

# THE LIFE EDUCATION TRUST



## The LIFE Trust Mid-Essex Primary Schools' Curriculum Policy

This policy was ratified by Governors

The policy will be reviewed in: September 2026

Person Responsible: Melissa Taylor

## LIFE Education Trust

### Mid-Essex Primary Schools' Curriculum Policy

#### Introduction

This policy explains the curriculum has been written for the Voluntary Controlled Church of England Mid-Essex Primary schools in the LIFE Education Trust: Ford End, Margaretting and Roxwell.

It is based on the 2014 National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 & 2 and the Early Years 2021 framework in Reception and is underpinned by the LIFE Curriculum Framework which applies to all our LIFE schools.

Our schools collaborate with one another, particularly within the same phase, to learn from one another, build upon best practice and ensure consistency of experience and high standards for all pupils in LIFE schools.

*Please also see LIFE Education Trust Curriculum Framework, Teaching and Learning Policy, Assessment Policy and the Mechanics of Learning Education.*

#### Mission, Beliefs, Vision and Values

At LIFE Education Trust, our **Mission** is “*everyone flourishes.*”

As with all our work, our **Values** are evident in our curriculum. They are:

##### ***Courageous Optimism:***

It takes courage to hope for a better future. We champion a ‘can do’ attitude and encourage our pupils and staff to tackle challenges with resilience and perseverance as they reach for ambitious targets.

##### ***Boundless Creativity:***

Through captivating discoveries in the classroom and eye-opening adventures in the outside world, we give pupils freedom and promote varied learning experiences which stimulate innovation and develop adaptability.

##### ***Heartfelt Compassion:***

We show love and respect to each member of our community as we nurture a powerful collective spirit. In humility we embrace difference and individuality, show forgiveness when necessary and are united by compassion.

Each Mid-Essex Primary School has a vision which reflects their status as a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school and their unique purpose. These are:

- ‘Hope and a Future’ for Ford End
- ‘No Limits on Learning’ for Margaretting
- ‘Discovering a World of Possibilities Together’ at Roxwell

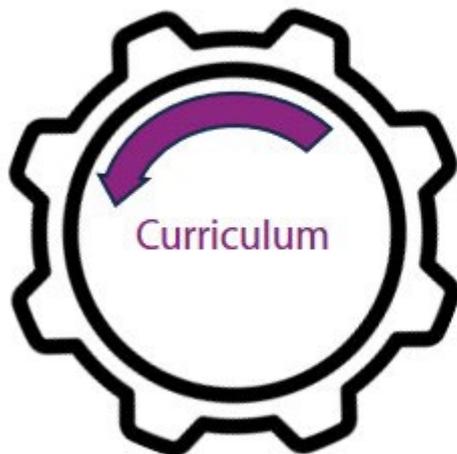
Each vision was written with the Trust’s Mission, Beliefs and Principles in mind. The school values also feed into each of the visions.

#### Principles and Intent (Including SMSC)

Our curriculum is the **foundation** for what happens in each of our schools. It is not just about what is taught in lessons and nor is it simply about subject content. Our curriculum is driven by our LIFE mission and beliefs and built upon **eight** key principles which ensure that **all** our pupils, regardless of their backgrounds:

- i. learn valuable **knowledge**
- ii. are taught the **skills to read well**
- iii. experience, understand and value **creativity**
- iv. acquire vital **cultural capital**
- v. understand and maintain good **physical health** and **mental wellbeing**
- vi. develop the **skills** to be **lifelong learners**
- vii. are fully prepared to carry out their roles as **valued citizens** in all aspects of life in **Modern Britain** having developed an **understanding of themselves and others**
- viii. **achieve excellent outcomes in national tests and examinations**

These principles are shown in our Curriculum Wheel, which is part of our Mechanics of Education approach:



- Well planned
- Sequential
- Knowledge based
- Skills focused
- Context specific
- Broad and balanced
- Creative
- Understood by all

We provide a knowledge rich curriculum which is broad, balanced and ambitious. The EYFS Framework and National Curriculum are covered in their entirety. The curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced so that it spirals with ever increasing levels of challenge and independence. Subjects plan schemes of learning to enable pupils to acquire mastery. The curriculum provides areas of learning and experience of the aesthetic and creative, human and social, linguistic and literary, mathematical, moral, physical, scientific, and technological.

The skills to read well are developed across the curriculum. Subjects promote and support reading through a range of strategies from teaching phonics, whole class reading, group reading and individual reading. Children are taught discrete phonics lessons in EYFS and Key Stage 1 and reading is encouraged everyday in the classroom and at home. Reading is also promoted in assemblies, by the English Subject Leader and through the celebration of World Book Day.

