Ascent Academies' Trust

Common Curriculum Principles

The aim of the curriculum is to enthuse, and engage learners evoking curiosity and interest in learning. It aims to support the development of the whole child through core learning and additional personal, social, behavioural, emotional and therapeutic support.

We began with the following principles:

Continuity and Coherence - all parts of the curriculum must be logically consistent with each other. There must be a "match" or a fit between parts. Learning experiences should be ordered so that learners build on previous experiences and move to deeper or more complex understandings and applications. Learning should start with the learners' current understanding.

Scope - the range or extent of "content" (whether information to be learned, skills to be acquired etc.) that will be included in a course or unit of work. It must be sufficient to lead learners to achieve the course outcomes. However, there is a constant tension between breadth and depth when considering scope. In general, when deep learning is required, "lean" is best. We should adopt the belief that in-depth study of a limited number of important topics will have a more lasting effect than a course that tries to cover too many disconnected bits and pieces of information

Continuity - refers to the vertical repetition of major curriculum elements in different courses over time. It is important to identify the themes or skills that need to run through a course and to map how they will be addressed at each level. The curriculum should be planned developmentally within a structured conceptual framework.

Integration - refers to the relationship among major curriculum components at any given point in time. Integration fosters reinforcement of key learning and is needed to promote application of learning across units and subjects.

Outcomes based curriculum - be clear about what we want pupils to be able to demonstrate on completion of the unit/course. Design course outcomes to focus on results, with multiple indicators (assessments) of performance. Design authentic assessments that will encourage originality, insightfulness, and problem-solving, along with mastery of important information and concepts.

Active learning -Design courses to encourage active involvement. Get students "doing" early in the course rather than studying all the principles and basics prior to performing.

We plan from the 2014 National Curriculum as a starting point. However, in a 'Life without Levels' we need to secure a curriculum framework that is relevant to all students in the trust, t reflects their SEND and builds knowledge, skills and understanding sensibly. We researched a number of different curriculum approaches including;

- The six areas of learning from the Northern Ireland Curriculum
- The International Primary Curriculum
- The eight Essential Learning areas from the New Zealand Curriculum
- The Western Australian First Steps approach for maths and English

The ensuing curriculum work has been developed with aspects from each model. However, we have chosen to fully embrace the maths and English curriculum from WA (First Steps) as it is extremely well-researched and is structured developmentally, logically building learning and identifying key indicators within each stage of learning. It has a range of diagnostic assessments that enable us to accurately select pupil starting points in the curriculum. It also identifies common misconceptions and teaching strategies. This has provided us with a clear developmental framework for teaching, learning and assessment.

The foundation curriculum builds from aspects of the NI curriculum, the IPC and Essential Leanings (NZ). We have adapted and structured these programmes in line with the developmental structures within the WA First Steps model.

Common Assessment Principles

We assess progress for each individual within the curriculum pathway they follow.

The aim of assessment is to celebrate success and promote effective learning to enable development of the whole child in the core areas of learning, PSBE and therapeutic support/ intervention.

Ascent will develop its own assessment schemes matched in timing and content to their curriculum.

Diagnostic assessment will be used to identify where learning needs to be based.

Formative assessment will be used inform curriculum planning for the individual.

Summative/ end of stage will takes place at regular interval (at least termly) to demonstrate progress and attainment including progress against NC end of year expectations.

