

THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM



POLICY DOCUMENT 41

POLICY ON THE THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Date updated by school:	March 2026
Next review due:	Academic Year 2028 - 2029
Policy review cycle:	Every 3 years
Policy Owner:	Assistant Headteacher – Curriculum and Assessment

Vision Statement

'Together we aim high, discover talents, and build a brighter future'

Roles

- Headteacher
- Chair of Trustees
- Board of Trustees
- Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum & Assessment)
- Subject leaders
- Teachers
- TAs
- SENCO
- Other members of SMT

Policies and procedures

- SEND Policy
- Careers Guidance and Provider Access Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Homework Guidance

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Statement of intent

At Thomas Mills High School, our core values are at the heart of everything we do. We set high expectations to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to excel across all aspects of school life. Our intention is to ensure pupils make outstanding progress and that the curriculum removes any potential barriers to learning.

We want our pupils to leave with knowledge and skills which will

- develop a **love of learning** for its own sake which will last a lifetime
- create **excellent life opportunities** and prepare them exceptionally well for life beyond the School.
- inspire them to enjoy a wide range of **social and cultural experiences** both in School and in the future.
- Develop into **responsible**, respectful and **active citizens**
- appreciate equality and are respectful of difference including protected characteristics
- develop pupils' **confidence** and **resilience** so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy

In the fulfilment of its intent, the School seeks to

- Provide a **broad and balanced curriculum** for all pupils
- Provide a curriculum that's **coherently planned and sequenced** to enable pupils to **develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills**, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** and develop pupils' understanding of **Fundamental British Values**.
- Develop pupils' understanding of **positive mental health, physical health, relationships and sexuality**.
- Support pupils' **physical development and responsibility for their own health**, and enable them to be active
- Promote a **love of learning** for its own sake
- Create an **Inclusive Education** to ensure equality and equity of access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a **high academic ambition** for all pupils
- Equip pupils with the **knowledge, skills, self-confidence and cultural** capital they need to succeed in life
- Develop pupils' **independent learning skills and resilience** so they understand the intrinsic value of persistent hard work in order to equip them for further/higher education and employment
- Ensure that all pupils are **literate and numerate and develop fluency in speech** and writing.
- Provide increasing degrees of choice as pupils progress through the School;
- embrace new approaches and opportunities for **curriculum development**;
- include guidance on **future pathways and careers**
- provide a curriculum that is complemented by an **extensive programme of extra-curricular opportunities**.
- Develop pupils into **critical thinkers**
- to respect all relevant legislation and statutory requirements.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE 'The national curriculum in England'
- DfE 'Academy trust governance guide'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- SEND Policy
- Careers Guidance and Provider Access Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Homework Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Curriculum Intent Statement

2. Curriculum aims and intent

What the curriculum is designed to do

The school's curriculum is designed with pupils' learning at the centre. The school recognises that the curriculum has to be broad, balanced, and offer pupils opportunities to grow as individuals as well as learners.

Through a combination of learning techniques, the school aims to ensure pupils enjoy learning and feel prepared for life after school. The school intends to offer pupils new and exciting experiences through extracurricular activities that are designed to build resilience, confidence and self-esteem.

How the school intends to deliver the curriculum

Below, the school's curriculum intent is outlined to demonstrate how the curriculum will be delivered through a variety of methods, both classroom-based and extracurricular.

- **Classroom-based learning:** The school encourages teachers to make cross-curricular links where possible within their lesson plans and use different learning resources to teach core content. Subject teachers should, when appropriate, make links in lessons to careers and Fundamental British Values. Lessons should be inclusive and teachers will ensure they are adapting lessons in line with the Universal Offer. Small groups and one-to-one teaching sessions are carried out for pupils who require additional support. Pupils who need additional support may be offered this by reducing the formal curriculum to allow for small groups and one-to-one intervention.

- **Extracurricular activities:** The school provides a variety of extracurricular activities for pupils that enhance their learning experience. The activities we offer can be found in the Extracurricular activities section of this policy.

A full list of subjects available to pupils in each year can be found in the Curriculum content section of this policy.

The overall aims of the curriculum are to:

- Enable all pupils to be successful learners and achieve high standards.
- Enable pupils to understand the skills and attributes needed to be a successful learner.
- Enable pupils who are not achieving age-related expectations to narrow the gap and catch up with their peers.
- Enable pupils to develop and be able to use high-quality functional skills, including key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- Enable pupils to develop their own personal interests and develop a positive attitude towards learning, so that they enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning.
- Enable pupils to value their learning outside of the curriculum and relate this knowledge to the taught curriculum.
- Teach pupils to be able to discern right from wrong, that actions have consequences, and the value and importance of forgiveness.
- Enable pupils to be creative and to develop their own thinking.
- Help pupils to develop an independent approach to their learning.
- Teach pupils about their ever-changing world, including how the environment and society have changed over time.
- Help pupils understand the fundamental British values and enable them to be positive citizens in society who can make a difference.
- Help pupils understand the importance of truth and fairness, to ensure they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all.
- Enable pupils to have respect for themselves and others, and to be able to live and work cooperatively with others.

