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OASIS COMMUNITY LEARNING TRUST LEARNING POLICY

September 2018

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended by	Recipients	Purpose

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Position	Date Approved	Version

National/Local Policy

☐ This policy must be localised (see instructions in Appendix)
☐ This policy must not be changed, it is a National Policy.

Position with the Unions

Does the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement?
☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, the policy status is:
☐ Consulted and Approved
☐ Consulted and Not Approved
☐ Awaiting Consultation

Distribution

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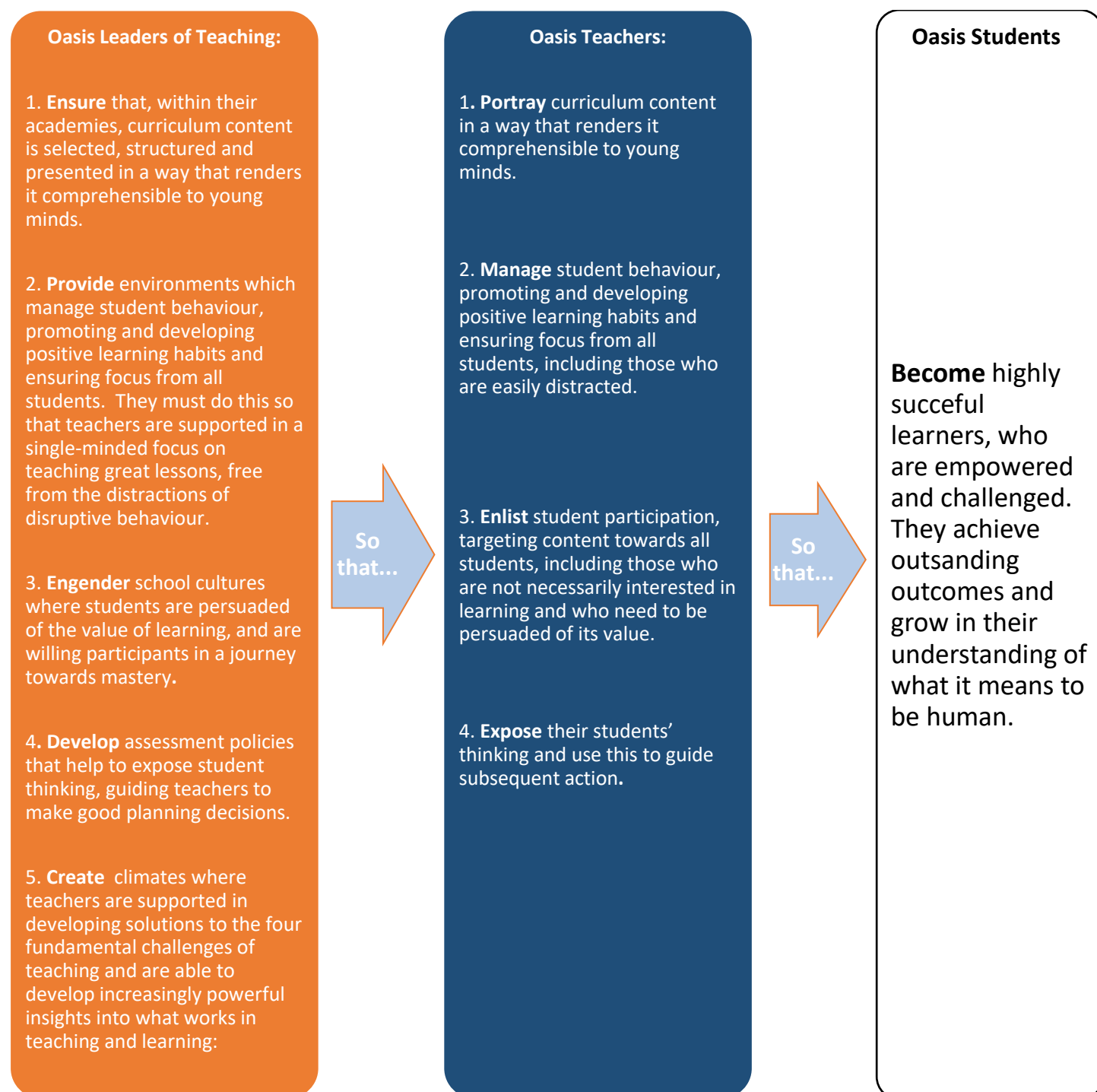| Name	Position	Date	Version

