

# School Review Subsidiary Guidance

## Evaluating the Curriculum

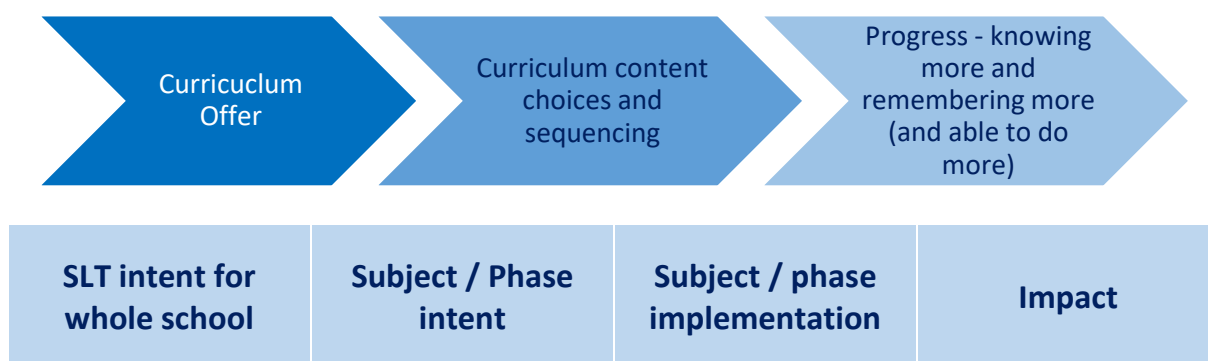


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*“The curriculum is a framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent); for translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (implementation) and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations (impact/achievement)”* **OFSTED – working definition of curriculum**

## Summary of Curriculum Review Model



### Context

- This subsidiary guidance is provided to support reviews of the effectiveness of the school curriculum which will take place in the context of Full School Reviews and Focused School Reviews. It should be read in conjunction with the guidance for those reviews.
- Aspects of this guidance may also be used when conducting any school review which investigates the effectiveness with which the school curriculum is planned, taught and learned.

### Key Principles:

- The starting point for a curriculum review should be without any preconceived view of curriculum, except that there should be progression in what pupils know, can do and understand over time.
- Reviewers should not require information to be presented in a particular format and there should be no need for schools to prepare any new material ahead of the review.
- The findings from a review of the curriculum support school self-evaluation about the curriculum in the context of the quality of education provided for pupils at the school. Whilst reference will be made to the grade descriptors within the inspection handbook and key aspects of the process reflect those of an inspection, it should be noted that a curriculum review in the context of a school review is not intended to replicate an OFSTED inspection.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's curriculum will specifically include consideration of:
  - **Intent** – How effectively is the curriculum planned and sequenced so that it is effective as the driver of pupil progress?
  - **Implementation** – How effectively is the curriculum taught so that pupils know more and remember more; and are consequently capable of doing more.
  - **Impact** – How well are pupils learning the knowledge and skills outlined in the curriculum? How highly do they achieve?

### Summary of Curriculum Review Activities

#### Pre-Review

- During the pre-review phone call, the lead reviewer will have an initial discussion with the Headteacher to agree the focus for the review and to begin to understand leaders' intentions for the curriculum and how they are putting this into practice.
- The lead reviewer will typically agree a **'deep dive' into at least four different curriculum subjects on the first day of the review**.
- One of these deep dives will usually be focused on early reading, including phonics. A further deep dive will often be in Mathematics, though this may not always be the case.
- There should always be a deep dive into at least one foundation subject which is being taught on the day of the review.

### Day 1:

On-site activities will be be-spoke to the context and size of the school, but will typically involve:

- Meetings with senior leaders at the start of the day to confirm key messages about the intent of the curriculum.
- Meetings with curriculum leaders, including review of documentation (or multiple meetings, depending on the size of the school and number of subject leaders)
- Book scrutiny and learning walk with curriculum leaders to observe the chosen subjects.
- Discussions with pupils about their learning across the curriculum.
- Discussions with teachers
- Discussion with governors (may take place remotely or on a different day prior to the review day)

Optional: discussion with parents

### Day 2:

- Day 2 of the review will pick up any key themes identified from the scrutiny of subjects on the first day of the review and seek further evidence in order to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- During Day 2, further evidence will also be sought about the extent to which the findings from Day 1 are more widely representative of the strengths and weaknesses of the school curriculum. This will usually involve seeking further evidence about other subjects which were not scrutinised on the first day of the review.