Through the aims outlined above, pupils will benefit by:

- Learning how to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Understanding that failure is part of the road to success.
- Being rewarded for academic successes.
- Being supported with their next stages in education or training and feeling prepared for life after school.

- Becoming responsible individuals who contribute to community living and the environment.
- Achieving to the best of their ability.
- Acquiring a wealth of knowledge and experience.
- Becoming critical thinkers.
- Finding a sense of belonging to the school and its community.
- Learning how to cooperate with their peers and respect one another, inside and outside the classroom.
- Developing personal moral values, respect for religious values and tolerance of others' beliefs and ways of life.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Approving and monitoring the content of this policy.
- Liaising with the headteacher, subject leaders and teachers with regard to pupil progress and attainment.
- Contributing towards decisions made about the curriculum.
- Formulating a curriculum committee that assists the school with the creation and implementation of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Ensuring the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced" curriculum.
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND.

The headteacher and Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum & Assessment) are responsible for:

- Devising long- and medium-term plans for the curriculum in collaboration with subject leaders, teachers and other members of the SLT.
- Communicating the agreed curriculum to the governing board basis and ensuring the governing board is fully involved in the on the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- Producing an annual report for the governing board advising on the standards achieved by pupils and any alternative arrangements made to ensure all pupils could access the curriculum.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Assisting teachers with the planning and implementation of the curriculum, ensuring their workload is manageable.

- Ensuring the curriculum is implemented consistently throughout the school and ensuring any difficulties are addressed and mitigated as soon as possible.
- Making any necessary adjustments to the curriculum where required.
- Keeping up-to-date with any relevant statutory updates and taking action where required.
- Creating and maintaining an up-to-date Curriculum Intent Statement.
- Updating and maintaining this policy.

Subject leaders are responsible for:

- The overall provision of the curriculum at the school.
- Developing a curriculum that provides pupils with a range of opportunities and the skills they need to prepare for later life.
- The strategic leadership and management across their curriculum areas, developing and implementing plans, policies, targets and practices within the context of the school's aims and policies.
- Managing subject leaders and staff within their curriculum areas, providing appropriate support, challenge, advice and information as necessary.
- Implementing the school's schemes of work.
- Supporting and offering advice to colleagues on issues relating to the subject or curriculum area.
- Monitoring pupil progress within the department and reporting on this to the headteacher.
- Providing efficient resource management for their department.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Ensuring there are specialist resources available for pupils in need so that everyone can have full access to the curriculum.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy consistently throughout their practices.
- Devising short-term lesson plans that are reflective of the school's curriculum.
- Implementing the curriculum in creative ways, appealing to different learning types and keeping pupils engaged in content.
- Creating short-term plans for the curriculum with fellow colleagues and reporting these plans to the headteacher.
- Creating weekly lesson plans in collaboration with colleagues and sharing these with the SLT where required.
- Collaborating with the headteacher and the SENCO to ensure that the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.

- Working closely with the SENCO and TAs to ensure those in need receive additional support in lessons.
- Ensuring academically more able pupils are given additional, more challenging work to celebrate their talents.
- Celebrating all pupils' academic achievements.
- Reporting progress of pupils with SEND to the SENCO and ensuring any difficulties identified are discussed and resolved.
- Monitoring the progress of all pupils and reporting on this to the headteacher.
- Working to close the attainment gap between academically more and less able pupils.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Collaborating with the headteacher and teachers to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all.
- Ensuring teaching materials do not discriminate against anyone in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Carrying out SEND assessments where necessary and ensuring pupils receive the additional help they need.
- Liaising with external agencies where necessary to ensure pupils who require additional support receive it.

4. Organisation and planning

The school's curriculum will be delivered over 190 days and equally throughout the school week. Each school day will be split into two sessions and pupils will receive at least one break (lunch).

In consultation with the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum) and other members of SLT; subject leaders & teachers will devise the following plans:

- **Long-term plans** that deal with the major areas and strands of the national curriculum to be covered across all key stages.
- **Medium-term plans** that deal with the activities within units of work that are set out **over a series of weeks as appropriate to that subject area.**
- **Short-term plans** that are concerned with individual lessons and address issues of curriculum differentiation and access for individual pupils.

Where possible, teachers will look for links between areas of learning that will support one another and allow pupils to reinforce their skills from one subject within another. A full list of subjects covered in school can be found in the Curriculum content section of this policy.

