



Curriculum Policy

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Introduction

Our curriculum is guided by our ethos, our vision, and our values, as well as our commitment to modern British Values and spiritual, moral, social, and cultural developments for the Learners (SMSC).

TLC School Vision, Mission, and Values

To achieve our aims, we will continue to develop a unique school in our local community. Our ethos is based upon full inclusion, high expectations, exceptional teaching and learning, nurture, and a relentless focus on the needs and potential of every learner.

Vision

We will continue to develop a school which values inclusivity, provides exceptional educational and personal development opportunities for our learners, encourages individual qualities, and enables our learners to gain self-worth, become independent, acquire cultural capital, and ultimately take a meaningful and fulfilling place in society.

Mission

We provide an inspirational, innovative, and safe place of education, where each learner is valued and treated equitably; delivering individualised high quality educational provision based on the past experiences and current needs of each learner.

Values

Our core values are:

- Valuing people
- Equality and diversity
- Ambition
- Inclusion
- Integrity
- Inspiration
- Nurture
- Pride
- Support
- Reflection
- Compassion

We deliver these through:

- Challenge
- Rigour
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Partnership

The curriculum is designed to re-engage young people who have experienced barriers to engagement in a mainstream context. Giving individualised attention to each young person allows the staff team to create a programme of learning, therapeutic and academic support, which maximises the chances of each young person engaging. The school aims to foster confidence and a love of learning through a combination of firm boundaries, nurture, accessibility, and inclusion.

Aims

Our curriculum aims to:

- provide a broad, rich education that is coherently planned and sequenced so that new and existing knowledge and skills are developed and built on
- have clearly defined objectives; explicitly preparing all learners for further/ future learning and employment
- equip all learners with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life

- give learners experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, and social, physical, aesthetic, and creative education
- develop young people's independent learning skills, educational curiosity, and resilience
- improve learner motivation and self-confidence, attendance, and engagement with learning
- accurately address typical gaps in knowledge and skills for our learner cohort (the local context)
- overcome the medical model of disability
- have high academic and behavioural expectations of all our young people
- addressing social disadvantage and with appropriate levels of challenge and support
- create a safe and stimulating environment in which positive, professional, and respectful relationships are developed between all members of the school community
- have an ongoing and monitored process in place whereby the specific personal, social, and academic needs of each young person are identified to help them overcome any barriers to attainment
- support learners' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development through embedded SMSC opportunities in all subject areas
- actively promote a culture of mutual respect and tolerance, democracy, the rule of law, equal opportunities and freedom in our curriculum and school culture/life
- support learners' physical development and responsibility for their own health, enabling them to be active and develop life skills
- have high academic and vocational ambitions for all learners and provide practical support through career guidance and careers information embedded into all curriculum areas

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibilities relating to the curriculum for different roles are below. For further details, the job descriptions are available.

The School Advisory Panel

The School Advisory Panel will:

- monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the principal to account for its implementation
- ensure that a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and targets
- ensure that the school is complying with any funding agreements
- ensure that there is a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science
- ensure that proper provision is made for learners with different abilities and needs, in accordance with their Education Health and Welfare Plans (EHCPs), particularly considering all TLC learners have special educational needs (SEN) and EHCPs
- ensure that all courses provided for learners below the age of 17 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs, are approved by the secretary of state (or ESFA)
- ensure that the school implements relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- ensure that all young people attending are provided with independent, impartial career guidance and that it is appropriately resourced

The School Principal

The school principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented, regularly reviewed, and monitored. At TLC, the curriculum will be overseen by the principal.

The School Principal will ensure that:

- the curriculum offer matches the vision of the school and the needs of the learner cohort
- the school's reporting to parents, agencies and other stakeholders is timely, of a high standard and a true reflection of all aspects of the curriculum
- the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the School Advisory Panel

- the School Advisory Panel is advised on whole-school targets to make informed decisions
- all required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual learners will be met
- the curriculum intent (planning) is monitored and, where necessary, developed in line with the aims of this policy
- implementation of the curriculum is excellent or good, and classroom staff are supported to improve
- the progress of all young people is recorded and regularly tracked
- improvement strategies are actioned for all learners in collaboration with teachers and regularly reviewed (Learner Progress Meetings, IEP meetings with SENCO)
- where necessary, timely and effective intervention strategies are put in place to ensure progress for all, proper provision is in place for learners with different abilities and needs,
- requests to withdraw young people from curriculum subjects, where appropriate, are managed
- exams are run according to requirements, obligations and our policies, and the Exams Officer is effectively managed

Assistant Principal – Education and Curriculum

The Assistant Principal – Education and Curriculum will support the principal in the day-to-day implementation of the Curriculum Policy.

