

Curriculum Policy

Context

TLG is committed to engaging with young people who are in crisis in their education. Many of them have experienced or are experiencing significant barriers to learning within mainstream school and demonstrate particular educational, social and emotional needs. Students may attend TLG on a full or part-time basis for a period of at least one term. The majority of students attend TLG two days a week. Students attend their referring school or other alternative programmes on the days they are not at TLG.

All TLG Centres are registered with the DfE as Independent Schools. Within that context, there is currently no requirement to deliver the National Curriculum. Instead, it is expected that schools will give pupils experience in the following areas of learning: linguistic; mathematical; scientific; technological; human and social; physical; and aesthetic and creative.

The Intent of our curriculum:

Knowledge and skills are intertwined in our efforts to ensure all learners deepen their understanding and retain knowledge in their long-term memory. At TLG we recognise that many of our students have neurological difficulties with working memory and therefore the transfer of information to long-term memory is hampered. Therefore, the intent that sits behind all of our curriculum is that we are able to identify and instil in our students what it is to be an effective learner, so that skills and knowledge aren't lost but built upon and strengthened. During their time at TLG we want to:

- Re-engage students in learning.
- Develop learning behaviours and help students understand how to become effective learners.
- Help students to improve levels of literacy and numeracy.
- Help students develop key transferrable skills that support reintegration into a mainstream school setting or further education.
- Prepare young people for the challenges and responsibilities of adult life.
- Offer qualifications (where relevant) that provide opportunities for progression onto further education or training.

To achieve our Intent (Implementation of our curriculum):

Our curriculum intent outlined the need to develop effective learners and for this to happen the implementation has to include the development of some key skills. It is essential that we focus on the skills that allow students to access the learning in all subjects. Raising awareness of the vital use of the basic and wider learning skills and how they help pupils to access knowledge across all subjects is implicit in how we plan our approaches to curriculum implementation. The TLG curriculum offers students a wealth of experiences so that they can make connections, build on their prior understanding and use the skills they have learnt in English and Maths across a range of contexts or subjects.

Comprehension is first and foremost the most important skill of all. The ability to read and understand is critical in the pursuit of knowledge retention and motivation to learn. Different subject areas have resources and publications with increasingly complex language structures. Creating opportunities to help students to access the subject vocabulary within non-fiction texts has huge benefits to ensure fluent readers.

Number skills are the essential building blocks that help us to make sense of how things are structured and work. Numeracy has an integral part to play in most subjects, sometimes in simple calculations other times in much more complex operations. We will endeavour to identify where number skills create opportunities for learning and where they can be strengthened in different contexts to help students master the skills and make connections across their learning.

Development of effective group work allows students to learn from each other, they develop the skills of collaboration, co-operation and the sharing of ideas and information. Learning how to work well in a group is another skill that must be nurtured to support students to become effective team players. Group work requires a teacher to focus on the qualities and skills of each individual member of the group in terms of how well they contribute to the task that the group has been set. At TLG we see the development of this skill as a key success indicator for students who are going to transition on to a mainstream school setting or further learning opportunities.

Presentation skills both through the development of written scripts to the actual speaking and listening skills needed are essential in the pursuance of independent learning and the development of self-efficacy and confidence. Creating opportunities for students to make presentations using their own enquiry skills and group work skills deepens learning and helps to ensure knowledge enters the long-term memory.

The implementation of our curriculum at TLG will ensure that:

- Our curriculum is driven by the prior learning, and individual emotional, psychological and learning needs of our students.
- Includes a clear focus on English, Maths and opportunities for developing learning behaviours.
- Embeds a breadth and balance of subject areas where there is a strong focus on the development of transferable skills.
- That we work hard at recognising which subject areas skills can be best developed so the focus isn't on content to be completed but knowledge and skills to be acquired (see appendices for more information). For example, an understanding of the concept of power has a very different meaning in History, Geography, RE, Science or PE. The concept however that power can be destructive, can drive change and can create, shape and form something new will aid understanding and allow for connections to be made by students across a range of learning experiences.