See guidance on review methodology below for further details.

### Documentation Scrutiny

The following documentation will be typically scrutinised during the day with particular reference to the curriculum:

- Curriculum Policies
- Curriculum Overviews and Maps
- Curriculum Planning – long and short term - in whatever format it currently exists
- Schemes of work or any documentation showing the sequencing of learning to support progression.
- Monitoring schedules and any monitoring information linked to leaders' scrutiny of the implementation and impact of the curriculum (observations, environment checks, book scrutiny etc)

Reviewers **will not** carry out in-depth scrutiny of internal assessment information or tracking data of pupils' achievement. However, where it is available consideration will be given about the extent to which school's internal data (including standardised test scores) reliably triangulates with assertions made by school leaders.

Reviewers **will** consider how the school assesses what pupils learn (what they can remember, do and apply) and how the school use this information constructively to inform curriculum planning.

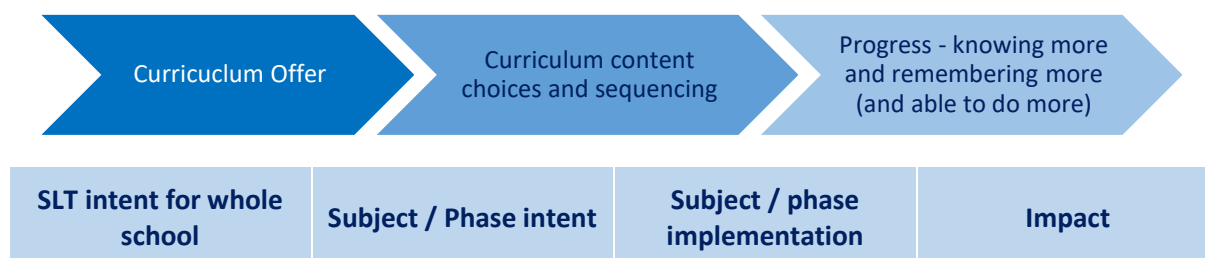
### Evaluating Curriculum Effectiveness

When evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum and the accuracy of school self-evaluation, in addition to making reference to the grade descriptors for 'quality of education' within the inspection handbook, reviewers may also wish to refer to:

- Annex 1: Evaluation Tool: Intent and Implementation
- Annex 2: Indicators of Curriculum Effectiveness

## Summary of Review Methodology

The planning for each review **will need to reflect the context of the school in question and therefore** this is subject to change, but typically the structure and methodology for a curriculum review will involve the following approach.



A key principle of curriculum reviews is that **the curriculum is the progression model** and therefore the methodology for evaluating curriculum effectiveness seeks to investigate whether it is sufficiently broad, ambitious and clearly sequenced to ensure that all pupils make progress (know more and remember more). To this end, reviewers should ensure that the evidence from different review activities is *connected* wherever possible to ensure a deep and substantial evidence base. In practice, this means that *particular attention should be given to the same pupils across different review activities* to understand in depth how the school curriculum and its delivery is impacting on their learning and progress.

For at least two of the subjects being scrutinised in depth, the chosen pupils should include pupils with SEND and pupils eligible for pupil premium to evaluate the impact of the school's curriculum on these pupils.