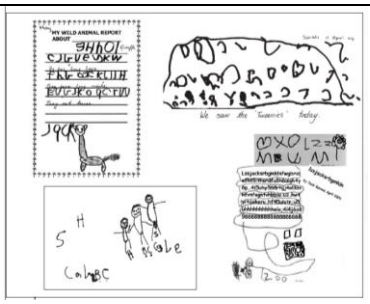
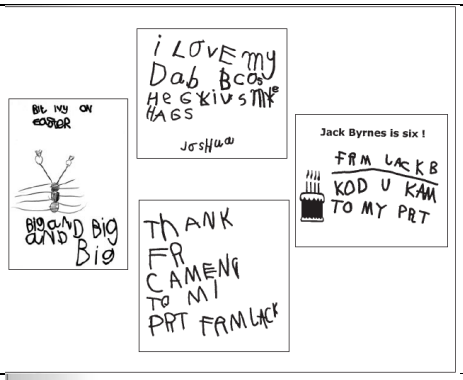
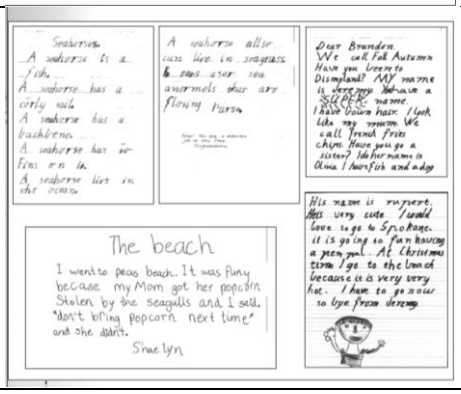
Assessments across all subject will bench marked /moderated at least termly this maybe within the Academy, across the trust or with appropriate other establishments.

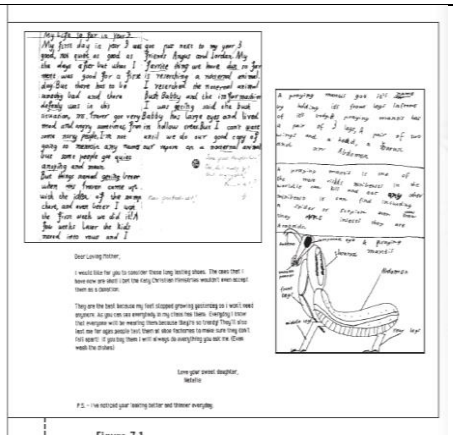
Emphasis will be on individual pupils and evidencing their learning journey through learning records and logs.

Accreditation will be sought as appropriate to pupils' ability, needs and interests.

At **Portland Academy** our learners undertake ***diagnostic assessments*** in maths and English. These are used to provide evidence for baseline as well as helping teachers to identify gaps, misconceptions and next steps. Learners are all mapped on to the First Step English curriculum and the First Step maths curriculum at the relevant stage of learning. These are developmental in nature, for example in writing there are the following phases of learning;

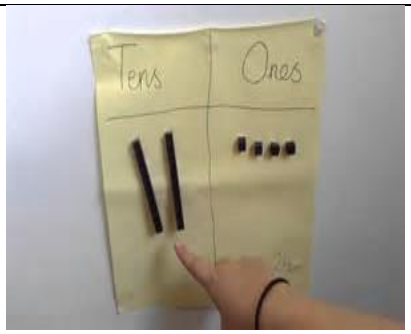
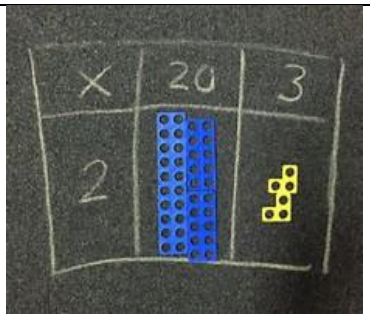
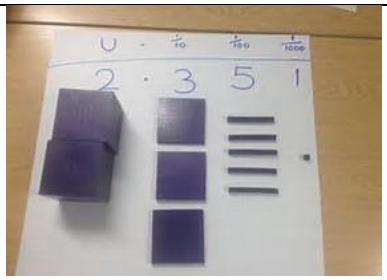
Example of Literacy curriculum -Writing

Phase	Description	Example
Sensori motor	***In this phase, students learn to gain control of their hands and fingers through reaching and grasping. They attempt to control objects and people through reaching and grasping. They make simple marks (intentional or unintentional) using a range of materials. They develop awareness of their hands and fingers.***	***(This aspect of the curriculum is not taught in isolation as the whole curriculum is delivered through a topic approach) This aspect would form part of body awareness, sensory activity, social communication etc)***
Role Play	***In this phase, writers emulate adult writing by experimenting with marks to represent written language. Role Play writers are beginning to understand that writing is used to convey meaning or messages; however, as understandings about sound–symbol relationships are yet to develop, their messages are not readable by others. Role Play writers rely heavily on topic knowledge to generate text.***	
Experimental	***In this phase, writers are aware that speech can be written down. Experimental writers rely on familiar topics to generate a variety of texts such as greeting cards, lists and letters. They demonstrate an understanding of one-to-one correspondence by representing most spoken words in their written texts. These words may consist of one, two or three letters, and reflect their developing understanding of sound–symbol relationships.***	
Early Writing	***Early writers produce a small range of texts that exhibit some of the conventions of writing. Texts such as retells, reports and emails are composed to share experiences, information or feelings. Early writers have a small bank of frequently used words that they spell correctly. When writing unknown words, they choose letters on the basis of sound, without regard for conventional spelling patterns.***	

