Meridian Trust

Teaching and Learning Policy

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Applicable To:	Meridian Trust Academies
Committee:	Curriculum & Standards Policy & Scrutiny Committee
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Related documentation:	Meridian Trust Appraisal Policy for Teachers Meridian Trust CPD Policy Meridian Trust Teachers' Pay Policy Academy T&L guidance/protocols Meridian Trust Remote/Online Learning Policy

Revisions

Version	Page/Para No.	Description of Change	Approved On
	Page 2. Section3	Revision to language around 'Aims' (highlighted). Addition of aims 2,4 and 8	
	Page 3. Section 4	The 'Principles' have been re-framed and revisions made to descriptors (highlighted).	
4	Throughout	Replaced all references to "CMAT" with "Meridian Trust"	March 2023
5	Section 3.1	Added reference to learning outside the classroom	March 2024

1   Introduction

1.1   This policy is central to Meridian Trust's mission and vision. It reflects our academies' shared values and our aspirations for all members of our academy communities in their capacity as lifelong learners. The Meridian Trust values are:

    i.   Pursuit of excellence

    ii.   Valuing people

    iii. Achievement for all

    iv.   High quality learning environment

    v.   Extending the boundaries of learning

1.2   Students of all backgrounds and abilities will be given equal opportunities to learn in order to make exceptional progress and to achieve their full potential.

2   Rationale

2.1   The purpose of this policy is:

    vi.   to provide staff, academy councilors and parents with information about the Trust's agreed approach to teaching and learning;

    vii. to raise standards of achievement and ensure progress for students of all abilities;

    viii. to improve the quality of teaching and learning in each academy;

    ix.   to guide teachers and academy leaders to enable them to implement our agreed approach;

    x.   to ensure all students have a consistent, positive learning experience

    xi.   To increase awareness of the importance of learning in environments outside a classroom setting.

3   Aims

3.1   Through our teaching we aim to:

    i.   ensure all students make excellent academic progress and achieve highly aspirational educational outcomes;

    ii.   deliver a carefully sequenced curriculum that is rich in knowledge and rich in opportunities for the application and development of new skills;

    iii. enable students to become confident, resourceful, enquiring, independent and resilient learners both in and outside a classroom environment;

    iv.   meet the particular needs of learners by adapting teaching to remove identified barriers;

    v.   foster student's self-esteem and help them build positive, safe relationships with other people;

    vi.   develop student's self-respect and encourage them to respect the cultures, ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;

    vii. enable students to understand and feel valued as part of their community;

    viii. show respect for a diverse range of cultures and different groups of people and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;

    ix.   ensure that students are equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding to

make informed choices and participate fully as citizens in our modern society.

4　Principles of Effective Teaching and Learning

The pedagogy and approaches used by individual teachers across subjects and phases will vary based upon a range of factors. At trust-level, Meridian Trust does not seek to de-professionalise teachers or stifle innovation at academy-level by heavily proscribing pedagogies and teaching methods. The expectations of all teachers are set out clearly in the DfE 'Teacher Standards' (2021), and the trust fully supports the implementation of these professional standards. Individual academies will differ in the day to day routines and priorities they set for teaching and learning through their protocols, but these will be rooted in the following key principles which we agree have a significant impact on learning and progress:

4.1　Teacher expertise and instruction

i. Teachers deliver a curriculum that reflects the collaborative planning of a wide range of colleagues in the academy and across the trust. Curriculum delivery is rich in knowledge and precise in instruction, enabling students to learn through regular modelling and clear explanations.

ii. Teachers remain committed to the collaborative development of the curriculum and of their own subject expertise.

iii. Regular assessment informs the planning and sequencing of teaching to ensure that key knowledge and skills are embedded, retained and applied effectively.

iv. Teaching fosters motivated, resilient, confident learners who enjoy being absorbed by the challenge of their learning and who thrive in an atmosphere of mutual respect, high-expectation and cooperation.

v. Teachers work collaboratively to create learning opportunities outside the classroom which draw together students and staff from across the trust.

4.2　High quality feedback

i. Learning, progress and next steps are effectively communicated so that students understand what knowledge, attitudes, skills or behaviours they need to develop or improve in order to progress further.

ii. Assessment by the teachers is accurate and informed by progress information and dialogue with learners. Teachers skillfully use assessment and feedback to guide and adapt learning within lessons and planning for future lessons.

iii. Feedback protocols in our academies should not create unnecessary workload demands on teachers. For example, approaches to written feedback should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they have an impact that is proportionate to the time taken.

4.3　High challenge, high support

i. Expectations of what learners can achieve are consistently high. Tasks are purposeful and appropriately challenging, taking into account students' different needs and abilities.

ii. High quality questioning and discussion is skillfully used to assess understanding, give feedback and challenge learners to think more deeply about key concepts, improve and in so doing move learning on and to eventual mastery.

4.4　Curiosity and independent endeavor

i. We believe the end point of education should be to liberate the thinking and curiosity

of learners and make them more independent of their teachers.

ii. We ensure that learners are more aware of thinking strategies which build self-regulation, intellectual curiosity as well as resilience. Students are taught to question and understand themselves as learners.

iii. We believe that students can benefit from inquiry and exploratory learning as long as such learning is carefully constructed and directed

iv. We create opportunities both within and after the school day which develops student character, leadership skills and experience of the world.