<b>Pre-Review Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The initial phone discussion between the Lead Reviewer and Headteacher should scope out the focus and organisation of the review day, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 4 subjects to be scrutinised deeply on Day 1 of the review.</li> <li>Discussion about leaders' curriculum intent, including their aspirations for what the curriculum should be achieving pupils; and what this actually looks like in practice, including the reasons for the chosen content and sequencing of the curriculum.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The lead reviewer should also obtain initial 'high level' information about curriculum intent that will inform the planning of review activities and areas to investigate.</li> <li><i>Consideration should be given in these conversations to how the curriculum reflects the curriculum intent of the Trust and the REAch2 touchstones.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Day 1: Discussions with Senior Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial discussions with the Headteacher and senior leaders should build on the initial phone call where curriculum intent was initially discussed. Discussions should allow senior leaders to share the 'big picture' of the school's curriculum, its aims and the rationale that sit behind it as well as the thinking behind how it is effectively delivered.</li> <li>Leaders should be given the opportunity to explain the organisation and structure of their curriculum offer. For example, they may talk about how the thematic curriculum is organised, whether specific subjects were taught by one teacher (and if the curriculum is organised thematically, how individual subject content and disciplines are identified and understood within this).</li> <li><i>Discussions should probe further than just leaders vision and aspirations for the curriculum and should seek to understand what makes the curriculum effective, including how subject content is chosen and sequenced; and how leaders know the curriculum ensures pupils know more and remember more.</i></li> <li><i>Consideration should be given in these conversations to how the curriculum reflects the curriculum intent of the Trust and the REAch2 touchstones.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Day 1: Discussions with Curriculum Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following discussions with senior leaders, the reviewer will usually meet with curriculum leaders. In some primary schools, particularly smaller schools, senior leaders may also be present for this meeting; or in some instances they may in fact carry out these roles themselves.</li> <li>The focus of these meetings should be on any <b>deliberate actions</b> they had taken over the last 12-18 months to shape the curriculum offer, including through the lens of any subjects being scrutinised in more depth.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of discussions with curriculum leaders is to gather first-hand evidence about <b>intent and implementation</b> of the curriculum and whether this is consistent with leaders' assertions. This will typically include looking at pupils' books and any other relevant evidence of pupils' work. It should involve the reviewer working alongside the relevant curriculum leader to scrutinise any evidence available linked to the subject.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 1: Lesson observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of lesson observation is to provide first hand evidence to triangulate the claims of leaders; and to deepen the evidence base around pupils' achievement in a range of subjects.</li> <li>Lessons should not be observed as individual units. It is important for reviewers to understand the purpose and context of the lessons they visit, to come to a view about how effectively they fit into a sequence of lessons which help pupils to learn curricular content and skills over time.</li> <li>Observations provide evidence about how effectively subjects are taught and whether pedagogy is appropriate to promote learning in different subjects.</li> <li>Where possible, there should be <b>at least 4</b> direct lesson observations of any subject chosen for a deep-dive on the first day of the review.</li> <li>Where possible, observations should take place in at least 2 different year groups.</li> <li><i>Particular attention should be paid during observations to any evidence of the learning for those pupils who were also selected for the work scrutiny and pupil interviews.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Day 1: Work Scrutiny</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of work scrutiny is to provide evidence primarily about the implementation of the curriculum and how well the school's approach to teaching the curriculum helps pupils to learn.</li> <li>This will pay particular attention to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>what is taught and learned (the breadth and depth of subject-matter content)</li> <li>how subject matter is taught and learned (from the perspective of how learning is structured to allow for efficient and meaningful acquisition of new knowledge)</li> <li>whether and how pupils consolidate knowledge so that it remains in long-term memory.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Work scrutiny will typically be conducted jointly with curriculum leaders to promote professional dialogue about the evidence.</li> <li><i>The work scrutinised should be the same pupils as were observed during the lesson observations and spoken to during pupil interviews.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Day 1: Discussion with Pupils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of discussions with pupils is to verify leaders' claims about the curriculum, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the regularity with which subjects are taught</li> <li>whether pupils enjoy different subjects</li> <li>any evidence of narrowing the curriculum in older year groups</li> <li>how well pupils remember key knowledge and how this helps them in their learning</li> <li>how proficiently they understand and can use subject specific vocabulary from previously learned content.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Pupil interviews should provide evidence about the <b>implementation and impact</b> of the school's chosen approaches to teaching the curriculum.</li> <li>Discussions with pupils may also explore with them different examples in pupils' work books to ascertain the quality of learning across the curriculum and how well pupils remember and understand what they have learned.</li> <li><i>Pupils selected for pupil interviews should be the same pupils as were observed during the lesson observations and whose books were scrutinised during the work scrutiny.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Day 1: Discussion with teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of discussions with teachers is to further triangulate the evidence presented by leaders and consider whether the understanding of teachers reflect the intentions of leaders.</li> <li>In particular, this meeting should probe the quality of training and CPD linked to the curriculum and how effectively staff have been helped to understand curricular progress.</li> <li>How have teachers been helped to teach effectively those subjects they are less confident in teaching so that the curriculum is still taught effectively?</li> <li>How do they assess pupils learning across the curriculum?</li> <li>How regularly and robustly are they held to account for the quality of practice in subjects across the curriculum other than English and Maths?</li> <li>Consideration may also be given to how leaders support teachers by reducing unnecessary workload.</li> <li><i>Discussions should be with those teachers who have been observed during the deep dives into curriculum subjects. Teachers may also be asked about the learning and progress of those pupils scrutinised through other review activities.</i></li> </ul>