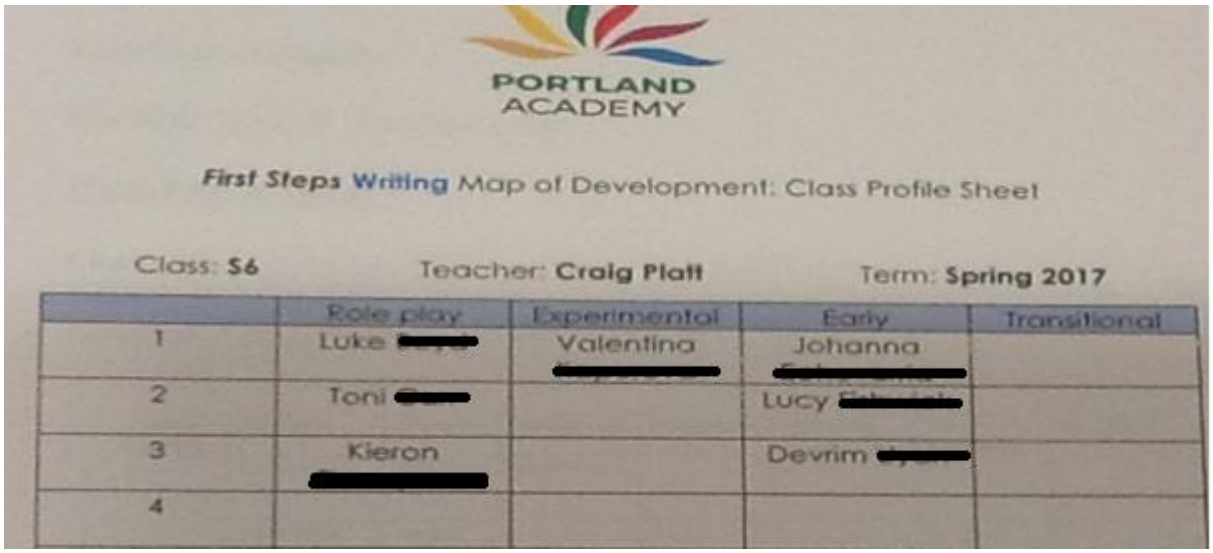
Transitional	***Transitional writers show increasing control over the conventions of writing such as punctuation, spelling and text organisation. They consider audience and purpose when selecting ideas and information to be included in texts. They compose a range of texts, including explanations, narratives, brochures and electronic presentations. Writing shows evidence of a bank of known words that are spelt correctly. Transitional writers are moving away from a heavy reliance on sounding out and are beginning to integrate visual and meaning-based strategies to spell unknown words.***	

Example of maths curriculum-Number

Phase	Description	Example
Sensori Motor	***In this phase, students learn to gain control of their hands and fingers through reaching and grasping. They attempt to control objects and people through reaching and grasping. They begin to explore objects and search for hidden objects.***	***(This aspect of the curriculum is not taught in isolation as the whole curriculum is delivered through a topic approach) This aspect would form part of cognitive development)***
Emergent	***In this phase students use 'bigger', 'smaller' and 'the same' to describe differences between small collections of like objects and between easily compared quantities. They distinguish numerals from other written symbols. These students recognise that numbers link to quantity.***	
Matching	***In this phase students recall the sequence of number names at least into double digits and know how to count a collection, respecting most of the principles of counting, understanding that it is the last number said which gives the count. These students use one-to-one relations to share and count out.***	
Quantifying	***In this phase students select counting as a strategy to solve problems such as: Are there enough cups? Who has more? Will it fit? They use materials or visualise to decompose small numbers into parts empirically; e.g. 8 is the same as 5 with 3. They make sense of the notion that there are basic facts; e.g. 4 + 5 is always 9 no matter how they work it out or in what arrangement. These students use part-part-whole relations for numerical quantities.***	