Teaching Staff

As TLC is a small school, most teachers act as a 'Head of Department,' except for Head of English and PSHE and those working directly below them. As such, they are responsible for the co-ordination, planning and implementation of their subject and tracking learner progress.

Teaching staff will:

- ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy,
- be a positive role model
- follow the feedback and marking guidelines in the TLC Marking and Feedback Policy
- be responsible for keeping up to date with the developments in their curriculum area/s and for amending their planning accordingly
- evaluate the effectiveness of their schemes of work and medium-term plans and amend if they identify areas for development and accessibility
- ensure that learners engage and achieve with the curriculum and amend planning to achieve this aim
- Apply Quality First Teaching methods
- specifically ensure that curriculum planning and delivery take into consideration the needs of all learners including those who need academic challenge (high achievers) and those with barriers to learning
- ensure that Teaching Assistants are effectively directed to support learning
- ensure that a baseline assessment of all learners new to the class is performed within the first three weeks of joining
- plan termly assessment opportunities to track and keep records of learner progress, as detailed in this policy
- identify learners who are not reaching their agreed goals and plan interventions; accordingly, in collaboration with the TLC SENCo. Teachers are required to escalate intervention to the SLT in a timely fashion when all in-class interventions have been exhausted.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo)

At TLC, all young people on roll have an EHC Plan, as per our Admissions Policy. The SENDCo leads on annual reviews. The SENDCo creates IEPs based upon EHCP suggested provisions and expected outcomes, including short-term targets, which give direction to the classroom staff as to strategies that will promote engagement and progress.

The SENDCo will:

- act as a resource for teachers around planning, delivery, and assessment of the curriculum, including some training
- suggest strategies that will promote individual progress and engagement via the IEPs
- manage a provision map to ensure all can access learning
- through observation and monitoring, ensure that the IEPs are live documents that are regularly reviewed and responded to
- lead on the implementation of the TLC SEND Policy and update it to ensure it is in line with current guidance, law, and good practice, gaining feedback from stakeholders
- Oversee a graduated approach to the curriculum from QFT universal teaching to teaching assistant run targeted interventions, to specialist professional input (focusing on adapted teaching approaches where appropriate)
- lead on communications with external agencies and act as quality control for the school in that respect
- ensure that the SEN offer is up-to-date and implemented; providing SEN information reports where required

Teaching Assistants

The support staff will be trained to plan and support the delivery of the subjects.

Teaching Assistants will:

- support teachers, working collaboratively with all classroom staff
- be positive role models
- be versatile and adaptable
- build relationships with parents and carers
- support young people with their learning and lead 1:1 sessions, including targeted interventions, with young people
- contribute to documentation such as IEPs
- regularly update display boards
- input safeguarding concerns, incident reports and parent/carer contact information reports on Engage and/or CPOMS (for Safeguarding specific concerns)

TLC Offer

The curriculum is regularly reviewed by senior management and subject teachers to ensure that it is broad, balanced and the best offer for the cohort of learners at the school. At TLC, we teach young people in small (up to 12 learners), mixed-age classes, divided into Key Stage 3 (years 7-9), Key Stage 4 (years 10-11) and Key Stage 5 (years 12-13). Groups are formed through careful consideration of the personalised needs of each young person, their attainment and progress and group dynamics. The core subjects, Maths, English, and Science are supplemented by a range of vocational and other academic subjects, to enable the delivery of a broad, rich curriculum appropriate to the learner cohort and expected outcomes.

Curriculum	Skills	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Qualifications
Age		11-14	14-16	15-16
Year Groups		7-9	10-11	At year 11
English Language	Linguistic	✓	✓	GCSE/functional Skills
Maths	Mathematical	✓	✓	GCSE/ functional Skills
English Literature	Fluency in written and spoken English	-	✓	GCSE
Statistics	Data analytics and critical thinking	-	✓	GCSE
Science	Scientific	✓	✓	GCSE/ entry Level
Art	Aesthetic and creative	✓	✓	GCSE
History	Human and social	✓	✓	Entry Level
RE	Human and social	✓	✓	Entry Level
Physical Education	Physical	✓	✓	-
Cookery	Aesthetic and creative, technological	✓	✓	ASDAN Foodwise
RSHE	Human and social, scientific, and technological	✓	✓	-
Literacy	Reading and spelling	✓	✓	-
Numeracy	Number calculations	✓	✓	-
Careers	Human and social, vocational	✓	✓	-
Citizenship	Human and social, vocational	-	✓	-
Bicycle Mechanics	Vocational	✓	✓	OCN Accredited
Hair and Beauty	Vocational	✓	✓	ASDAN Award

The qualifications underpinning our curriculum are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they meet the needs and aspirations of our young people.