<b>Pulling together the evidence (end of Day 1)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the end of the first day of the review, the review team will draw together the evidence from the different review activities to come to an initial view about the effectiveness of the curriculum.</li> <li>This will involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion of evidence gathered up to this point to build an initial view of the quality of education, identifying which aspects may not be typical and those aspects which appear to be systemic issues across the evidence base.</li> <li>The reviewer quality assuring the evidence from the review and for reviewers to offer professional challenge evidence in to ensure a robust view is reached about what the key emerging issues appear to be.</li> <li>establishing which review activities will help the review team on Day 2 to come to establish the systemic features of the curriculum; and to draw reliable conclusions about the quality of education.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Day 2: Broadening the evidence base</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The second day of the review will involve further gathering of evidence about the curriculum to deepen the evidence base from Day 1.</li> <li>This may involve further follow up discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.</li> <li>It will also usually involve gaining evidence from other subjects and areas of education to further explore the issues that emerged at the end of Day 1.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 2: Drawing conclusions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the end of the second day of the review, the evidence base from all review activities will be drawn together to establish which issues are systematic to the school's provision. This supports reviewers to come to a view of the effectiveness of the curriculum.</li> <li>In evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum, reviewers will take into account the indicators of curriculum effectiveness (annex 1).</li> <li>Reviewers will finally come to a view about the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation with reference to the quality of education.</li> </ul>

### Evaluating the impact of the curriculum on SEND pupils and pupils eligible for Pupil Premium:

Top level view	During deep dives into the relevant subjects	Day 2 of the review
<p>SEND and Pupil Premium context and ambitions.</p> <p>Organise a sample of pupils with SEND in at least 2 subject deep dives – with copies of their EHC and SEND support plans, or any other individual plans where relevant.</p>	<p>Is the curriculum implemented well for pupils with SEND?</p> <p>Is it sufficiently ambitious for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium?</p> <p>Do the experiences of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium reflect the intentions of the schools Pupil Premium strategy?</p> <p>Are these pupils gaining cultural capital as a result of curricular experiences?</p> <p>What are they learning?</p> <p>How well are they involved in school life?</p>	<p>Dialogue with responsible leaders if needed (eg, SENDCo, PP Lead).</p> <p>Seek more evidence where needed.</p> <p>If required, sample group of pupils with SEND and/or pupils eligible for pupil Premium.</p> <p>Review Day 1 and Day 2 evidence to evaluate quality of education for SEND pupils.</p>

### Subjects not taught on the day of the review:

Where a subject is not being taught on the day of the review it is still possible to conduct a deep dive on the subject, though greater weight should be placed on securing a wider evidence base through the other review activities.



## Guidance: Discussions with Senior Leaders

The main purpose of the initial meeting is to collect evidence about **curriculum intent**. This does not simply refer to leaders' aspirations for the curriculum, but also how leaders have structured and sequenced the curriculum so that it has a meaningful impact on pupils' learning.

This can then be triangulated with the first-hand evidence collected across the other review activities to better understand the relationship between intent and implementation.

The questions should allow school leaders to explain the organisation and structure of their curriculum offer. Leaders in primary schools, for example, may talk about how the thematic curriculum is organised or whether specific subjects were taught by one teacher (and if the curriculum is organised thematically, how individual subject content and disciplines are identified and understood within this). The questions should allow senior leaders to share the 'big picture' of the school's curriculum, its aims and the rationale that sit behind it.

Through this discussion the review should explore the extent to which:

- There is a clear and coherent rationale for the curriculum design
- The rationale and aims of the curriculum design are shared across the school and fully understood by all
- Curriculum leaders show understanding of important concepts related to curriculum design, such as knowledge progression and sequencing of concepts
- Curriculum coverage allows all pupils to access the content and make progress through the curriculum
- The curriculum is at least as ambitious as the standards set by the National Curriculum / external qualifications
- Curriculum principles include the requirements of centrally prescribed aims (but are also fully fit for purpose at local level)
- Reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer (particularly in EYFS and KS1)
- Mathematical fluency and confidence in numeracy are regarded as preconditions of success across the curriculum.

