THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL GROUP LTD

Curriculum Intent Policy (2/8)

(Part of the TAS Relationship and Regulation Model known as TRRM)

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1. Purpose and Curriculum Intent

The Powered by TAS Curriculum has been developed through almost twenty years of practice, ISI and Ofsted inspections, reflection and continuous improvement. It provides a broad, balanced and ambitious education that reflects National Curriculum expectations while responding to the needs, strengths and starting points of the pupils who attend our Powered by TAS (PBT) schools and provisions.

Our curriculum is designed for pupils who may have experienced barriers to learning, including SEND, SEMH needs, medical needs, anxiety, trauma or disrupted education. It therefore develops the whole pupil: academically, personally, socially and emotionally, while preparing them for adulthood, further education, training and employment.

Our guiding belief is that every pupil can learn, achieve, progress and succeed if they are given the right support and environment. Qualifications, certificates and accreditations are important, but they are not the only measure of ambition or success.

At TAS we often refer to "Sneaky Teaching". This reflects our belief that meaningful learning can take place in every activity, whether inside or outside the classroom. Staff intentionally embed literacy, numeracy, communication, problem-solving and personal development into everyday experiences. Young people often learn without realising they are participating in formal education because learning is purposeful, engaging and relevant.

This approach allows pupils to experience success, build confidence and develop transferable skills whilst remaining fully aligned to curriculum expectations.

Progress in personal development is monitored using the TAS Personal and Social Development Tracker (PSD), enabling staff to evidence growth across independence, resilience, communication, relationships, leadership, emotional regulation and wider life skills alongside academic achievement.

The topic provides the context for learning. Qualifications provide evidence of learning; they are not the curriculum itself.

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This policy should be read alongside the Curriculum Delivery Policy, Assessment and Progress Tracking Policy, SEND Policy and Inclusion Policy.

2. Curriculum Maps, Inclusion and Pathways

The TAS curriculum is organised through a progressive series of curriculum maps. These maps provide the protected framework from which teaching, progression, assessment and qualification pathways are planned. The maps must not be replaced by an alternative curriculum. Personalisation takes place within the framework, not instead of it.

The framework is inclusive and is designed for a wide range of pupil starting points. Pupils may be working broadly in line with age-related expectations, significantly below them, or unevenly across different areas. Chronological age is therefore a guide, not the sole determinant of the curriculum map a pupil accesses.

The appropriate map is identified using the Pupil Profile, EHCP where applicable, referral information, initial and ongoing assessment, input from professionals, parent/carer information, pupil voice, strengths, communication needs and prior learning. The starting question is: what does this pupil already know, understand and do, and what do they need to learn next?

Our three inclusion principles are: start at the right point; remove barriers to accessing learning; never lower the ambition for the pupil.

Curriculum Map	Typical Stage	Main Purpose
ROOTS	Nursery / EYFS	Foundations for relationships, communication, play and learning
BRANCHES	Reception / EYFS	Extending communication, curiosity and independence
SPARK	Early Primary	Igniting engagement, confidence and readiness for learning
SUNSHINE	Primary	Building knowledge, skills and confidence
RAINBOW	Primary	Broadening knowledge, experiences and independence
STARS	Later Primary	Strengthening learning and preparation for secondary
BRONZE	Secondary	Building secondary knowledge, skills and accreditation
SILVER	Secondary	Developing depth, independence and achievement
GOLD	Secondary	Preparing for qualifications, progression and next steps
PLATINUM	Post-16 / 16–18	Highly personalised 16–18 curriculum focused on qualifications, independence, employability, life skills and positive destinations
COMPASS	TRIDENT Leadership	Leadership, character, service, independence and direction

PLATINUM – Post-16 / 16–18. Platinum provides an age-appropriate but highly personalised curriculum for 16–18-year-olds. It supports continued English and mathematics where required, qualifications and accreditation, communication, independence, employability, vocational

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learning, life skills, community participation and preparation for adulthood. Positive destinations may include further education, training, apprenticeships, supported internships or employment.

Pathway A and Pathway B

Every TAS curriculum map has two access pathways. A and B are not higher and lower curricula: they are different ways of accessing and demonstrating learning. This includes Platinum: post-16 pupils may access Platinum A (Guided Pathway) or Platinum B (Accessible Pathway) according to their individual learning and communication needs.