The curriculum, as a whole, along with the extra-curricular offer is designed to ensure that pupils have the cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The schools teach the required amount of PE each week and participation in sporting events are regularly planned and encouraged. We also offer bespoke nurture and counselling programmes to those who need it and aim to promote high levels of confidence and self-esteem and every available opportunity.

As we believe in developing the whole child, we explore children's talents and provide them with as much access to enrichment as possible. The Mid-Essex Primary Schools are set in beautiful locations that are bursting with nature. We have a commitment to taking the children outdoors and learning outside as much as possible. All children in Key Stage 1 are provided with the opportunity to participate in Forest School. Additionally, educational visits and topic days happen at least once a term in each class. Children are given the opportunities to attend extra-curricular clubs and events such as sports tournaments. We also encourage them to perform in front of large audiences to build their resilience. Alongside this, the schools' also celebrate 4 events together throughout the school year. Children in Year 5/6 attend a residential trip every two years. Cultural capital is acquired at every opportunity.

In the Mid-Essex Primary Schools, there is a commitment to the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of each child. This is achieved through collective worship and the vision of the school but also the enrichment programme that we provide for the children. Each school also has a strong relationship with the local Church and aims to develop children into moral and valued citizens through prayer, collective worship, church services and community projects.

Providing the children with these experiences means they are able to understand themselves and others better as well as prepare them for life in Modern Britain.

### **Organisation and Planning**

Our classes are taught in mixed year groups after EYFS, so children in Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 are taught within the same classroom. Therefore, our curriculum works on a two year cycle: Year A and Year B. Children will either experience the journey of Year A or Year B but by the end of each Key Stage they will have completed what is required of the National Curriculum.

It is delivered using a variety of approaches and resources depending on the nature of the subject being taught and the needs of the children (for more details please refer to the separate subject policies). We use a cross-curricular creative approach so that pupils are immersed in a topic each term or half term. The engaging curriculum and linked enrichment opportunities mean each child acquires vital cultural capital at each stage of their primary education. Separate subject overview documents are available for:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- RE
- PE
- Music

- History
- Geography
- Computing
- PSHE and SRE
- MFL (French)
- Art
- Design Technology

Although teaching and learning is still theme-led, each subject's skills progression is carefully planned from the EYFS up to Year 6 and has a subject overview document to show this clearly. This ensures that the children learn the valuable knowledge required for their age. Reading is seen as a high priority in all subjects and is featured in lessons as regularly as possible.

The schools have collaboratively developed clear long, medium and short term plans which ensure that every teacher understands the curriculum intent of what is taught when and why, and that they are empowered to deliver creative and engaging lessons that secure pupil progression throughout the key stages.

Each year group/subject have:

**Long-term plans** provide a curriculum map, or overview, that articulates the rationale for the sequencing of the curriculum, so that every teacher knows not only what they are teaching, but how the knowledge and skills will build upon prior learning and will be developed in future years to ensure progression.

**Medium-term plans** provide the schemes of work that deliver on the curriculum intent and ensure smooth progression and high aspiration for all pupils. They clearly articulate the expected outcomes and success criteria, key vocabulary to be learnt, and a range of creative activities and resources to provide and innovative learning experiences for both in and out of the classroom. Cross-curricular links are also identified when appropriate.

These plans are not restricted to National Curriculum subject content; they also outline the progression in pupils' cultural and creative opportunities and their character development.

**Short-term plans** provide teachers with a range of pedagogical approaches to deliver exciting lessons that ensure the progression of the curriculum, even for less experienced teachers.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

At the Mid-Essex Primary Schools, we teach our curriculum to all pupils, regardless of their ability. We provide learning opportunities matched to the individual needs of each pupil, including those who are more able or have learning difficulties. When planning the delivery of the curriculum and providing feedback to pupils, any EHCP (Educational, Health and Care Plan) IEP (Individual Educational Plan) and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) are taken into account.

In order to provide all pupils with relevant and appropriate work at each stage, we:

- Set suitable learning challenges
- Respond to pupils' diverse needs
- Endeavour to overcome potential barriers to learning

Learning is planned and adapted to enable children to broaden, deepen and accelerate their understanding and development of skills and knowledge. Children are challenged to think at depth and deepen their learning across the curriculum. Regular formative assessments identify children/groups of children for differentiated activities.