Accredited qualifications are an important way of recognising achievement, celebrating learner progress, and laying solid foundations for further development in post-16 provisions.

As all of the learners who attend TLC have an EHC plan, the school has IEPs for all learners, and these are regularly reviewed.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education are taught as part of PSHCE education, and throughout the curriculum. Further details can be found in the RSE and PSHCE Policies.

Careers Information, Education, and Guidance

Careers information, education, and guidance help young people to develop the knowledge, confidence, and skills that they need to make well-informed choices and plans that are thought-through and enable them to progress smoothly into further learning and work, now and in the future. At TLC, we ensure that high-quality information and guidance enable learners to make the best of their talents and achieve their ambitions by choosing the pathway

that is right for them. We aim to ensure that information about learning options and careers is presented impartially, and that advice promotes the best interests of learners. In addition, we aim to ensure that our careers' education:

- is embedded in all subject planning
- empowers young people to plan and manage their own futures
- responds to the needs of each learner
- provides comprehensive information and advice
- raises aspirations
- actively promotes equality of opportunity and challenges stereotypes
- helps young people to progress and transition

This year, we have a number of our young people on part-time placements at Lewisham Bike Project (attending courses in carpentry, mechanics, and sustainability) as an enhancement to their core education at TLC; this has enabled them to engage in a vocational, practical, and technical programme which serves to both keep them engaged in formal education and prepare them for the world of work. Since September 2023 we have offered ASDAN awards in hairdressing, foodwise and OCN units relating to bike mechanics.

Planning - Intent

The curriculum is planned for the three key stage levels, key stages 3, 4 and 5. Learners learn together in mixed-year tutor groups of up to 12, staying with their group for each subject, generally. For the benefit of young people in year 11, towards the end of their qualifications, the KS4 groups can be rearranged so that there is a discreet year 11 higher achieving (GCSE) group. Some KS5 Learners may join them if re-taking GCSEs.

Each subject teacher/leader has regularly updated schemes of work and medium-term planning.

The schemes of work give more information about each topic covered, including context and cross-curricular links and strategies used in the classroom relating to the Learner's needs as outlined in their EHCPs.

TLC's medium-term plans give detailed objectives and assessment strategies that are used when teaching each topic or subject. Teachers use these documents as a basis for planning their lessons on a weekly basis, ensuring adaptive teaching approaches are applied. The schemes of work give more detail including context, resources used, success criteria, cross-curricular links and how the topic teaching incorporates learning around British Values and SMSC.

The curriculum is regularly and frequently reviewed by senior leaders and subject teachers to ensure that it is the best offer for the cohort of learners at the school.

Planning at TLC school:

- takes into consideration the needs, learning styles and abilities of all learners, all of whom have SEND needs, and those who are more able
- includes lesson objectives.
- incorporates regular opportunities for formative assessment (which informs planning).
- shows progression in the learning of knowledge and skills, builds on previous learning and has clearly defined endpoints.
- gives learners the opportunity to develop thinking and reasoning skills.
- is relevant to the learners and addresses social disadvantages.
- is personalised and pays attention to the strategies detailed in young people's IEPs.
- equips learners with knowledge and cultural capital.
- incorporates opportunities for reading.
- incorporates spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education and an exploration of British Values.

Delivery – Implementation

Overall Approach

Young people at TLC School have come to the school through referral by their local authority and subsequent naming of TLC on their EHC Plan (currently placed children from Bromley, Lewisham, Bexley, Croydon, Greenwich, Kent, Surrey, and Croydon Boroughs).

In accordance with the ethos, vision and values of the school, all teachers delivering lessons prioritise our young people, with the teacher assisted by one or more teaching assistants.

The school pedagogy is based on personalised needs and recognised approaches to teaching young people with special education needs, particularly SEMH.

