coding and deliberate practice.
- All teachers will draw on the curriculum to secure their pedagogical content knowledge and all teachers will update the curriculum with improved sequencing, narratives, strategies and explanations using evidence of the impact of the curriculum.
- How the curriculum is being implemented, and its subsequent impact, will be monitored routinely against the intended curriculum outcomes and teachers will be provided with feedback that supports them in that implementation - improving their explanations, narratives, strategies and sequencing within and across lessons so that all students have access to and can achieve the intended curriculum outcomes.
- Every teacher, irrespective of their stage, is a leader of curriculum and, during calendared CPDS (Curriculum Planning and Development Sessions), is afforded opportunities to enhance their practice and contribute to the curriculum development. Teachers own their curriculum – they are the experts.

## **Our Implementation**

Gateacre aspires to a knowledge-based curriculum where curriculum is the 'knowing more and remembering more' of a body of declarative, disciplinary and procedural knowledge as defined by the subject specialists, who take account of the national curriculum, the shared wisdom of subject pedagogical communities and the understanding we have of 'science of learning'. The invaluable knowledge of a subject which students will acquire is planned skillfully by specialist subject teams. Procedural knowledge (skills) is developed as students gain more subject specialist knowledge.

All curriculum areas within our school have a clear statement of intent which sets out the inherent worth and purpose of the subject. They all have clearly sequenced Curriculum Progression Maps for each year group, clearly linking SOL to ensure students make a systematic, logical progression from KS2 – KS5. These documents are monitored throughout the year and reviewed on an annual basis and all staff within the teams contribute to them.

The curriculum is sequenced in a way which allows progress across units of work, year groups, key stages and the whole time in the school. This enables each subject to teach hierarchical elements of the curriculum in the correct order. It also allows cumulative elements of the curriculum to be introduced in an order which is appropriate for each individual subject. It also allows for subjects to spiral their curriculum content and ensure greater complexity as students' journey through the subject. Teams will review the sequencing of the curriculum on an annual basis considering evidence derived from comparing actual outcomes with intended outcomes.

Curriculum teams plan resources together during CPDS (Curriculum, Planning and Development Sessions) to share best practice and train staff in the best practice of sequencing new learning. Before embarking on the design of their curriculum.

Curriculum Teams considered the following questions:

1. KS2-3 Transition: What knowledge and skills did our students learn/experience in primary?
2. Intent: What is the purpose of teaching your subject?
3. Content: What knowledge and skills are you going to teach them?
4. Sequencing: What order are you going to 'teach things'?
5. Rationale: What is the rationale for your sequence? How does it build knowledge?
6. Key Skills: What are the key skills students will learn?
7. Vocabulary: How will you develop Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary?

8. Assessment (Formative and Summative): How will you measure attainment and progress?

9. SMSC: How does your curriculum facilitate a students' social, cultural, spiritual and cultural development?

10. Cultural Capital: What experiences do you facilitate for your students beyond your lessons to enable them to acquire 'knowledge beyond their experiences' (Young, 2014)?

11. Careers: How do you ensure students understand the import of your subject in students' aspirations?

12. Impact: How do you know your curriculum is 'Good'?

Thus, all Curriculum Progression Maps now clearly show:

- a clear sequence
- a rationale for the sequence
- an outline of the key building blocks of learning
- retrieval practices
- key skills to be learned
- key vocabulary to be learned
- links to numeracy/literacy to develop schema
- formative assessment practices
- summative assessment
- opportunities to develop SMSC
- opportunities to develop cultural capital
- clear links to careers

Each leader of a subject area, along with their team of subject specialists, choose the most appropriate resources for the curriculum. The curriculum will dictate the use of resources, rather than the other way around – for example, where subject leaders choose text books this will follow a rigorous assessment of the textbook and making sure that the textbook matches the expectations of the curriculum. Where quality text books do not exist the specialist teachers will create and share appropriate resources.

Each unit of work is accompanied by a variety of strategies to ensure learning is embedded into LTM (long-term memory). This may take many forms of retrieval practices such as: exit tickets; LSQ (low-staked quizzes); multiple choice quizzes and peer/self- quizzing. We also use Knowledge Organisers for home-learning to further ensure the retention of knowledge and students develop independent learning skills.

## **Assessment**

In all departments, teachers will utilise live marking, corrections in class and individual/whole class feedback to ensure students learn more and remember more. Staff review the achievements of their classes and then plan lessons to address misconceptions or extend progress.

To ensure that students 'learn more and remember more' of our knowledge-led curriculum, in all departments, students will complete recall style quizzes that respond to knowledge-learning homework. These knowledge assessments will provide regular opportunities to recall knowledge through quizzes, exit tickets, LSQ, multiple-choice questions and other tasks that require students to demonstrate their acquisition of knowledge.

Each half term there will be (at least) one formal "DIRT" lesson for all classes in the school. Whole class, and where required individual, feedback will be provided on what students have learned and remembered. The teacher will identify what students need to do to improve.

All departments have two summative assessment points each academic year to assess how well students are learning the content in the progression plan. Each assessment 'tests' knowledge learned over the year: AP1 is the knowledge learned September – January; AP2 in June, contains content from the learning that took place between September- January and the new knowledge learned between January and June. This allows us to ensure that students learn more and remember more.

Assessment of the curriculum will compare the actual outcomes/progress of students

with the intended outcomes/progress of the curriculum. Each department plans the assessments that will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and will use this to adjust the curriculum of future units to minimise any gaps in students' knowledge of the subject. The planned assessments are outlined in a document for use in MERA of the curriculum.

## **Monitoring the Quality of the Curriculum**

All monitoring must be file in CLs MERA files.

### **Intended curriculum to Actual curriculum monitoring by Curriculum Leaders**

Curriculum Leaders will use the line management meetings and CPDS to evaluate whether their intended curriculum is becoming actual curriculum and intended outcomes are becoming actual outcomes. Senior Leaders will take feedback from the Head of Faculty/Department and employ due diligence to ensure what is reported is accurate and offer challenge where their evidence and target setting does not match that of the Curriculum Leader.

Curriculum Leaders will scrutinise the work across the Faculty/department each term. This scrutiny will inform CPDS activities to be completed during CPDS meetings.

### **Curriculum Review**

The work of Curriculum Leaders throughout the year will feed into a Senior Team Curriculum Review with focus on curriculum design and implementation triangulating the information gained through the Curriculum Leaders MERA File and regular LM meetings. The curriculum review will establish and evaluate the rationale for curriculum content and sequencing as well as the extent to which intended curriculum and outcomes have become actual curriculum and outcomes. Strengths and areas for development will be synthesised throughout the process and a clear target will be set for each curriculum area to further improve their work.

Curriculum Leaders and Line Managers will collect and scrutinise evidence throughout the year. With a Curriculum Review being completed by SLT/EXSLT Line Managers during the penultimate week of Summer 1 (to begin Summer, 2024).

See MERA GUIDANCE AND PROFORMAS on P:Whole School: Quality of Education: MERA 2022