The intended impact of our curriculum is to develop:

- A new mind-set for learning where students change their view of themselves and of their world.
- Secure progress in the development of Behaviours for Learning – Relationship with Self, Relationship with Others, Relationship with the Curriculum.
- Transferable personal learning and thinking skills that enable students to engage with learning in a mainstream school setting.
- Students who are confident and inquisitive deep thinkers who know their worth, challenge their own value system and respectfully engage with other's views.
- Functional Skills – a key component in all our programmes.

Independent School curriculum requirements

The Independent School Standards states that our curriculum must include experience in learning: linguistic; (covers English) mathematical; scientific; technological; human & social; physical; and aesthetic & creative. In addition, we must provide appropriate personal, social and health education, careers education, cultural appreciation and citizenship (including a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England and upholding the values of democracy, the law, individual liberty and mutual respect). Apart from English and maths, it is not expected that these will each be stand-alone subjects and will be mapped through the use of project-based or topic work.

Preventing radicalisation

We promote equality of opportunity and diversity for staff and pupils and do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour or attitudes. Staff work hard to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism by being open to discussion about these issues and are swift to identify and respond to vulnerable pupils.

Section 96 Qualifications - Functional Skills and AIM Awards suites of qualifications

Functional Skills and the AIM Awards suites of qualifications are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and are recognised within the DfE's list of approved qualifications (Section 96). They are measurable at Entry 1, 2, 3 and accredited at Levels 1 and 2. Although they carry performance points, these cannot be counted towards School Performance Measures. Where it is not possible for KS4 students to attain GCSEs or equivalents, TLG has chosen to deliver these qualifications as they provide accreditation in subject areas and at levels that are appropriate, accessible and achievable for our students. Functional Skills contribute to the content of the new English and maths GCSE's and achievement of them allows students to progress onto courses of study at FE colleges.

Functional Skills

We base our KS3 and 4 English and maths teaching on the new Functional Skills criteria and Adult Literacy and Numeracy Core Curriculum. We use 'SkillsForward' (www.skillsforward.co.uk), to support our internal teaching and assessment in these areas. 'SkillsForward' is an online tool that provides baseline assessment, individually tailored support learning resources and measures on-going progress.

In addition to using SkillsForward, we expect staff to use, create and share other resources for teaching the English and maths curriculum and to carry out teacher assessments.

For KS4 students, Functional Skills are externally accredited through the National Open College Network (NOCN). Students can be registered for assessments at Entry Levels and exams at Levels 1-2. We expect all capable KS4 students to be given opportunities to access assessments or exams in Functional English and maths at a level appropriate to them. Aspects of the Functional Skills curriculum can also be accredited through the AIM Awards units (see below).

Where students' levels of Literacy and Numeracy are 'pre-Entry', they will struggle to access the whole Functional Skills curriculum. These students will require specific interventions, e.g. literacy recovery programmes, in order that they can make progress and begin to access the wider curriculum.

AIM Awards suites of qualifications

Wherever GCSE programmes are not being followed, our subject-based curriculum utilises the AIM Awards suites of qualifications - AIMVOCs (vocational pathways), EMPLOY (employability) and PSD (personal and social development). Usually, accreditation would be for KS4 only, although this qualification is open to students of all ages. This qualification is portfolio based and can be accredited at Entry Level (E3), Level 1 or Level 2. Students complete units which carry credits. Numbers of credits build into qualifications of increasing sizes, starting with an Award (requiring 6 credits at L1) up to a Diploma (requiring 37 credits at L1). The units cover a wide range of suitable topics and work can be moderated soon after completion in most cases.