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Section 1: The Purpose, Scope and Principles underlying this Policy

Our **Education Charter** sets out our commitment to work in partnership with our communities to transform lives and create a culture of excellence for all. We believe our children and young people are precious and we prioritise social inclusion. To help achieve this, we make great learning the cornerstone of everything that we do. Through academic and vocational excellence, we look to achieve outcomes that drive social mobility and give everyone freedom of choice throughout their lives. Across our academies, we work, learn and develop together so that students and staff can share and benefit from everyone's best practice. Our Trust Learning Policy plays an important part in delivering the aspirations set out in our Charter.

Our Trust targets set out in our **Improvement Plan** reflect our commitment to achieving outstanding outcomes for all. By 2021, at least 85% of our pupils will have met the expected standard by the end of Key Stage 2: 35% will have reached the higher standard. At Key Stage 4, at least 62% will have attained the Basics at Grade 5+ and all will have moved on to sustained education or employment. On average Oasis pupils, will make half a grade more progress than the national average across all of their subjects. Post 16, our students will make a quarter of a grade better progress than the national average. To achieve these aspirational targets, we are determined to ensure that all of our classrooms are great classrooms.

We believe that this Policy has the potential to drive school improvement in all of our academies, primary, secondary and all-through. It provides a framework for learning that chimes with Oasis values, that makes a difference to what we do in classrooms but that is not prescriptive or mandated. As such, it incorporates our thinking on the leadership of teaching, the curriculum and learning behaviour. The policy needs to be read alongside a number of other key Oasis principles including the **9 Habits** and the policies for **Behaviour, Feedback and Marking** and **Assessment**.

The diagram below reflects the core principles of this Policy and the part that leaders and teachers play in enabling our students to achieve and thrive:

Oasis Leaders of Teaching:

1. **Ensure** that, within their academies, curriculum content is selected, structured and presented in a way that renders it comprehensible to young minds.

2. **Provide** environments which manage student behaviour, promoting and developing positive learning habits and ensuring focus from all students. They must do this so that teachers are supported in a single-minded focus on teaching great lessons, free from the distractions of disruptive behaviour.

3. **Engender** school cultures where students are persuaded of the value of learning, and are willing participants in a journey towards mastery**.**

4**. Develop** assessment policies that help to expose student thinking, guiding teachers to make good planning decisions.

5. **Create** climates where teachers are supported in developing solutions to the four fundamental challenges of teaching and are able to develop increasingly powerful insights into what works in teaching and learning:

So that...

Oasis Teachers:

1**. Portray** curriculum content in a way that renders it comprehensible to young minds.

2. **Manage** student behaviour, promoting and developing positive learning habits and ensuring focus from all students, including those who are easily distracted.

3. **Enlist** student participation, targeting content towards all students, including those who are not necessarily interested in learning and who need to be persuaded of its value.

4. **Expose** their students' thinking and use this to guide subsequent action**.**

So that...

Oasis Students

Become highly succeful learners, who are empowered and challenged. They achieve outsanding outcomes and grow in their understanding of what it means to be human.

Section 2: For all our Leaders of Teaching

Great leaders are needed to create great classrooms. Because our leaders care about those they lead, **this is best achieved by** the embodiment of the following qualities and characteristics:

- A passionate belief that things can change for the better.
- A willingness to find and face the facts, and then act upon them to make a difference.
- A genuine care and concern for the people and communities with whom they work.
- An ability to develop, share and ignite a vision with those that they lead.
- Total integrity: our leaders' words and deeds are fully integrated.
- The ability to empower others and to develop their potential.
- A willingness to encourage risk-taking, questioning and challenge.
- A relentless focus in helping teachers to solve the four fundamental problems of teaching and learning mentioned below.

More specifically:

1) Leaders must ensure that within their academies, curriculum content is selected, structured and presented in a way that renders it comprehensible to young minds:

- Leaders have absolute clarity as to what excellent education should look like in their Academy, for all year groups and in each subject area. This is accessible in every academy through bespoke Teaching and Learning and Curriculum Policies, which all have as their foundation the framework provided in this document.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum taught in their academies focuses upon powerful knowledge and experiences that build cultural capital.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is carefully planned, so that every year students' learning provides foundations for what they do in the following year(s). They ensure that everything students learn – in every subject – empowers students to realise their potential academically, whilst at the same time preparing them for success in the next phase of their lives.

