

The OCL secondary curriculum 3 Is overview

This document below is for academy leaders and outlines the rationale for the OCL secondary curriculum. It is to be used alongside the OCL Curriculum Statement of Intent, which gives more details of how we develop character, competence and community in our children and young people, and other relevant policies, such as the OCL Continuity of Education Policy and OCL Learning Policy.

Intent

- **Our 5 or 7 year OCL secondary curriculum aims to develop character, competence and community** in all of our children and young people (see the OCL Curriculum Statement of Intent for more details about each of these).
- **Focused learning is the foundation of every lesson** and the OALP curriculum is designed to ensure the very best academic outcomes for our children and young people using the latest research in cognitive science.
- **Our curriculum is ambitious and allows students to develop a deep understanding of the world around them** because:
 - It goes beyond the National Curriculum. All Key Stage 3 and 4 National Curriculum expectations and exam board specifications are exceeded in all subjects, so that the curriculum is challenging for all (including the most able and higher prior attainers).
 - Academic reading is introduced throughout the curriculum which develops students' vocabulary and increases their subject specific knowledge.
 - Our aim is that the majority of students will study Geography or History and a language at GCSE by 2025.
- **Our curriculum is broad and balanced** because:
 - The vast majority of students study History, Geography, MFL, DT, Art, Drama and Music until the end of year 9, and study Maths, English, Science, PE, RE and PSHCE until the end of year 11.
 - Our students do not select their GCSE options until the end of year 9 and are not assessed using GCSE assessments until year 10.
 - We aspire to a fundamental offer which includes a promise to all children and young people for opportunities which further broaden the curriculum, including playing an active part in a hub project, playing a musical instrument, attending a residential trip, visiting theatres, art galleries, museums, universities and places of work.
 - Our curriculum focuses on the personal development of our children and young people, by developing their character and teaching them how to keep themselves safe. PD is interwoven through PSHCE lessons, REACH days and daily Year Group Meetings.
- **Our curriculum is rigorous** because:
 - It is planned in line with the latest research into how the brain and memory works.
 - It places significant emphasis on the importance of knowledge, which is gradually introduced and increases in difficulty over time to expand learners' schemas by connecting this to prior knowledge held.
 - It also recognises the importance of skills and aims to support children and young people to access and apply their schema in the real world, developing deep learning and creativity.
- Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do and is an essential part of the Oasis ethos, which is reflected in the OCL curriculum design and delivery. **Our curriculum is inclusive** because:
 - It is a vehicle for inclusion because it provides a strong foundation of knowledge and finely develops skills, which brings advantage to the disadvantaged, where barriers to



learning are successfully overcome and there are no limits to the achievement and ambition of our children and young people.

- It offers a personalised, tailored package through the Hope Centre to meet the specific needs of students with SEMH.
 - It intentionally builds character through the Oasis ethos and 9 habits. This prepares our children and young people to be the best version of themselves not just for today but for their futures too, by helping them discover who they are and who they are becoming.
 - Every opportunity is taken to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.
 - It is personalised and adapted by teachers across the Trust to reflect students' starting points, prior knowledge and needs, so that barriers are removed and so that it can be accessed by all children and young people (including low prior attainers, EAL students, students with low reading ages and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).
 - It is adapted by teachers to reflect the local context of each academy, including heritage and experience of the local community.
- **Our curriculum is sequenced to support deep learning.** Our curriculum is a spiral curriculum, where knowledge and skills are carefully sequenced across 5 years. Learning is spaced, and vertical links between knowledge and skills are deliberately constructed within subjects so that key concepts are repeatedly encountered. Horizontal links between subjects reinforce knowledge and provide further opportunity for deliberate practice of skills. Each subject has the following:
 - A Subject Statement of Intent, which outlines how their curriculum develops character, competence and community. It also identifies the core concepts for that subject, which exist in each academic discipline and can be defined as concepts that, once grasped, allow new and previously inaccessible ways of perceiving and thinking about the subject to emerge (Meyer & Land, 2003). Content builds on students' learning at Key Stage 1 and 2, and the core concepts build on those developed in the OCL Primary curriculum and prepares students for Key Stage 5 study and life after secondary school.
 - A long-term plan, which outlines the 5 or 7 year learning journey and explains how the core concepts develop over time. Year 9 is a foundation year, where the expectations outlined in the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum are exceeded. In some cases, some relevant KS4 content is also introduced to prepare students for the options process and the next step in their education where appropriate. This balance will look different in different subject disciplines, dependent upon the progression and development of core concepts, knowledge, and skills across the curriculum. KS4 content will only be covered when this is appropriate for sequencing and core concept progression.
 - Medium term plans outline how character, competence, community and core concepts develop within each unit of work.
 - Developing the **reading skills** of students is central to our curriculum, and we develop these by:
 - Enhancing literacy by continually developing reading skills so that all children and young people become fluent readers, whilst also developing their written communication and oracy. All OCL teachers are teachers of literacy, and key vocabulary and reading development are a focus in all subjects and all classrooms.
 - We aim for every student to have the skills to access a minimum of age-related reading materials by the time they leave. For students who have reading ages below their chronological age, structured reading programmes and interventions are put into place to support student progress.
 - Students have access to a range of reading materials via physical and e-libraries, so that they can develop a love of reading. Curriculum time is devoted to independent and teacher-led reading during PARQ time (Pause And Read Quietly).