Access to Achievement/ Progress 8 subjects, including GCSE's and equivalents

Where local specialisms, resources and partnerships allow it, some TLG Centres may offer programmes that allow students to complete courses of study within the Progress/ Achievement 8 group of qualifications. So far, these have included subject specific GCSE's and BTEC's, which have typically been delivered in partnership with a referring school and through specialist volunteers or sessional workers. Students are usually registered for these qualifications through their school and TLG staff liaise closely with the school on aspects of administration, course content, delivery and assessment. Currently, TLG are only approved (through Pearson/Edexcel) to directly deliver GCSE and BTEC qualifications at the Bradford (Hope Park)

site. Centres can, if they wish, directly deliver the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) at L2, through BCS. This is where local resources are sufficient and students are of the required ability (i.e. capable of L2).

Reset Curriculum

The Reset curriculum is specifically designed to help students consider, develop and embed positive Learning Behaviours, facilitating a successful reintegration into mainstream school or college. Topics covered include looking at barriers in their relationships and behaviour, conflict resolution, peer relationships, teacher-student relationships and dealing with expectations from others. The Reset curriculum in its entirety forms a large part of the KS3 curriculum, alongside Functional English, Maths and other required subject areas. Aspects of the Reset curriculum are also utilised within KS4 programmes to help develop positive Learning Behaviours that can be carried forward into their next stages of learning or employment.

Curriculum structure and content

Each TLG Centre develops its own timetable and teaching plans with support from the Education Centre Development team. Over the course of a day/programme/week/term/year the timetable should facilitate delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum with a strong focus on English, Maths and development of Behaviours for Learning.

Elements to be included are:

- English/Literacy (including reading, writing, speaking and listening)
- Maths/Numeracy
- Behaviours for Learning Skills - including aspects of social and emotional learning, personal learning and thinking skills, working as teams and personal progression goals.
- ICT - some stand-alone teaching is recommended, particularly if Functional ICT exams are to be taken.
- PSHCE - including issue-based learning (e.g. Drugs and Alcohol awareness), Health, Romance Academy, Citizenship.
- Human and Social – including RE, cultural, historical, geographical.
- PE
- Aesthetic & Creative - could include music, art, dance, drama etc.
- Science
- Technology - could include food technology/cooking, motor mechanics, craft etc.

Curriculum enrichment

Our curriculum can be enriched by regular input from external volunteers and speakers. Good examples of this include: talks from the Police, Drugs and Alcohol Counselling, Sexual Health Counselling, Social Services, local charities such as homeless support and financial advice services. Young people take part in visits, trips, outdoor activities and work experience as well as reintegration programmes in school, college or further education provision.

Students at TLG have access to a variety of extra-curricular activities beyond the school day and in the holidays. These provide additional opportunities for students to learn, achieve and develop skills and grow in confidence and self-awareness. These include workshops in sport, ICT, media, arts and music. TLG also runs social and cultural trips and visits including weekend residential within the UK and international trips which have in the past included Uganda and Ghana.

Suitability for all ages, and needs, including differentiation and progression

At TLG, groups of students may be of mixed ages and levels. While it is expected that most students within a group will follow the same overall programme of study, Individual Learning Plans (ILP's) should be utilised within planning to ensure that curriculum content is appropriately differentiated to addresses the individual

needs, aptitudes, prior experiences and intended progression routes of each young person. Where a student has a Statement of special educational needs, or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), special consideration must be given to the special educational provision the LA considers necessary to meet the child's needs. TLG will liaise and plan carefully with the referring school/agency to ensure that these requirements are being met.

Related documents

- Subject specific Intent, Implementation and Impact documents.
- Templates for weekly timetables, medium-term planning (menus of activities) and long-term planning
- Centre-adapted long, medium and short-term planning
- SMSC Policy
- SEN Policy
- Marking Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Trips and Visits Policy
- Visitor Procedure
- Range of policies relating to Exams and Assessments
- Specifications and Standards for Functional Skills and AIM Awards Qualifications