5 Development of Practice

5.1 Meridian Trust recognises the value of research and innovation in the development of effective practice and encourages all academies to regularly review and refine their practice in light of this, taking account of evidence of impact on student achievement.

5.2 Teaching staff at every career stage and discipline will be given equal opportunities to improve their teaching practice in a culture of continuous reflection and improvement.

5.3 The development of teaching and learning within schools will be complemented by the application of a range of professional development opportunities and activities at trust level.

6 Individual Academy Guidance and Protocols

6.1 Each academy will publish guidance and procedure/protocol documents which will underpin this policy and support staff in ensuring that its particular aims are met.

6.2 Individual academies will develop protocols or 'frameworks' that outline approaches to teaching and learning that meet the challenge and priorities of their particular contexts and stages of development. Such guidance and frameworks will not diverge significantly from the practices of other academies within the Trust in order to allow: greater convergence of good practice and procedure; the sharing of good practice and learning materials; the fostering of cross-academy innovation and evidence-based working; the sharing of excellent staff across the trust, who can lead and develop their colleagues in more than one academy.

6.3 Across our primary academies common guidance documents for teaching and learning approaches in core subjects are used widely to guide and direct particular approaches to teaching and learning.

6.4 Executive Committees will moderate all frameworks and guidance issued by academies to ensure that they support the aims of this policy.

7 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 To ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of this policy the Trust will:

i. set the vision and values within which all academies will operate;

ii. establish Executive Committees, with representation from the leadership teams from each academy in order to develop and refine practice;

iii. monitor the financial allocation of provision and resources to deliver the policy;

iv. ensure the school buildings and premises are suitable to deliver the policy;

v. ensure that performance management of staff is rigorous and effective in promoting good teaching, learning, research and innovation.

7.2 To ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of this policy Leaders will:

i.   develop the ethos/shared values and expectations that reinforce high quality teaching and learning through guidance and protocols reflecting the parameters set by the Trust;

ii.   encourage the development of effective teaching and learning;

iii.   provide appropriate support, training and resources within a relevant and responsive system of staff development;

iv.   monitor and evaluate delivery and impact of academy guidance/protocols regularly through the academy monitoring cycle;

v.   write, in consultation with staff and academy council, academy development plans which place a strong emphasis on the development of teaching and learning;

vi.   modify and update the academy guidance and protocols in light of ongoing developments within the academy.

vii.   regularly inform parents about what and how their children are learning and how to support them at home.

7.3   To ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of this policy Academy Councilors will:

i.   support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by monitoring the allocation and provision of resources, challenging or supporting decisions of the leadership team where appropriate;

ii.   ensure that the academy maintains and regularly reviews its guidance and protocols around teaching and learning in line with the principles set out in this policy;

iii.   ensure that the all learning environments are used optimally to support teaching and learning both inside and outside the classroom;

iv.   monitor student achievement and the impact and effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies implemented by the academy;

v.   monitor the extent, use and impact of staff development to promote good teaching, learning and progress.

7.4   To ensure the effective implementation of this policy Teachers will:

i.   reinforce the Trust and academy's shared values and attitudes that support high quality teaching and learning;

ii.   ensure they follow any phase and school specific guidance or protocols for effective teaching and learning, incorporating all aspects regularly into their teaching over time;

iii.   evaluate and contribute positively to the development of teaching and learning within the academy/Trust;

iv.   comply fully with all aspects of the Teachers' Standards (2021) as a minimum requirement;

v.   take responsibility for improving their teaching by engaging with appropriate professional development, research or evidence base and through innovation and, where appropriate, to support the development of others through these processes.

7.5   To ensure the effective implementation of this policy students will:

i.   demonstrate the values, attitudes and behaviours that promote effective learning;

ii.   take responsibility for their own learning, acting upon feedback in order to improve their outcomes and demonstrate effective collaborative and independent working practices;

iii.   evaluate and contribute positively to the development of teaching and learning within the academy/Trust via appropriate mechanisms.

7.6   To ensure the effective implementation of this policy we would like Parents to:

iv.   promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general which includes promotion of activities and opportunities outside the normal school day;

v.   ensure that their child had the best attendance record possible;

vi.   inform the academy if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect their child's performance or behavior;

vii. fulfil the requirements set out in agreements between academies and families.

8   Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of this Policy

8.1   This policy will be promoted throughout each Academy and published on the Meridian Trust intranet and website, which should also be linked to the policies page of each academy website.

8.2   The Executive Committees will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy, review and recommend to the Executive Board and Curriculum & Standards Policy & Scrutiny Committee for approval annually.

8.3   The Trust will monitor the impact of the policy on the achievement of students.

9   Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of Individual Academy Guidance and Procedures

9.1   Local academy councillors and school leadership teams should co-ordinate the monitoring, evaluation and review of specific academy guidance and procedures around teaching and learning, including assessment and marking, home learning extracurricular opportunities and quality assurance, in line with the principles and standards outlined in this policy and against the exemplars provided by the Executive Committees.

9.2   Guidance and protocols should be reviewed locally in each school by the senior leadership team annually.

9.3   Local academy councillors should comment upon and approve guidance and protocols annually.

9.4   The approved version of all academy procedures should be shared on the school website and in the Executive Committee TEAMS folders (or other agreed online platforms).