Pathway A - Guided Pathway. For pupils who can access the curriculum through structured teaching approaches such as direct teaching, discussion, reading, writing, group work, practical work and independent learning, with appropriate differentiation.

Pathway B - Accessible Pathway. For pupils who need greater adaptation because of speech, language, communication, cognition, learning or developmental needs. This may include pupils who are non-speaking, use Makaton, AAC, symbols or other communication systems, are working below age-related expectations, require sensory or practical approaches, or need additional repetition, modelling and scaffolding.

Pathway B is not a separate SEND curriculum and does not reduce ambition. Pupils may demonstrate learning through Makaton, AAC, symbols, pictures, objects of reference, gesture, pointing, matching, practical demonstration, photographs, video, observation, speech or writing, as appropriate.

A pupil does not have to access the same pathway in every area. For example, a pupil may access Sunshine A in mathematics and Sunshine B in communication and English. Where a pupil is developmentally or academically working at an earlier stage, the appropriate earlier map should be selected rather than simply placing the pupil on an age-related map and making all learning Pathway B.

Progress does not mean every pupil moving through the maps at the same speed. Progress means building securely from the pupil's own starting point towards increasingly ambitious knowledge, skills, communication, independence, qualifications and preparation for adulthood.

Teachers are not expected to teach multiple unrelated curriculum maps at once. The Headteacher agrees the most appropriate map(s) and pathway(s) for the class and individual pupils through planning and review.

3. The Powered by TAS Pupil Profile (Previously ILP, IEP)

Historically, TAS used the terms Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and later Individual Education Plan (IEP). These terms referred to the same core planning and review document. As our approach became more pupil-led and strengths-based, the document was rebranded as the Powered by TAS Pupil Profile.

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The Pupil Profile fulfils the same educational purpose but presents a more holistic picture of the pupil. It records strengths, interests, aspirations, current attainment, academic and personal development targets, barriers to learning, triggers, successful teaching strategies, attendance, timetable, health and medical information, specialist involvement, risk assessment information and PUPIL VOICE.

The Pupil Profile identifies the pupil's agreed curriculum map and, where relevant, whether Pathway A or Pathway B is being used in particular curriculum areas. It is created with the pupil and teacher and reviewed and updated every six weeks. Data from this document then informs progress tracking and the next planning cycle.

4. The Topic-to-Qualification Curriculum Model

Learning is organised through engaging, relevant and purposeful topics. How learning is delivered is flexible: project-based learning, interactive activities, games, creativity, practical work, outdoor learning and Purposeful Enjoyment are encouraged. Evidence should show a well-rounded approach to the topic rather than teaching narrowly to a qualification.

Nursery pupils may explore a topic weekly; younger primary pupils generally work through a topic over three weeks; older primary pupils may work across a half-term theme; and secondary/post-16 pupils normally study one planned topic each half term. Teachers use professional judgement within the agreed curriculum map and planning cycle.

Qualifications and accreditation are selected because they support the pupil's pathway, aspirations and preparation for adulthood. These may include, where appropriate, AQA Unit Awards, JASS, Entry Level qualifications, Functional Skills, GCSEs, BTECs, Gateway, Arts Award, Sports Leaders, Gateway STEM, BCS E-Safety, Duke of Edinburgh and other approved accreditation.

Smaller units may build towards Awards, Certificates and Diplomas. Pupils with particular interests may pursue additional one-to-one teaching, independent study, supervised projects or enrichment without narrowing the remainder of their curriculum.

Purposeful Enjoyment and Sneaky Teaching place meaningful learning first, with accreditation embedded naturally rather than allowing qualification criteria to become the whole curriculum.

5. Half-Termly Curriculum Planning Cycle

1. Review	Review academic progress, personal development, attendance, engagement, achievements, qualifications, EHCP outcomes, Pupil Profile targets, educational enhancements and preparation for adulthood.
2. Teacher planning	Use the review, curriculum map, agreed A/B pathway, Pupil Profile, pupil voice, parent/carer communication and assessment information to prepare the next half-term overview.
3. Headteacher scrutiny and approval	Review planning for ambition, breadth, sequencing, personalisation, inclusion, assessment, qualification opportunities and educational enhancements; agree

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	amendments where required.
4. Submission / oversight	Approved planning is submitted in line with TAS quality assurance arrangements.
5. Delivery, reflection and adaptation	Deliver the agreed curriculum, assess understanding and adapt teaching where required while remaining faithful to the curriculum map and agreed intent.
6. End-of-half-term evaluation	Review impact with the pupil and parent/carer, update the Pupil Profile and trackers, and use this information to inform the next planning cycle.