### Possible Questions for Senior Leaders:

*(Note: the questions asked should reflect the context and lines of enquiry for each review – these questions are indicative and should not be treated as a script. Ideally the meeting with leaders should be a 'conversation').*

- Why is this curriculum the right curriculum for a [school name] pupil?
- What are the core principles that underpin your curriculum?
- What have been your 'deliberate actions' to shape the current curriculum? What are your plans for further development?
- How do you know statutory requirements are met? How do you satisfy yourself that the curriculum is broad and balanced in every year group, particularly in KS2? Are the expectations of your curriculum sufficiently high?
- How have you decided what constitutes the 'essential knowledge' that pupils in this school should learn? (probe examples of this in a foundation subject, such as history, geography or art).
- How is learning developed over-time? How have you ensured curriculum sequencing enables pupils to know more, remember more, understand concepts, apply skills and express their learning clearly? *(Do leaders have a clear understanding of the differences between those things? Or do answers tend to conflate them into a generic set of ideas? How precise is leaders understanding?)*
- How do you reassure yourselves about the quality of implementation? How is teaching, learning and achievement monitored and evaluated across a range of subjects? (Explore examples and documentation).
- Where staff are weaker at teaching certain subjects how are they supported to teach those subjects effectively?
- How are contextual safeguarding issues reflected in the curriculum?
- In what ways is the curriculum mindful of the equalities act and protected characteristics?
- How are the touch-stones reflected in your curriculum?

## Guidance: Discussions with Curriculum Leaders (including Work Scrutiny)

The purpose of discussions with curriculum leaders is to gather first-hand evidence, particularly about the **implementation** of the curriculum. Depending on the size and structure of the school, these discussions could also involve one or more senior leaders who carry these responsibilities themselves. Discussions with curriculum leaders will at some point during the review also involve scrutiny of first-hand evidence, including pupils' work books.

The focus of these meetings should be on any **deliberate actions** that curriculum leaders have taken to shape the curriculum offer, including through the lens of any subjects being scrutinised in more depth, and how this is implemented at classroom level.

**The activities should support the reviewer to assess how well:**

- Leaders assure themselves that the school's curriculum intentions are met and the subject curriculum is sufficiently challenging for the pupils it serves. How are leaders monitoring the curriculum?
- The **content, sequencing and progression** in different curriculum subjects is appropriate and secured and whether it demands enough of pupils
- All domains/strands within the subject are learned (as set out in the national curriculum)
- Pupils consolidate their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject
- The progression of pupils learning of knowledge and skills is checked across the year and how this information is used to support further progress
- The school's curriculum offer prepares pupils for the next stage in their education.

These discussions should **not** involve in depth scrutiny of internal school data or tracking information on pupils' achievement, though consideration may be given to any systems or processes that use assessment to support learning (ie: how the school assesses what pupils can remember and can do – and how this information is used to plan further learning).

### Possible Questions for Curriculum Leaders:

Notes:

- *The questions asked should reflect the context and lines of enquiry for each review – these questions are indicative and should not be treated as a script. Ideally the meeting with leaders should be a 'conversation'.*
- *The questions asked of senior leaders will often also apply here (part of the purpose of this meeting is to triangulate what leaders at different levels are saying about the curriculum).*

- What have been your 'deliberate actions' to shape the current curriculum? What are your plans for further development?
- What has your role been in curriculum development? How do your different roles work with each other? *(explore with leaders the 'interface' and 'communication' between different roles – unpick whether there is a 'golden thread' from pupils to subject-leaders to SLT)*
- How do you know statutory requirements are met? How do you satisfy yourself that the curriculum is broad and balanced in every year group, particularly in KS2? Are the expectations of your curriculum sufficiently high?
- How have you decided what constitutes the 'essential knowledge' that pupils in this school should learn? (probe examples of this in a foundation subject, such as history, geography or art). ***\*This should be recorded and later 'tested out' in pupil interviews.***
- How is learning developed over-time? How have you ensured curriculum sequencing enables pupils to know more, remember more, understand concepts, apply skills and express their learning clearly? ***\*Explore evidence fully in relation to this question (curriculum plans, pupils books etc)***
- Talk to me about timetabling, coverage, mapping of subjects – what does this look like in this school?
- How do you monitor to ensure that the curriculum is taught well in all subjects and year groups? Can you demonstrate the impact of your monitoring? ***(review evidence)***
- What are the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of the curriculum across the school?
- How are contextual safeguarding issues reflected in the curriculum?



- What is your role in supporting staff in the subjects they may be weaker at teaching in order to ensure good quality teaching in all subjects?
- In what ways is the curriculum mindful of the equalities act and protected characteristics?
- How are the touch-stones reflected in your curriculum?

### Work Scrutiny: Possible Indicators

*Work through pupils' books to demonstrate progression across a key stage as well as within year groups and sequences of lessons. These indicators are intended to provide guidance but they are not exhaustive of the range of evidence that might be provided from scrutiny of pupils' work.*

Is work building on previous learning	Do books show a depth and breadth of curriculum coverage	Are pupils making progress? (knowing more and remembering more)	Are there opportunities for purposeful practice
<p>Pupils' learning of new knowledge is consistently, coherently and logically sequenced so it can develop incrementally over time.</p> <p>There is a progression from simpler and more concrete concepts to more complex or abstract concepts.</p> <p>Pupils work shows the development of knowledge and skills over time.</p>	<p>The content of the tasks and pupils' work shows that pupils learn a suitably broad range of topics across different subjects.</p> <p>Tasks allow pupils to deepen their knowledge of the subject by requiring thought on their part, understanding of subject-specific concepts and making connections to previous knowledge.</p>	<p>Pupils make strong progress – they acquire knowledge and understanding from their starting points.</p>	<p>Pupils are regularly given opportunities to revisit and practice what they know to deepen and consolidate their understanding.</p> <p>This helps them to recall information effectively, which provides strong foundations for new learning.</p> <p>Misconceptions are addressed and there is evidence in future work to show that pupils have overcome these.</p>

## Guidance: Discussions with Pupils

The purpose of discussions with pupils is to deepen the evidence base around the 'impact' of the curriculum and how effectively pupils feel they are learning across a range of subjects. The focus of the pupil discussion should be related to the outcomes from the subject leaders meeting and require pupils to elaborate on:

- How often particular subjects are being taught (any evidence of narrowing, particularly in KS2?)
- The design and implementation of the curriculum (**through talking about work in their books – how confident are they about this and how meaningful is the work?**)
- How motivated pupils are about different subjects
- Pupils' knowledge and retention of what had been taught in these subjects (including whether they revisit key knowledge and concepts to support them to know more and remember more)
- Pupils' knowledge of domains and strands within a subject discipline (eg, map work as a strand of geography)
- How proficiently pupils understand and can use subject specific vocabulary from previously learned content.
- Additional questioning about the coverage of other subjects not part of the subject foci of the visit
- Pupils' views about their transition from class to class and between key stages.
- Their understanding of equalities

### Possible Questions for Pupils:

Notes:

- *The questions asked should reflect the context and lines of enquiry for each review – these questions are indicative and should not be treated as a script. Ideally the meeting with pupils should be a 'conversation'. Questions should be adapted to reflect the curriculum taught at the school.*

- What do you enjoy learning at school? *(Do pupils readily refer to a range of subjects? Or do they need prompting? Does this indicate some subjects are given less attention than others?)*
- What subjects do you particularly enjoy?
- Are there any subjects that you enjoy less? Why?
- How often do you learn different subjects? *(Unpick any examples, as needed)*
- What does the school do to help you be ready for secondary school?
- What do you know about equality? *(Use 'what would happen if....' scenarios to explore, if necessary).*

Exemplification (following a line of enquiry):

- **I saw in your exercise books you have been learning about [enter content]. I would like to know a bit more about how you are finding this work and what you have learned from it. What can you tell me?**
- How much of the book (related to a topic) have you read so far?
- Do you like it?
- **Do you know why you are reading this book?**
- **Can you see how this work might help you with....?**
- [To other pupils] Can anyone add to [pupil's name] ideas?
- **Tell me more about your use of this book in your lesson. Do you have your own copies of the book? How does it work in the lesson?**
- **Some of the words you are using in your work are very interesting. Tell me a bit about what they mean. (Explore examples)**
- **How are you coping with such challenging words? How does the teacher help you to understand them?**
- **Can you remember any of the new words you have been introduced to?**
- **Could you explain what this sentence means in your book [use example].**
- Would anyone like to add any more ideas?
- **Before using this book, did you look at any other books written at a similar time? Or on a similar theme? How did that help?**
- **Were you given any other background information before this topic?**
- **Can you think of anything that you found out when learning this topic that you did not know before? (prompt, as needed).**
- **What do you do in class that helps you to remember these facts?**

## Guidance: Discussions with Teachers

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The purpose of discussions with teachers is to further triangulate the evidence presented by leaders and consider whether the understanding of teachers reflect the intentions of leaders.

In particular, these discussions should explore:

- The quality of training and CPD linked to the curriculum and how effectively staff have been helped to understand curricular progress.
- How teachers have been supported to teach effectively those subjects they are less confident in teaching.
- Teachers understanding of how to they assess pupils learning across the curriculum.
- How regularly and robustly are they held to account for the quality of practice in subjects across the curriculum other than English and Maths.
- How they ensure the delivery of the curriculum meets the needs of different pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with EAL and SEND.
- How well leaders support teachers by reducing unnecessary workload.

Discussions should also explore the context of any lessons observed during the review, including teachers understanding of how the lesson fits into the long term sequence of learning to support pupils to know more and remember more.

### Possible Questions for Teachers:

*Note:*

- *The questions asked should reflect the context and lines of enquiry for each review – these questions are indicative and should not be treated as a script. Ideally the meeting with teachers should be a ‘conversation’.*

- What role have you played in contributing to the development of the school’s curriculum?
- How have you decided what the ‘important knowledge’ and ‘key vocabulary’ is that pupils should learn?
- How do you make sure that ‘important knowledge’ is embedded before you move on and teach new knowledge?
- What are you teaching your pupils to become ‘experts’ in?
- How do the subjects you teach link to each other? Does learning in one subject support learning in other subjects?
- How carefully sequenced is the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils are exposed to? How have you planned your curriculum so that learning is revisited, deepened and used as the basis for acquiring new learning?
- How do you adapt our curriculum for different groups of pupils, including those with EAL and SEND, so that they make strong progress?
- Why is the curriculum you teach right for the pupils of this school? What opportunities are provided for pupils to gain cultural capital?

*(Where possible – tease out further evidence in relation to the questions above from the lessons and pupils observed during the review)*

- How are you supported by other leaders to teach a wide range of subjects effectively? What professional development have you received?
- How do leaders monitor the quality of your teaching and support you to improve? Is this in all subjects?
- How have leaders taken action to support the reduction of workload? What impact is this having?

## Guidance: Discussions with Governors

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During Full School Reviews and Focused School Reviews, the lead reviewer will typically wish to meet with governors to explore their roles, function, delegated responsibilities and how effectively these are met.

During these discussions, the lead reviewer will be interested in whether governors exercise the same level of strategic oversight and scrutiny of the wider curriculum as would be expected of core subjects.

Governors should be able to show a depth of understanding which is consistent with the views expressed by school leaders about the intent of the school's curriculum. They should be well positioned to hold leaders to account for the quality of the curriculum.

Through records of discussion in LGB minutes and school visits, governors should be able to articulate how they have supported and challenged school leaders to develop a curriculum appropriate for the pupils of the school.

### Possible Questions for Governors:

- How does this school's curriculum fit into the school's vision and values? Why is it the right curriculum for the pupils who attend this school? (Intent)
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of this school's curriculum?
- What does leadership of the curriculum look like? Strengths/weaknesses/gaps of particular subject areas?
- How is the curriculum monitored? How does the leadership team check for effective teaching across the whole curriculum?
- What is your understanding of how learning is organised and the reasons for this? (topics, subjects, blocks of learning etc). What is your understanding of why leaders have made these choices?
- How has the governing body satisfied itself that the curriculum is meeting the needs of all pupils, including SEND pupils and disadvantaged pupils? What **deliberate choices** have been made to ensure this?
- How does the curriculum provide cultural capital for all pupils, though particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds?
- What are the areas for development for the curriculum? What are the plans for curriculum development over the next 12 months?
- How strong is teachers' subject knowledge? Any areas of weakness? (And what CPD will be provided in relation to this?)
- How does our curriculum promote equalities and regard for the protected characteristics?

## Annex 1: Evaluation Tool – Intent and Implementation

### Comparing Intent and Implementation Indicators

<p><b>Top left quadrant: Strong intent, weaker implementation of the curriculum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders focus on planning and paperwork but do not check its implementation or its impact</li> <li>• Subject leaders have complete autonomy. This goes unquestioned by the Headteacher.</li> <li>• Subject leadership does not check the implementation of the curriculum and so the building blocks within units of work or schemes are not secure. This has an adverse impact on curricular implementation</li> <li>• Accountability (knowing what is implemented and learned) is narrowly focused on Year 2 and 6 in primary schools.</li> <li>• There are weaknesses in other non-benchmark years. These are not tackled in a timely way.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Top right quadrant: Strong intent, strong implementation of curriculum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of accountability (knowing what is implemented and learned)</li> <li>• Clear methods to check what pupils know, can do and understand so that the right work is taught/informs teaching (assessment)</li> <li>• Teacher subject knowledge is consistently strong across the school, phase, key stage, and department</li> <li>• Senior leaders make it their business to check implementation of the curriculum – it is not left to chance</li> <li>• Leaders ensure that all groups of pupils can access the curriculum well</li> <li>• In primary schools, leaders understand all the component strands of the national curriculum – e.g. they check that the component parts of the design-technology curriculum happen, including planning, designing, making and evaluating.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bottom left quadrant: Weak intent, weak implementation of the curriculum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability from the Headteacher and subject leadership is poor (knowing what is implemented and learned)</li> <li>• Headteachers do not check implementation of the curriculum or delegate this task effectively.</li> <li>• There is a lack of accountability beyond English and mathematics</li> <li>• Accountability is about qualifications in the core subjects and data rather than the curriculum that is implemented and learned</li> <li>• Headteachers do not prioritise or know whether there are weaknesses in teacher subject knowledge</li> <li>• Little time or emphasis is given to subject leadership to check the impact of teaching</li> <li>• Progression across a key stage is weak</li> <li>• Units of work do not provide depth and this impedes pupils' conceptual understanding and subject specific knowledge over time.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bottom right quadrant: Strong implementation and with weak leadership intent</b></p> <p><i>Note: This was not a feature of any of the primary schools in research carried out by OFSTED</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is little strategic thought or decisions to shape the curriculum on offer beyond the teacher.</li> <li>• Weak intent by Headteacher that impedes pupils' access to curriculum/an aspect of the curriculum</li> <li>• Teachers are left to deliver a curriculum. They have complete autonomy and the impact of teaching is consistently good, but the lack of coherence gets in the way of pupils' progression.</li> </ul>

## Annex 2: Indicators of curriculum effectiveness

Intent	1a	There is a clear and coherent rationale for the curriculum design
	1b	Rationale and aims of the curriculum design are shared across the school and fully understood by all
	1c	Curriculum leaders show understanding of important concepts related to curriculum design, such as knowledge progression and sequencing of concepts
	1d	Curriculum coverage allows all pupils to access the content and make progress through the curriculum
	2a	The curriculum is at least as ambitious as the standards set by the National Curriculum / external qualifications
	2b	Curriculum principles include the requirements of centrally prescribed aims (but are also fully fit for purpose at local level)
	2c	Reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer
	2d	Mathematical fluency and confidence in numeracy are regarded as preconditions of success across the curriculum
Implementation	3a	Subject leaders at all levels have clear roles and responsibilities to carry out their role in curriculum design and delivery
	3b	Subject leaders have the knowledge, expertise and practical skill to design and implement a curriculum
	3c	Leaders at all levels, including governors, regularly review and quality assure the subject to ensure it is implemented sufficiently well
	4a	Leaders ensure ongoing professional development/training is available for staff to ensure curriculum requirements can be met
	4b	Leaders enable curriculum expertise to develop across the school
	5a	Curriculum resources selected, including textbooks, serve the school's curricular intentions and the course of study and enable effective curriculum implementation
	5b	The way the curriculum is planned meets pupils' learning needs
	5c	Curriculum delivery is equitable for all groups and appropriate
	5d	Leaders ensure interventions are appropriately delivered to enhance pupils' capacity to access the full curriculum
	6a	The curriculum has sufficient depth and coverage of knowledge in the subjects
	6b	There is a model of curriculum progression for every subject
	6c	Curriculum mapping ensures sufficient coverage across the subject over time
	7a	Assessment is designed thoughtfully to shape future learning. Assessment is not excessive or onerous



	7b	Assessments are reliable. Teachers' ensure systems to check reliability of assessments in subjects are fully understood by staff
	7c	There is no significant mismatch between the planned and the delivered curriculum
Impact	8	The curriculum is successfully implemented to ensure pupils' progression in knowledge (and associated skills) - pupils successfully 'learn the curriculum'
	9	The curriculum provides parity for all groups of pupils