2) Leaders must provide environments which manage student behaviour, promoting and developing positive learning habits and ensuring focus from all students. They must do this so that teachers are supported in a single-minded focus on teaching great lessons, free from the distractions of disruptive behaviour:

- Leaders create and manage a whole-school behaviour policy that empowers teachers to deliver effective lessons and reflects the approaches outlined in the OCL Behaviour Policy.
- Leaders should embody their school behaviour policy, the Oasis ethos and 9 Habits: in their own daily interaction with students they should model to students and staff exactly how behaviour should be managed.
- Leaders work to create and maintain a culture in which excellent behaviour is the norm and both teachers and students understand their responsibility for explicitly promoting and developing positive learning behaviours. These behaviours include, but are not limited to, self-direction, resilience and self-control.

3) Leaders must engender a school culture where students are persuaded of the value of learning, and are willing participants in a journey towards mastery:

- Leaders work to create and maintain a culture where the pursuit of mastery is valued and emphasised *in the present* and for the future.
- Leaders work to create and maintain a culture where well-being is valued and emphasised *in the present* and for the future.
- Leaders actively seek to remove barriers to learning including social disadvantage and special educational needs and disability. This includes resourcing strategies that close the gap between the most and least advantaged. For SEND, the focus is on inclusion, integration and high quality learning. In our academies, student grouping (whether by ability, band or mixed) is designed to support the achievement of all, including the most and least able.
- Leaders seek opportunities to promote, celebrate and share stories of excellence, progress and transformation within their schools.
- Leaders also recognise their responsibilities as custodians, not just to their existing students, but also to those of the past and future. As such, leaders recognise the value of developing and growing engagement within the communities they serve, harnessing the power of positive role models, improving the effectiveness of communication and building sustainable partnerships. In so doing, they recognise the particular importance in forging these relationships with parents/carers whose role in supporting their work is of the utmost significance.

4) Leaders must develop assessment policies that help to expose student thinking, guiding teachers to make good planning decisions:

- Leaders recognise the power of formative assessment [practice] in raising attainment, and ensure that staff develop in this area.
- Leaders recognise that summative assessment [performance] reflects and drives curriculum and teaching quality. As a result, leaders intentionally select and sequence summative assessments to cumulatively test large blocks of knowledge and skill.
- Leaders create assessment policies driven by research evidence, making informed choices that work for both teachers and students.

5) Leaders create climates where teachers are supported in developing solutions to the four fundamental challenges of teaching [see section 3] and are able to develop increasingly powerful insights into what works in teaching and learning:

- Leaders use a range of evidence (for example, pupils' work, pupil voice, the observation of teaching) to assess the effectiveness of learning for all. Teachers are observed regularly, with focus placed exclusively upon what they are doing to enable great learning to take place and what is the single most important step they can take to improve learning in their classrooms.
- Leaders ensure that all teachers know exactly what they need to work on in order to improve the learning in their classrooms. Staff have clear, precise developmental targets and review conversations are focused, practical and enabling. Leaders will regularly follow up agreed targets to assess their impact.
- Leaders act swiftly whenever and wherever less-effective teaching is identified. They provide robust support and challenge, which may include intensive and regular observation, coaching and training.
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- Leaders are committed to on-going professional learning for all. This includes expectations around the development of both subject and pedagogical expertise, as well as refining classroom [behaviour] management. Leaders are relentless in providing opportunities for all staff in pursuit of this goal.
- Leaders utilise the power of deliberate practice to improve teaching quality. They build opportunities for teachers to practise core skills on a regular basis.
- Leaders role-model engagement in research around student learning and work to disseminate best practice and key knowledge to their staff.
- Leaders create an environment where great teaching practice is used to improve teaching quality within and beyond their own schools.
- Leaders make effective use of a range of Trust expertise – for example, the Monitoring Standards Team, the Directory of Best Practice and our National Lead Practitioners – to help us secure more rapid improvements in the quality of pupils' learning.