There is also a commitment to ensuring children are exposed to beliefs, cultures and religions that are different to their own. This is done through celebrating festivals in other cultures, collective worship, the topics studied and exposing children to literature from a wide range of authors and contexts.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The **Executive Headteacher/Heads of School** will ensure that:

- All statutory elements of the curriculum have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of their school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the curriculum is adequate
- The procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements, and students and their parents/carers receive information to show how much progress the students are making, how they compare with national expectations, and what is required to help them improve
- They complete the monitoring of the day-to-day impact of the curriculum in their schools
- The Local Governance Committee (LGC) is advised on statutory targets in order to make informed decisions

The **LGC** will ensure that:

- It considers the advice of the Executive Headteacher/Head of School and Educational Development Partner when approving this curriculum policy and when setting statutory and non-statutory targets
- Progress towards annual statutory targets is monitored
- Assessment data via teacher assessments and examination results in KS2 are published in and progress towards meeting agreed targets is described
- Parents and carers receive timely reports on the progress of their child against clearly defined expectations
- It participates actively in discussion about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

The main responsibility of the **Curriculum Leader** (who may or may not be a member of SLT) is to share good practice and ensure that the curriculum meets the principles in every subject in every school. However, they also have the responsibility for:

- The day to day organisation of the curriculum
- Monitoring provision, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives

- Overseeing the work of the Subject Leaders and work collaboratively to ensure the support is there for subject development and there is a consistency across all areas of the curriculum

Together, each **Subject Leader** and the **Curriculum Leader** will:

- Keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level
- Plan and/or review the subject planning and how it is taught across the schools and plan for improvement
- Review the curriculum plans for their subject, ensuring that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and that progression is planned into schemes of work
- Monitor their subject across all of the Mid-Essex Primary Schools

**Subject Leaders will:**

- Support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject
- Support staff development and improve subject pedagogy, where required
- Monitor pupil progress in that subject area by conducting learning walks, pupil voice and work sampling activities
- Monitor teacher's planning
- Liaise with appropriate bodies e.g. other schools, governors, the LEA etc. about matters relating to their subjects
- Provide efficient resource management for the subject, as needed
- Ensure the correct coverage of the curriculum through long term plans

The **Trust Curriculum Leadership Team** is made up of curriculum experts from across LIFE Education Trust. They meet regularly to discuss and evaluate each school's curriculum. They are responsible for:

- Keeping up to date with curriculum developments and pedagogy
- Ensuring that each schools' curricula are aligned in terms of expectations, wording and monitoring
- Supporting each other with curriculum design
- Sharing good practice from each of the schools in the Trust

The **Educational Development Partner** works closely with the CEO and the Trust Education Committee. Their role is to ensure consistency and maintain high standards across the Mid-Essex Primary Schools and all of the schools within the Trust. The Educational Development Partner is responsible for:

- Completing monitoring across the Mid-Essex Primary Schools every half term
- Evaluating the success of the Mid-Essex Primary Curriculum
- Supporting the Executive Headteacher/Head of School/Curriculum Leader and Subject Leaders with monitoring
- Feeding back to the CEO, Trust Education Committee, Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and/or the Curriculum Leader (as appropriate)

- Making suggestions for strategic improvement

The **Trust Education Committee** ensures that each school is implementing the curriculum to a high standard and decides if schools are fulfilling their duty. The main responsibilities include:

- Listening to, evaluating and agreeing the feedback from the Educational Development Partner.
- Ensuring that each school in the Trust is fulfilling its statutory curriculum responsibilities

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Every LIFE School sets highly ambitious targets in order to secure progress at above the national average for all pupils, and all groups of pupils. Pupil progress towards these aspirational standards, and the role of the curriculum and teachers in achieving them, is consistently reviewed and evaluated; and, where necessary, appropriate actions taken.

Our curriculum is monitored by the schools' Senior Leadership Teams, the Subject Leaders and the independent Educational Development Partner. The different ways we monitor our curriculum are: observing children working, discussions with children and staff, quizzes and tests, assessment tasks, assessment groups, assessment conversations, work sampling activities, planning scrutinies and lesson observations. We regularly moderate in house and across the Mid-Essex Primary Schools in the Trust, to ensure standards are consistently high.

At the end of each term teachers meet with SLT, after having completed assessments, for pupil progress meetings. During these meetings, children who require additional support, intervention or a change in resources are discussed and plans are made accordingly. The SENDCo also closely monitors the impact of additional staff, resources and interventions and adapts these when necessary.

LIFE Education Trust via the LGC monitors the appropriateness of the curriculum, measuring its impact, taking into account levels of achievement and engagement.

The LGC will receive reports, at least annually, from the Schools' SLT on:

- the progress and attainment of pupils
- the progress and attainment at the end of each key stage, compared with national and local benchmarks
- the standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs and groups deemed to be vulnerable
- the number of pupils for whom the curriculum was disapplied, the arrangements which were made, how pupils and parents were informed, how progress was monitored, the progress made by those pupils
- the evidence of the impact of external intervention and support and national strategies on standards

LIFE Education Trust will regularly audit its curriculum provision, seeking the views of all stakeholders including pupils, parents, staff and governors.