- Ensuring each student has a book at all times for reading opportunities in YGMs and recreation times.
- **Our curriculum is planned to support recovery**, as students have lost significant learning due to COVID-19. We support recovery by:
 - Emphasising the importance of literacy development and reading, both inside and outside of the classroom.
 - Taking every opportunity to develop our children’s numeracy skills, so that they are fluent mathematically, enhancing their economic wellbeing and strength in functional content.
 - Using the most up to date guidance from the DFE and findings from research into recovery to prioritise the highest leverage knowledge, skills and concepts in each subject discipline which will best support recovery. Academy leaders then further adapt the curriculum to account for the learning loss for their children and young people.

Implementation

- To ensure our intent transfers into everyday classroom practice, **we deliver our curriculum in line with the most recent research in cognitive science**:
 - Content is introduced with cognitive load in mind.
 - Knowledge and skills are presented through modelling and direct instruction.
 - Time is built into lessons for deliberate practice.
 - Knowledge and skills are revisited repeatedly through retrieval practice while the unit of work is being taught and then again in subsequent terms and years. This has been shown to improve memory and retention.
- **We use assessment data to adapt and improve our curriculum delivery by**:
 - Using formative and summative assessment data to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all children and young people.
 - Employing responsive feedback approaches for formative assessment, such as those delivered through our highly effective one-to-one horizons approach, to ensure each adult knows the relevant next steps to maximise learning opportunities.
 - Analysing Trust summative assessments at a national and local level to focus curriculum development and ensure students have appropriate support. We use standardisation and moderation of common assessments to make assessments more rigorous.
- **We prioritise staff development by**:
 - Using current research in cognitive science to develop pedagogy and specific CPD to ensure subject content is expertly delivered. This also includes supporting teachers to develop approaches for remote/blended learning, so that disruption to student learning due to COVID-19 is minimised.
 - Ensuring all teachers receive regular feedback through instructional coaching, so that all adults are constantly striving to continually improve practice.
 - Providing bespoke support to each academy and department via the Strategy and Innovation Team.

Impact

- **We know our curriculum is having an impact if students know and remember more. We also know our curriculum is having an impact on students if they can demonstrate core concept development.** We determine this in many ways:
 - Through formative assessment such as checking for understanding techniques, quizzing and other class-based assessments.
 - Through analysis of student work.
 - Through summative assessment, such as end of year exams, mock exams, GCSE exams and reading tests.

- Through coaching feedback, lesson drop ins and feedback from learning walks.
 - Through feedback from students, teachers and parents.
 - Through destination data.
- **We are constantly refining the OCL curriculum to ensure it has maximum impact.** National Curriculum Leads and National Lead Practitioners oversee the development of the OCL and engage academy leaders in the process. Curriculum developments are then quality assured by Senior National Curriculum Leads, the National Lead for Secondary Behaviour, Curriculum and Pedagogy and the National Director of Academies. We use the various impact measures above to improve our curriculum by:
 - Analysing data from each academy centrally.
 - Gathering feedback from academy leaders via Strategy and Community groups.

Links to relevant policies and research

- The OCL Curriculum Statement of Intent can be found [here](#).
- A useful, up to date summary of the most recent research into cognitive science of learning can be found [here](#).
- The OCL Assessment Procedures and Schedule for 2021-2022 can be found [here](#).