Section 3: For all of our Teachers

We recognise that all teachers, no matter what key stage they teach or career stage they are at, are faced with the same four fundamental challenges when teaching their students. We know that our best teachers are constantly working on solutions to these problems, and that all our efforts as teachers should be directed towards solving them.

1) **Teachers must portray curriculum content in a way that renders it comprehensible to young minds.**
2) **Teachers must manage student behaviour, promoting and developing positive learning habits and ensuring focus from all students, including those who are easily distracted.**
3) **Teachers must enlist student participation, targeting content towards all students, including those who are not necessarily interested in learning and who need to be persuaded of its value.**
4) **Teachers must find ways to expose their students' thinking and use this to guide subsequent action.**

1) Teachers must portray curriculum content in a way that renders it comprehensible to young minds:

This is best achieved by:

- Scheduling / interleaving content – curriculum design.
- Representing new concepts to students.
- Avoiding cognitive overload.
- Teaching for memory - overlearning and repeated re-testing.
- Exploring / exposing misconceptions.
- Building new learning on foundations of prior knowledge.
- Providing time for learners to practise and apply in other contexts.

More specifically:

Teaching for memory, *so that students retain important content far beyond the end of the lesson.*
Teacher presents content (teacher talk/ resources) clearly and simply, *so that confusion and cognitive overload is avoided.*
Teacher adapts lesson content for memorability, *so that students remember content easily.*
Teacher plans in lots of time for practice, *so that students develop automaticity and build knowledge retrieval strength.*
Teacher ensures that teaching builds off prior learning, *so that students make links with what they already know.*
Lesson delivery, *so that every minute in the classroom is used well.*
Teacher uses time effectively, *so every minute of classroom time is made to count.*
Teacher ensures activity transitions are slick, *so that no learning time is wasted.*
Teacher uses support staff effectively, *so that all students are adequately supported.*
Lesson planning, *so that curriculum content is rendered comprehensible to young minds.*
Learning objectives are precise, clear, important, achievable, *so that learning is precisely targeted at student knowledge gaps.*
Teacher ensure that lesson outcomes demonstrates achievement of the objective, *so that students clearly demonstrated their learning.*
Teacher pitches lesson correctly, *so that all students are sufficiently challenged.*
Teacher plans all activities to link with the achievement of their objective, *so that students follow a clear, straight path towards learning.*
Teacher sequences learning objectives and outcomes over time, *so that a clear picture of student learning emerges.*
Reading, writing and speaking, *so that literacy-teaching complements subject teaching.*
Teacher works to develop students' basic literacy skills, *so that students can access the curriculum.*
Teacher engages students in effective whole class reading, *so that students become skilful readers of varying text types.*
Teacher supports students to write well, *so that students learn to write accurately and expressively.*
Teacher supports students to speak academically and confidently, *so that students learn to use academic registers and subject specific vocabulary.*
Teacher models high quality, appropriate use of language, *so that student language skills are constantly reinforced and developed.*

2) Teachers must manage student behaviour, promoting and developing positive learning habits and ensuring focus from all students, including those who are easily distracted:

Teachers have a responsibility to explicitly promote and develop learning behaviours such as self-direction, resilience and self-control so that students can fulfil their true potential. At times students can be excitable, boisterous, and easily distracted. Teachers need to manage and channel these behaviours, in part as a matter of safety, but principally to ensure that students and teachers are focused on the learning.

This is best achieved by:

- Planning high quality routines and training students in these, including for independent learning.
- Building a focused and productive classroom culture.
- Maintaining focus throughout the lesson.
- Ensuring students and their parents/carers understand and can see the relationship between their choices about learning behaviour and their learning outcomes.

More specifically:

Behaviour Management, *ensuring focus from all students, including those restless and easily distracted.*
Teacher manages the lesson opening, *so that students begin the lesson quickly and calmly.*
Teacher is able to gain and hold student attention, *so teaching can take place.*
Teacher's classroom routines are clear, slick, and efficient, *so that no learning time is wasted.*
Teacher deals effectively with disruption to learning, *so that students are able to focus on their learning.*
Teacher uses a system of rewards and sanctions, *so that students are motivated to behave.*
Teacher uses time effectively, *so that every minute of classroom time is made to count.*
Teacher ensures activity transitions are slick, *so that no learning time is wasted.*
Teacher narrates the link between behaviour and learning, *so that students see the connection between their behaviour and successful outcomes.*

3) Teachers must enlist student participation, targeting content towards all students, including those who are not necessarily interested in learning and who need to be persuaded of its value:

Learning cannot occur without active intellectual engagement. Moreover, students need to understand their role in, and responsibility for, effective learning.

This is best achieved by:

- Building learning on a platform of what students already know.
- Encouraging concentration and mental effort.
- Designing activities that direct student thinking to the right areas.
- Encouraging students to apply learning in a variety of contexts; to make learning flexible.
- Ensuring that activities direct student thought to appropriate content rather than procedural details.
- Praising effort rather that intelligence so that students begin to see the link between hard work and their outcomes.
- Using assessment, both formative [practice] and summative [performance], judiciously to identify gaps in learning, to motivate and to empower improvement.

More specifically:

Questioning, *so that students are made to think hard with breadth, depth and accuracy.*
Teacher uses questioning strategies that hold students accountable, so that **all** students think hard about important content. e.g., Cold Call; Question, Pause, Name; Wait Time; Everybody Writes.
Teacher uses questions move students on in their learning, *so that students think hard about important content.*
Behaviour Management, *ensuring focus from restless and easily distracted students.*
Teacher uses a system of rewards and sanctions, *so that students are motivated to behave.*
Student motivation, *so that students see the value in effortful learning.*
Teacher develops students' intrinsic motivation to master content, *so that students are driven towards mastery for its own sake, especially when learning gets tough.*
Engagement, *so that students feel enriched and joy of learning is nurtured.*
Teacher demonstrates a love of learning and of their subject, *so that students never feel they 'have' to learn about a topic but 'need' to.*
Teacher contextualises the learning, *so that students know the value of the learning beyond summative assessment.*

Reading, writing and speaking, *so that literacy-teaching complements subject teaching.*
Teacher engages students in effective whole class reading, *so that students become skilful readers of varying text types.*
Teacher supports students to write well, *so that students learn to write accurately and expressively.*
Teacher supports students to speak academically and confidently, *so that students learn to use academic registers and subject specific vocabulary.*
Teacher models high quality, appropriate use of language, *so that student language skills are constantly reinforced and developed.*
Lesson delivery, *so that every minute in the classroom is used well.*
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Teacher presents content (teacher talk/ resources) clearly and simply, *so that student confusion and cognitive overload is avoided.*
Teacher adapts lesson content for memorability, *so that students remember content easily.*
Teacher narrates the link between behaviour and learning, *so that students see the connection between their behaviour and successful outcomes.*

4) Teachers must find ways to expose their students' thinking and use this to guide subsequent action:

Without knowing what students understand at any given moment, teachers cannot know what to repeat, what to elaborate, or when to move on. Teachers must also understand and communicate to their students the difference in both purpose and function of on-going formative assessment [practice] and periodic summative assessment [performance]. The judicious and skilful use of these tools enables accurate diagnosis of gaps in learning, informs teacher planning, harnesses student motivation and empowers improvement.

This is best achieved by:

- Taking into account the different prior experiences and levels of knowledge of students.
- Hanging new learning off prior learning and experiences.
- Gathering and responding to live data in the classroom.
- Gathering and responding to data from student books.
- Observing and talking to students as they learn.
- Rigorous analysis of data on progress over time.

More specifically:

Assessment, checking for understanding and feedback, *so that learning can be observed and gaps in understanding can be bridged.*
Teacher ensures that teaching builds off prior learning, *so that students make links with what they already know.*
Teacher uses strategies to expose whether students have learned what they are teaching, *so that the teacher can adapt their planning and delivery to bridge gaps in knowledge.*
Teacher adapts their planning and delivery based on data gathered during the lesson, *so that instruction is targeted at knowledge gaps.*
Teacher's feedback (oral and written) makes students aware of how to improve, *so that students don't repeatedly make the same errors.*
Over time, student work (in books or similar) is of good quality and quantity, *so we can see that good student outcomes are a pattern over time.*
Teacher's assessment gathers data on student progress, *so that students and teachers are aware of next steps.*

Teacher asks targeted questions to gauge the impact of learning, *so that instruction targets student learning gaps.*

Teacher uses summative assessment to check for larger blocks of knowledge acquisition and skill development, *so that future planning is evidence informed.*