Please refer to the SEND Policy. All teachers use Quality First Teaching as a first-tier approach and add to this both teacher-led, class-based interventions and out-of-class interventions. The school uses a multi-agency approach, and interventions are informed by the Individual Education Plans, informed by EHCPs. IEPs are regularly reviewed – half-termly by teaching staff and at least termly by the SENDCo.

Quality First Teaching, QFT

Quality First Teaching (QFT) aims to engage and support the learning of all young people in the class and places a strong focus on learner participation in learning.

The key characteristics of QFT are:

- Highly focused lesson design with smart objectives (targets)
- High demands of learner involvement and engagement with their learning
- High levels of interaction for all learners
- Appropriate use of questioning, modelling, and explaining on the part of the teacher
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for young people to talk both individually and in groups
- An expectation that learners will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently (in line with their level of ability)
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate learners

Teachers at TLC take account of these characteristics, in particular,

- modelling, in which a teacher thinks aloud to help learners to understand underlying structures, processes and conventions.
- explaining, which helps learners to understand abstract concepts and events that are outside their own experiences, and
- questioning, which can help promote higher-order thinking skills and structure the development of learner knowledge and understanding.

Assessment – Impact

Rationale

At TLC, we assess to:

- inform planning.
- ensure that the school is providing targeted, individualised learning for each learner.
- identify and plan for gaps in knowledge and skills.
- identify special educational needs that have not been identified already.
- identify and support more able learners.
- enable nuanced conversations about learners' understanding of topics and areas of learning so that they can appreciate their own progress, their learning and how they learn.
- monitor progress through the school as a whole, looking at specific subjects and year groups in order to improve our provision.
- report and inform young people, parents, teachers, agencies and other stakeholders of progress, strengths, and areas for improvement.

- support transition, particularly at the end of KS4 and/or 5.
- demonstrate the success of our approach.

How the School Assesses

Initial Assessment

The school aims to ensure that each new learner undergoes an initial baseline and diagnostic assessment in maths and English within the first weeks of enrolment. Additionally, young people undergo a baseline assessment at the beginning of the academic year. For these assessments, the school uses BKSb, an online learning platform, at both GCSE and functional skills levels.

BKSb diagnostic assessment analyses gaps in understanding and knowledge. This provides a basis for individualised learner programmes and targets in the three subjects and is shared with young people in a formative and motivating way.

Other subjects have a less formalised, but still comprehensive approach to initial assessment. The initial assessments from BKSb serve to inform assessment in other subjects. All learners working towards GCSE's, level 1 or 2 or entry level qualifications have teacher-led initial assessment in class within the first two weeks of joining the school. This assessment, often using questions from past papers from the appropriate specification, provides in-depth information of learner 'knowledge gaps' and enables teachers to plan their lessons to address these.

Ongoing Assessment

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment, or assessment *for* learning (AFL) – “*assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there*” (Assessment Reform Group, UK 2002),

It enables the teacher to improve and tailor learning and helps learners identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, it encourages independent learning. Examples of approaches used at school are:

- 'think, pair, share'
- questioning strategies
- plenaries during which learners reflect on their learning
- peer (where appropriate) and self-assessment
- observation of activity and work completed
- explicit objectives for the learning session and knowing what being successful in the session means
- reflective conversations between classroom staff and learners, particularly at the end of a topic or when a learner has hit a milestone

At TLC young people are provided with subject-specific attainment sheets, stuck into the front of their exercise books which enable them and their teachers to monitor their progress in a uniformed way that they can understand.

Summative Assessment

Assessment **of** learning, or summative assessment results in an evaluation of learner achievement in the form of a level or grade. At TLC, young people have summative assessments at the end of a topic (around 3 times per academic year) – for example, by using questions from past papers that match the topic or skill that has been taught and by using BKSb for maths and English. This feeds into a termly progress report of each young person, ensuring that the needs of all learners are met.

Learner progress is discussed in regular progress meetings (every three weeks) with the SENDCo, DSL and Assistant Principal – Education and Curriculum. Any learners falling behind are noted and suitable interventions are planned.

Recording and Reporting of Assessment Data

Recording

- Summative assessments are recorded on a grid in the front of each learner book, or in similar style (teacher individualise) along with their initial assessment data in every subject. Over time, this data offers learners, parents/carers, and classroom staff a record of progress. This is also used formatively, for instance in conversations between classroom staff and learners.
- The grid informs the learner of the grade they are working at, their target and predicted grades and strategies for improvement (the 'how').
- Initial and summative assessments are also recorded on a class spreadsheet (for each teacher), giving an overall learning journey for each learner. Levels and grades are recorded for both Functional Skills and GCSEs.
- The strategies enable all learners to progress whether this is to further push more able learners or to show interventions for learners who are falling behind.