Teachers will plan lessons which are challenging for all pupils and ensure that there are provisions in place for more academically able pupils, e.g. completing additional work that is above the academic level of their peers.

Planning will be used to identify any possible difficulties within the curriculum and will break down barriers to learning. Any difficulties identified will be addressed once curriculum planning has commenced. As a

consequence, lessons will use a range of techniques to appeal to different learning types, e.g. visual, audio and kinaesthetic. Lesson plans will include regular checking for misconceptions and address those promptly.

Pupils who are identified as needing additional support will receive it, e.g. those with SEND – this will include dedicated time with TAs and access to specialist resources and equipment where required. TAs will be deployed within lessons strategically so that they can assist with pupils who require additional help, but are also able to minimise disruptions where necessary.

Pupils with EAL will be given the opportunity to develop their English ability throughout lessons where necessary.

Classrooms will be organised so that pupils have full access to resources and equipment – they will be provided with a rich and varied learning environment.

5. Curriculum content

The school will have due regard to the national curriculum at all times throughout the academic year.

The school will ensure every pupil has access to the following core subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- RE
- RSHE

The school will ensure pupils also have access to the following foundation subjects:

- Art and design
- PSHE & Citizenship
- Computing
- Design and technology
- Languages
- Geography
- History
- Music
- PE

Pupils will be allowed some choice in Year 8 before making their final choices for their GCSEs at KS4 in Year 9.

Pupils will choose their subjects for KS5 in Year 11.

The subject content of each subject the school offers will be kept up to date and easily available on the school website.

6. PSHE

As part of the curriculum, the school timetables Personal development Lessons. These lessons cover statutory RSHE, Careers education as well as Citizenship and PSHE.

Details of the Long-Term plan for Personal Development can be found on the school website.

7. Careers education

The school will work to encompass careers education and guidance into subjects across the curriculum, in line with the Careers Guidance and Provider Access Policy.

The school will continue to work to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks

The school will engage with and ensure pupils have access to local employers, businesses and professional networks, and providers of post-16 and post-18 education and training, including by inviting visiting speakers with whom pupils can relate.

During Key Stage 4 Pupils will have access to meetings with a suitably qualified member of staff to help develop their ambitions for future careers. All pupils will be able to use software packages to develop their ideas.

All pupils will be offered a period of work experience with a local employer during Key Stage 4.

The school will host careers events such as careers talks, careers carousels and careers fairs. The school will seek to engage with large local employers to give insights into the world of work and possible apprenticeship routes.

8. Reporting and assessment

All reporting and assessments will be conducted in line with the school's Assessment Policy.

Homework will be set by subjects in accordance with the school's Homework Policy.

The school's assessment processes will be used to plan for differentiation within curriculum delivery, to ensure all pupils can access each lesson, and to inform individual teaching programmes.

Individual pupil performance and progress will be regularly monitored and reviewed. Formal assessments will be recorded and reported back to the headteacher, pupils and pupils' parents. Pupils will also complete national assessments. The results of these assessments will be reported back to the headteacher, pupils and their parents. Evaluations and assessments will feed back into future or modified curriculum plans.

Special measures will be given to pupils who require them, e.g. pupils with SEND, pupils who are ill, or pupils who suffer from conditions that inhibit their academic performance. Assessment of pupils with EAL will take into account the pupils' age, length of time in the UK, previous education and ability in other languages.

9. Equal opportunities

The school will take account of its duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. When planning and implementing the curriculum, the school will have due regard to the Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy at all times. Care will be taken within all schemes or work to ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum content.

The school's curriculum will celebrate diversity and the SLT has a responsibility to ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against any of the above characteristics.

10. Supporting pupils with SEND

The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all pupils who attend the school.

Where required, pupils with SEND will receive the additional support they require both academically and with their personal development, in line with the school's SEND Policy. This may include:

- Working with HLTAs in smaller groups to work literacy, numeracy or ELSA programme.
- Working individually with HLTAs or SES to help meet their needs.
- Taking measures to ensure pupils with SEND are not discriminated against in any way.
- Teachers monitoring the progress of pupils with SEND and reporting this to the SENCO.
- Adopting a close working relationship between the SENCO and teachers to help them break down any barriers pupils with SEND have to achieving.

11. Extracurricular activities

The school will offer pupils a wide range of extracurricular trips and activities to enhance their academic learning and personal development. Extracurricular trips and activities occur outside school hours and can include overnight stays both in the UK and abroad.

The school will ensure that all pupils are able to participate in the activities and trips available where possible. Wherever there is an instance where a pupil cannot participate, the trip or activity will be adapted where it is reasonable to do so, to enable the pupil to take part.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed every three years by the headteacher and the governing board.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.