Partitioning	***In this phase students can compare whole numbers using their knowledge of patterns in the number sequence, and think of movements between numbers without actually or mentally representing the numbers as physical quantities. They make sense of why any whole number can be rewritten as the addition of other numbers. They can partition at least two- and three-digit numbers into standard component parts (e.g. 326 = 300 + 20 + 6) without reference to actual quantities. They can count up and down in tens from starting numbers like 23 or 79. They write suitable number sentences for the range of addition and subtraction situations and use the inverse relationship between addition and subtraction to make a direct calculation possible; e.g. re-interpret 43 – 27 as 'what do you have to add to 27 to get 43' and so count on by tens and ones. These students use additive thinking to deal with many-to-one relations***	
Factoring	***In this phase students are flexible in their mental partitioning of whole numbers, confident that the quantity has not changed. They understand that a number can be decomposed and re-composed into its factors in a number of ways without changing the total quantity*** ***They find it obvious that if 3 rows of 5 is 15, then both 15 divided by 3 and one third of 15 are 5. They begin to use division and multiplication interchangeably. These students think both additively and multiplicatively about numerical quantities.***	
Operational	***In this phase students represent common and decimal fractions both smaller and greater than 1 on a number line. They generalise their understanding of whole number place value to include the cyclical pattern beyond the thousands, so can read, write and say any whole numbers. They use their understandings of the relationship between successive places to order decimal numbers regardless of the number of places. They use the cyclical pattern in the places to count forwards and backwards in tenths, hundredths, thousandths, including up and over whole numbers. They realise that for multipliers smaller than 1, multiplication makes smaller, and for divisors*** ***smaller than 1, division makes bigger*** ***These students can think of multiplications and divisions in terms of operators.***	

Mapping all students' starting points helps us to see the ability range in each class and to plan for individuals and cohorts.



PORTLAND ACADEMY

First Steps Writing Map of Development: Class Profile Sheet

Class: **S6** Teacher: **Craig Platt** Term: **Spring 2017**

	Role play	Experimental	Early	Transitional
1	Luke [redacted]	Valentina [redacted]	Johanna [redacted]	
2	Toni [redacted]		Lucy [redacted]	
3	Kieron [redacted]		Devrim [redacted]	
4				

Teachers then use the indicators for English and key objectives for maths to establish what the student can already do by highlighting the indicators or objectives. This is baseline information and will be highlighted and dated.

Experimental Writing Indicators

Use of Texts

- **Experiments with familiar forms of writing,** e.g. lists, captions, retells.
- **Uses writing with the intention of communicating a message.**
- **Demonstrates awareness that print contains a constant message,** e.g. recalls the 'gist' of the message over time.
- **With assistance, finds information in texts appropriate to purpose or interest.**
- Writes by repeating the same beginning patterns, e.g. I like cats, I like dogs, I like birds.
- Knows that print and drawings can support each other to convey meaning.
- Uses familiar topics when writing.
- Experiments with the metalanguage associated with writing, e.g. purpose, audience, sentence.

Contextual Understanding

- **Provides reasons why people write,**

- Uses left-to-right and top-to-bottom orie of print.
- Recognises the difference between nume and letters when writing.
- Leaves a space between word-like cluste letters.
- Experiments with print conventions and overgeneralise, e.g. puts a full stop after eac
- Uses knowledge of letter names to repres word, e.g. cd – seed.
- Knows some simple common letter patte e.g. tr, ch.
- Represents most words in a sentence usi initial letter.
- Represents a whole word with one, two letters, e.g. hp – happy.
- Recognises some words in context.
- Uses knowledge of rhyme to spell.

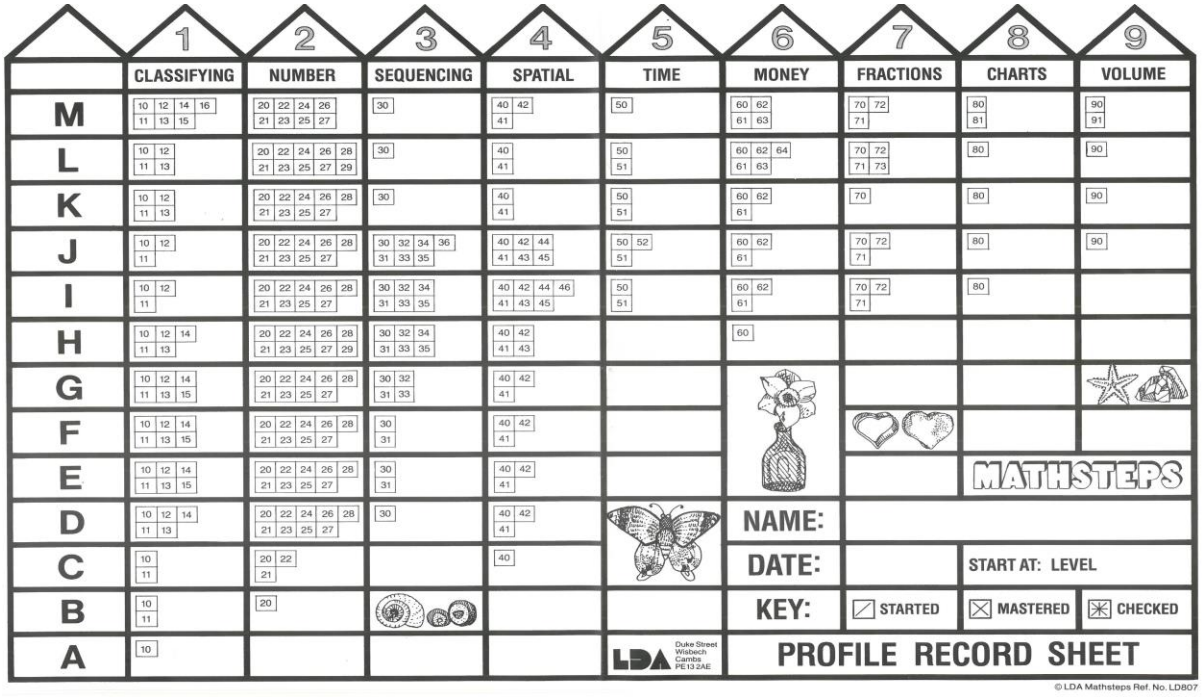
Processes and Strategies

- Draws upon semantic, graphophonic

PRE-OPERATIONAL STAGE	DATE	COMMENTS

KEY OBJECTIVE				
				Has student successfully and independently completed mastery tests? Evidence?
Subitises up to 5 objects				
Demonstrate cardinality with collections of up to 5				
Uses 1:1 correspondence when counting out objects to 5				
Count out at least 10 objects using 1:1 correspondence				

At earlier levels progress is assessed and recorded through Mathssteps programme;



Students with PMLD have progress recorded through Footsteps.

Student learning Plans (SLPs) are set termly for English (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and maths. Teachers set aspirational targets for each strand that ensures we are challenging our learners and that staff have the highest expectations. They link to EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) outcomes.

Writing Target: by July 2017		**Role Play stage**			
Identified target & steps towards meeting	**Provision required (intervention/support)**	**How often this will happen?**	**Who will provide this support and grant costs?**	**Who will monitor and when?**	**Linked to EHCP**
To write her first name independently	In a range of different writing contexts- sign in, book about me, labelling equipment/photos. Handwriting practice. (see target letters)	Daily	Class teacher and support staff. Also at home through set	Teacher X2 weeks Evidence of samples	Y

	Fine motor skills programme(advice from OT)		homework practise		
To form the following letters correctly a, i, j, l, t, u, v and w	Using language to talk about the letter formation, multi-sensory approaches (feely bag letters, drawing large to small, letters drawn on her back etc), going from large to small, fine motor exercises.	2x per week and additional intervention sessions covered by PP grant (2 x 30 mins weekly for 4 weeks)	Intervention staff SALT (£120)	Intervention staff SALT-monthly	Y
Aspirational writing Target: By July	Tia will write her first and second name independently and use this in a range of contexts e.g. signing letters/cards and to write her name on all her work. She will form identified letters correctly and use these functionally to read and 'write' independently. Writing will contain recognisable letters and some clusters of letters that represent a word. She will use appropriate spacing.				

These targets are monitored and quality assured by SLT termly and sent out to parents for their comments, additions and agreement. Students are encouraged, where appropriate to set their own targets and contribute to the process.

In English and maths, teachers create learning ladders to further chunk the target in to small steps. These record steps within a target and show progress toward a target at a given point.

Evidence is collected over time and teachers assess formatively across the term. Progress meetings with the leadership team are held with every teacher, to look at ladders, learning in books, learning comments from class staff, photos etc. Leaders and teachers agree the level of progress in terms of planned progression and aspirational progress linked to targets. Where students do not make progress against set targets; discussions are held to look at possible changes to teaching strategies, obtaining additional advice and support or adapting the target. Where targets have been met and evidence clearly demonstrates the learning is secure, the indicators or key objectives for maths are updated accordingly and dated.

We use yellow to baseline and then:

Term	Colour
autumn	
spring	
summer	

There are key decisions that will be quality assured, for example when a student is deemed to have completed a phase and is ready to move on. This can be achieved through evidence, or through a bank of summative assessment activities. These are all available on the 'One Drive' and are linked to each stage of learning e.g. NCTEM mastery assessments/PUMA year group termly assessments). In order to make links between the national curriculum and First steps we have linked these to year group expectations.

Maths Curriculum

Number	NC Y	Shape and space	NC Y	Chance and Data	NC Y	Measure	NC Y
Sensori Motor		Sensori Motor					
Emergent		Emergent		Emergent		Emergent	
Matching		Recognising		Matching and comparing		Matching	
Quantifying		Describing	1&2	Quantifying	1&2	Quantifying	1
Partitioning	1	Analysing	3&4	Measuring	4-6	Measuring	2
Factoring	2	Relating	5&6			Relating	3&4
Operational	3&4					Operating	5&6
Formal operational	5&6						

Target setting is based on progression through phases. Baseline assessment against the key indicators for maths and English defines students starting point within a phase. (Beginning, developing, extended.) Predictions are then made in terms of progress through that phase and beyond.

Student	ROLE PLAY (Beginning)	ROLE PLAY (Developing)	ROLE PLAY (Extended)	EARLY (Beginning)
A	Mar-17	X	*	
B	Mar-17	X	*	
C		Mar 17	X	*
D	Mar-17		X	*

X = predicted * = aspirational

Once the curriculum is established and all academies in the Trust are working within the new framework we will be able to use benchmarking to identify expected progress for students. For example a student starting in 'Role Play stage' at Y7 reaches the end of 'Experimental stage' by year 10. How does this compare with others who had similar starting points?

We currently moderate work at different phases through joint moderation meetings within the Trust and using the indicators and key objectives that match the English and Maths curriculum.

Senior leaders monitor progress towards targets through book scrutiny, lesson observation, planning, assessments and record keeping. This ensures that targets are appropriately set and are challenging and that there is clear development of work towards the targets.

Trustees monitor pupil outcomes through the MCSG meetings (Monitoring Challenge and Support Group) Progress will be reported through a whole school map of where each student is currently working. We will report numbers of students on target and on target for aspirational.

Outcomes will be reported in terms of end of key stage levels with starting points. See example below for writing;

Student	Starting point	End of KS4 stage completed	Number of completed stages	Accreditation
Amy Harris	Experimental beginning	Early writing	1	ELQ1
Ben Jones	Role play extended	Early	1	N/A
Elspeth Henderson	Role Play developing	Experimental	2	ELQ1

We are also able to report annual progress through a range of formal assessment processes for students who are able to access these.

Assessment	**Accessed by**	**Reporting data**
NFER maths	Students working at Emergent stage onwards	Maths age years and months
Schonnel spelling	Students working at Early phase writing onwards	Spelling age –years and months
Phonics screening	Students working at role play reading onwards	Number of recognised sounds
PUMA maths	Students working at reception level and beyond (Quantifying stage number +)	Year group
Single Word Reading test	Students working at role play onwards	Age related years and months
Good Enough Draw a man	Students working at role play onwards	Age related years and months

We will report to parents through the evaluation of academic targets and also the phase students are working at. This will help them to understand what stage their child is at, how they can support them at home and what progress within this phase looks like.