Reporting

Progress and assessment data is reported to all stakeholders at the school, for example, leaders, parents/carers, agencies, further education colleges, learners, and classroom staff.

Data is reported in the following ways:

- To learners, in dedicated class time (with discussion)
- to the SLT (Senior Leadership Team), in learner progress meetings
- to the SLT, on a termly basis in the form of a progress report for each learner
- to parents/carers at parents' events, in mid-year and end-of-year reports and informally at other times
- to agencies, based on the agreement made with the school. Agencies receive progress and attainment information such as end-of-year reports and progress updates as part of annual reviews, PEP strategy meetings, CP meetings and on request and through Annual Reviews

Reading – An Essential Part of the Curriculum

Rationale and Aims

Young people at TLC have frequently missed education. Initial assessment upon joining the school has shown that the reading ages of our learners are almost universally lower than their actual age. Improving reading and reading comprehension, and enjoyment of reading, are therefore priorities at TLC. The aim is not only to motivate reluctant readers but to encourage them to become intrinsically motivated to read.

Reading Sessions and Leads

A whole school reading programme has been developed at TLC, led by Head of English, in collaboration with TLC senior leadership team, Melrose English Heads' forum and other teaching staff. Literacy and reading policies available.

Successful strategies within our Reading Programme include:

- emphasising the power of choosing what to read
- incorporating movement (if others are not disturbed)
- Provide comfortable areas in which to read
- using discussion groups to review the reading
- breaking the reading down into smaller chunks
- reading to learners, whilst they follow the text
- reading interventions (1:1 or small group) where appropriate

The programme is regularly reviewed and personalised strategies are employed, with reference to IEPs of individual learners. A library of books has been created and will be continually updated. Learners are encouraged to read, borrow books, and participate in whole school reading initiatives i.e., the Read-a-Thon for World Book Day and Form Reading Day on Tuesdays during tutor time.

Assessment of Reading Levels

Reading levels are assessed separately from other assessments but feed into reports, the SEF, SIP and English assessment. Reading levels are assessed termly and by a specialised team to ensure consistency.

Inclusion

Our curriculum offer is tailored to the individual needs of our young people. Our broad and balanced curriculum focuses on functional learning, accredited courses/qualifications and incorporates vocational and life-skills to support and promote independence and transition. We encourage trauma centred planning, as we move towards trauma informed practices. Inclusion, as it relates to individual needs, is underpinned by the following principles at TLC:

- All learners are equally valued. Equality, however, does not always mean treating learners in the same way, but according to their individual needs (equity).
- Individual needs are to be seen in the context of learners learning in different styles rather than in the context of “deficit” models of ability and learning.

Teachers have high, appropriate expectations for all young people based on the information that is brought with them from their previous placement, the induction process, and our initial and diagnostic assessments. Four/five targets are given on each Individual Education Plans, IEPs and these are reviewed termly. The targets, from EHCPs where a young person has one, are in the areas of cognition and learning, social communication interaction, SEMH, sensory/physical, in line with EHCP, with a personal target set with the young person.

In this way, a complete picture of each young person's journey is built up over time and incorporates learners with low prior attainment, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and learners with English as an additional language (EAL). Further information can be found in our Inclusion Policy, Equity and Diversity Policy and in our SEND Policy.

Monitoring Arrangements

The School Advisory Panel monitors the quality of education through the annual self-evaluation process and through regular reports and communication with the principal and the Assistant Principal – Education and Curriculum. The senior leadership team, including the SENCo, will undertake regular, focused learning walks, lesson observations and book looks to ensure a good standard of teaching, learning and assessment as well as curriculum deep dives. Progress is similarly tracked, in addition to termly learner progress meetings with the Assistant Principal – Education and Curriculum for each teacher.

Links with Other Policies

This policy has due regard to the guidance of exam board specifications of the qualifications we deliver. It reflects requirements for curriculum, inclusion and equality as set out in the Independent Schools' Standards Regulations (ISSR's 2014), in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and in the Equality Act 2010. The policy also refers to the curriculum-related expectations and responsibilities of the board of directors set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook. This policy links to the following policies and guidelines for the school:

- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equity and Diversity Policy
- British Values Policy
- RSE Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy