



**Acorn**  
Education Trust

# **Link 2 Curriculum Statement**

## **Statement of intent**

At Link 2, we understand the importance of a well-rounded, fulfilling curriculum to prepare our pupils for the next stage of education, and for their future as citizens of the UK.

This document is based on the 6 core principles in the Acorn Curriculum Statement and is designed to give an outline of the key principles behind the curriculum delivered in Link 2 and how they may be implemented.

### **Vision for SEND in Acorn Education Trust**

*We believe that every child in every school should aspire to achieve their potential. We embrace the philosophy of learning for all and strive to prepare the children in our schools for their future in their time.*

### **Vision statement for Link 2**

*Every child attending Link 2 will progress in their social and emotional and/or communication and interaction skills to ensure that they can either re-integrate fully to their mainstream primary school or move on to the next stage in their education. Children will feel safe, valued and supported at Link 2 in order that they aspire to be the best they can be.*

# **1. Social/Emotional/Mental Health (SEMH) and Communication and Interaction (C&I) Skills**

## **1.1. Intent**

Education in SEMH and C&I is at the root of learning at Link 2. We assess behavioural skills on entry and identify key areas to work on through this and via opinion from home schools and parents. The child also has the opportunity to express their views on their own development. Much work is personalised so that children are educated in such learning at their stage rather than their age. At all points, it is the intent to prepare children and equip them with the social and emotional skills to return to a mainstream education at their home primary school or to the next stage of their education at a different setting.

## **1.2. Assessment**

The SNIP behaviour audit is used to identify strengths and weaknesses before a child starts a placement at Link 2. This is re-assessed after 12 weeks and progress recorded and used to inform future planning and measure impact.

In addition, ongoing assessment and AFL is used daily. Children are given a “smiley” for each session which is sent home and to home schools on a weekly basis. ABC charts are completed where a session has been “poor” in order to identify any antecedents to refine ongoing work with a child.

## **1.3. Planning and delivery**

Each morning starts with the opportunity to have breakfast together. This is invaluable learning time where children are working on communication and interaction and social skills.

Daily social skills group sessions are planned where the whole group works on a single activity. This may have a particular focus linked to a subject area or may concentrate specifically on developing social and emotional skills such as managing anxiety. Regardless of topic, the aim of the session is to promote positive behaviour, cooperation and communication skills.

At other times, activities may be child-led. This may involve a child working on an area which interests them or engaging in self-led play. Opportunities are taken during these sessions to further learning in SEMH and C&I skills. Sometimes these are made explicit to a child and sometimes is more implied.

Autism and attachment friendly approaches are used where appropriate.

## **1.4. Preparing for the future**

Pupils are encouraged to discuss their difficulties and help to come up with strategies which work for them. All pupils are offered a variety of approaches as there is no “one size fits all” option. Staff help pupils to develop a personal “toolkit” to assist them to

manage their own behaviour independently. Visual approaches are used to aid discussion.

When ready, children are supported to reintegrate to their home primary school. Acorn Education Trust employs a Behaviour Support Assistant who helps with this process by accompanying the child to their home school, sharing strategies and approaches with staff and assisting the child to settle in and make use of key learning from their time in Link 2.

Children moving to a different setting are supported with the transition process on a personalised level. We encourage new settings to offer a transition programme.

Where appropriate, children are encouraged to reflect on British values and how these are relevant to their lives.

## **2. Subject overview**

### **2.1. In general**

Children are assessed in their literacy and numeracy skills within the first few weeks of a placement in order that we can track progress in basic skills as well. Home schools also are contacted to obtain information on current academic attainments. The intent of subject specific learning in Link 2 includes:

- Re-engaging children who may have become disengaged in all learning at their primary school.
- Furthering of basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Developing independent learning skills.
- Preparing children for re-integration to their home primary school or for their next education setting.

The first part of the morning is given to working on basic learning skills. Children can choose the order in which they approach their work. All work is personalised to the child and planned, prepared and assessed by the teacher. Teaching staff are creative in their planning and try to match work to the interests of the child. Some work will be independent and at other times children may work in a small group or on a 1:1 with the teacher or TA. Marking is mainly verbal and/or completed very sensitively as many of the children at Link 2 respond negatively to feedback. "Proud books" are completed to track success and promote a sense of achievement.

### **2.2. Reading**

All learning is personalised as per the above. Some children attending Link 2 are weaker in reading and require more intensive support from staff in this area.

Reading may be taught through a paired reading approach which is child-led and enables an adult to work 1:1 with the pupil and develop individual reading skills. In addition, comprehension may be taught through the use of specific texts with questions targeted

towards developing early and more advanced comprehension skills. There are books freely available in Link 2 which children may choose to access.

Phonics programmes used include Letters and Sounds, Phonics play and Teach a monster to read.

Children may be working on the NFER tests completed by all children in Acorn Education Trust (years 2-5) or on practice SATs material as appropriate too. These are always broken down and chunked so as not to overwhelm the child and to promote positive self-esteem and achievement.

Progress is monitored using the Salford Sentence Reading Test and through looking at pupil work.

### **2.3. Writing**

Children practise handwriting on a daily basis as part of their set learning each morning. Progress can be seen in handwriting books. Other activities such as cutting, threading, colouring etc. may also be employed to support development of fine motor skills.

Children attending Link 2 are often reluctant writers. Planning therefore again is bespoke. Best endeavours are made to match writing tasks to the children's areas of interest whilst still trying to develop skills. Successful attempts at writing are celebrated and can be seen in "proud" folders. Feedback is largely verbal with some written praise.

Alternative methods of recording are encouraged. Children often choose to use ICT to record and are therefore also developing typing and computing skills.

Progress is monitored using the Vernon Graded Spelling Test and through looking at pupil work.

### **2.4. Mathematics**

Children have opportunities to enhance their basic maths skills on a daily basis. Again, planning and delivery is bespoke to the individual child. Work is chunked in order to maintain focus. Games are used to motivate children and to weave in the development of social skills as well.

Some children attending Link 2 are weaker in number and require more intensive support from staff in this area.

Maths programmes used include Sumdog, ICT games and TT Rockstars.

Progress is monitored using the Basic Number Screening Test and through looking at pupil work.

### **2.5. Physical Education (PE)**

There is an outside area exclusively for the use of learners in Link 2. Children can go outside to use up excess energy at various points throughout the day as directed by staff.

Many learners attending Link 2 also attend a forest school provision (either within the Trust or organised externally) for one day a week.

There is a weekly PE session taught by a member of Acorn Education Trust PE staff too.

Children are encouraged to be healthy and look after themselves. Breakfast and lunchtimes are ideal times for discussion around these areas. Much focus in Link 2 is also on positive mental health.

## **2.6. Computing**

There are laptops available to use in Link 2. As already stated, these are used as an alternative method of recording to handwriting. Computers are also used for research purposes and for children to access educational games and websites.

In addition, some children access coding as part of their learning. The programme used for this is [www.code.org](http://www.code.org).

We also have a Lego Minestorms pack which uses coding and encourages problem-solving, design and coding skills.

## **3. Promoting fundamental British values**

**3.1.** Citizens of the UK should:

- Respect and obey the law.
- Respect the rights of others, including their right to their own opinions.
- Treat others with fairness.
- Look after themselves and their family.
- Look after the area in which they live and the environment.

**3.2.** We believe that our code of conduct underpins the fundamental British values to:

- Always try our best at everything we do.
- Listen to each other.
- Treat each other with respect and value our differences.
- Make time to talk through our problems.
- Care for our environment and everything in it.

Each child is given a “smiley” for every session during the day. These are graded. Any variable or poor lessons will be attributable to the child not adhering to the expectations in Link 2. Percentages of good or better sessions are calculated on a termly basis in order to monitor overall behaviour in Link 2.

**3.3.** We promote fundamental British values throughout our curriculum.