6. Curriculum Entitlement

Every pupil is entitled to a broad curriculum. Across the framework this includes English, Mathematics, Science and STEM, History, Geography, Creative Arts, Computing and Digital Literacy, Physical and Outdoor Education, Careers, Sustainability and Personal Development including PSHE/RSHE. Reading, writing, speaking, listening and communication are embedded across the whole curriculum.

ROOTS and BRANCHES are aligned to the seven areas of learning and development within the EYFS. SPARK through to PLATINUM are informed by relevant National Curriculum expectations and the Independent School Standards, while retaining the flexibility needed to meet pupils' ages, aptitudes, needs and starting points.

Communication is an entitlement for every pupil and is not limited to spoken language. Where appropriate, schools should use Makaton, AAC, symbols, visual supports, objects of reference and other agreed communication approaches consistently across curriculum delivery.

Word of the Week and Collective Reflection remain key parts of weekly planning and delivery. Science and STEM should be brought to life through enquiry, investigation, practical experiments, project-based learning, design challenges, outdoor science and real-world problem solving. Geography and History should make purposeful use of fieldwork, local exploration, visits, cultural experiences and educational enhancements.

Educational enhancements are part of the curriculum rather than an optional extra. These may include visitors, residentials, outdoor and adventurous activities, community projects, work experience, Forest School, Farm School, Duke of Edinburgh, John Muir and other experiences that build resilience, confidence, leadership and independence.

7. Personal Development, RSHE, Careers and British Values

Personal Development, including PSHE/RSHE, supports healthy relationships, physical and mental health, online and personal safety, economic wellbeing, citizenship, self-awareness, strengths, confidence and preparation for adulthood. RSHE is delivered through the Personal Development curriculum in line with relevant statutory guidance and the PSHE Association framework.

Careers education and preparation for adulthood are embedded progressively and include impartial guidance, CV and application support, mock interviews, employer encounters, work

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experience, college and university visits, apprenticeship awareness and transition support as appropriate. Fundamental British Values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted through curriculum topics, collective reflection, discussion, pupil leadership and community participation.

8. Evidence, Assessment and Progress

Teaching is evidenced through an appropriate combination of exercise books, topic books, scrapbooks, portfolios, online portfolios, photographs, observations, pupil reflections, quizzes, practical work, educational enhancements and completed qualification evidence. Evidence should demonstrate the breadth of the curriculum and should not be organised solely around qualification units.

For pupils accessing Pathway B, evidence may appropriately include observations, photographs, video, communication records, symbol-supported work, practical demonstration and other evidence that captures what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

Progress is considered through academic learning, reading, writing, communication, speaking and listening where appropriate, mathematics, attendance, engagement, Personal Development, EHCP outcomes, Pupil Profile targets, strengths, qualifications, educational enhancements, outdoor activity, contribution to the school community and positive destinations. No single measure is used in isolation.

9. Responsibilities, Monitoring and Review

Teachers are responsible for planning from the approved curriculum map, selecting and using the appropriate A/B access pathway, maintaining high expectations, using practical and engaging approaches, assessing learning, responding to misconceptions and ensuring equality of access.

Headteachers and Powered by TAS leaders monitor curriculum quality through planning scrutiny, work sampling, moderation, learning walks, observations, pupil and parent voice, reviews, progress data, qualification oversight and the annual SEF/SDP process.

The curriculum framework is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with current Department for Education guidance, inspection expectations, qualification changes, societal developments and the changing needs of pupils. Curriculum maps provide a common TAS framework; schools are expected to use that framework while bringing it to life through their own setting, specialisms, resources and pupil needs.

THE FRAMEWORK IS FIXED; THE DELIVERY IS FLEXIBLE.

START WHERE THE PUPIL IS. KEEP THE DESTINATION AMBITIOUS. CHANGE THE ROUTE WHEN NECESSARY.

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