

## 1. Vision, ethos and values - responsible Lisa Southwood

Acer Academy will accommodate 64 pupils aged between 11-16. It will be for children who have a diagnosis of complex Autism with social and Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Characteristics and behaviours. We have high aspirations for our children and young people, and we aim to provide a high quality, relevant and balanced education that focuses on individual, personal and academic achievement to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn, develop and succeed.

We want to ensure our children and young people become valued and active members of the community whilst making a successful transition to adulthood and an appropriate level of independence within local communities.

In partnership with our pupils and their parents, our school will provide a stimulating environment where:

- The education and development of our pupils is supported in a pleasant, happy, safe and caring environment, where belief in the importance of positive, interpersonal relationships is firmly embedded.
- Physical and emotional health and care are seen as the foundations by which good educational outcomes are achieved.
- Enjoyment, interest, motivation and achievement for all are fostered through success.
- The curriculum has a wide degree of overlap with the best mainstream curricula, in that it covers, through modification where appropriate, an appropriate range of experiences, the same skills, concepts and moral values.
- Each pupil's present educational and personal needs are met as fully as possible whilst preparing them for life-long learning.
- Pupils prepare to become socially included, active participants and responsible contributors to society, achieving as much independence as possible.
- Children and young people are prepared for the transition to adulthood and a level of independence appropriate to their abilities.

Every child or young person will be:

- **Successful** - enjoy learning, make progress, choose pathways that are appropriate to them individually and achieve their potential.
- **Confident** - able to lead safe, healthy, happy and fulfilling lives and have high aspirations.
- **Responsible** - make a positive contribution to our community and society.

### **Acer Academy Ethos**

Acer Academy is committed to fostering an environment where professionalism and high expectations are central to everything we do. We prioritise the well-being and individual needs of our learners and staff, ensuring that everyone feels valued and supported.

We recognise the unique strengths and challenges faced by pupils with autism and SEMH, and we create tailored learning experiences that are sensitive to their specific needs. Our nurturing and understanding approach helps pupils thrive in a safe and inclusive environment, where they are encouraged to reach their full potential, both academically and personally.

At Acer Academy, we believe in the power of individualised support. We focus on identifying and nurturing the talents of each pupil, empowering them to develop their strengths and achieve success at their own pace. By building on their abilities and addressing their needs, we provide the tools for them to exceed expectations and grow as confident individuals.

We are dedicated to supporting life-long learning and personal development, and we aim to inspire our pupils to develop a love of learning. Through patience, care, and tailored strategies, we help our pupils build the skills they need to make a positive contribution to society and achieve their aspirations.

### **Our Mission, Vision & Values**

- Our mission is to work with those who need us the most.

#### **Our values are:**

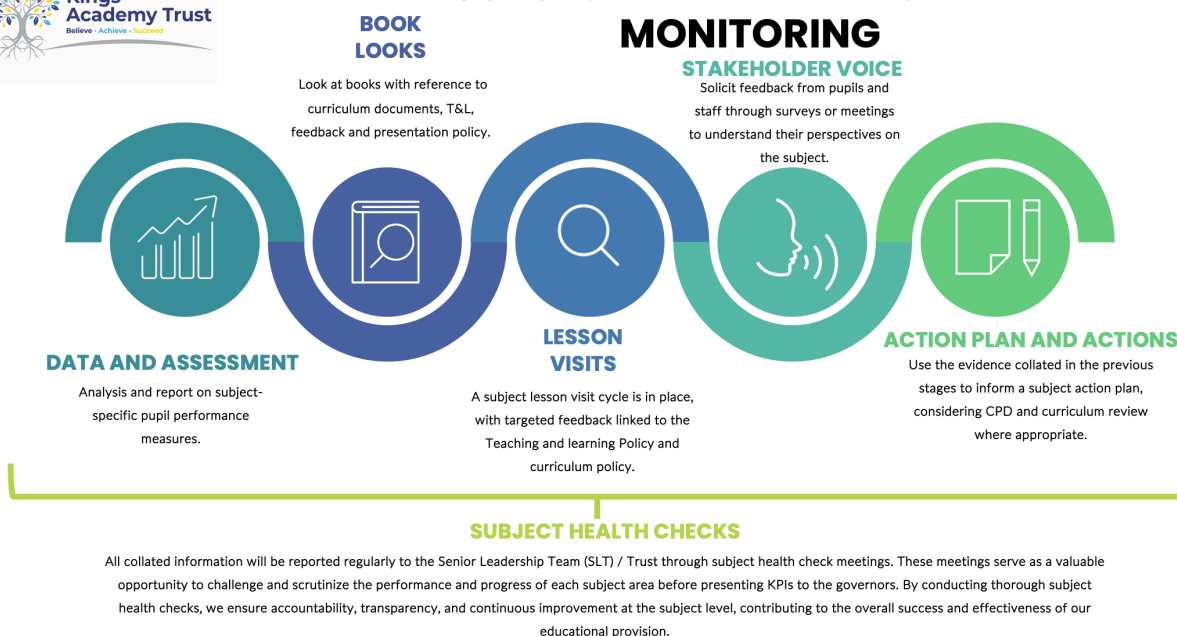
- To be inclusive
- To provide nurturing/caring environments
- For children to feel safe
- To work with integrity and a strong moral compass
- To have the highest expectations and standard

## **2. School development planning cycle**

### School Development Planning Cycle

At Acer Academy, our School Development Plan (SDP) is built upon a comprehensive and cyclical process of data analysis. Each year, the SDP is created after a thorough review of key performance data from the previous academic year. This data is analysed on a termly basis by Senior Leaders and Governors, following a detailed departmental health check carried out by Heads of Department. The process begins with classroom data being reviewed by individual teachers, followed by middle leaders and Heads of Department, and culminates with further analysis by the Senior Leadership Team, Governors, and the Trust Board. Any trends identified throughout this process are flagged and incorporated into the SDP. The SDP is reviewed termly and shared with other stakeholders

## SUBJECT LEAD FEEDBACK AND MONITORING



Additionally, we actively invite external audits and moderation from the Local Authority and Kings Academy Trust to support quality assurance. We are committed to staying at the forefront of educational best practices, ensuring that our strategies are aligned with the latest research, guidance, and policy, and are fully ready for quality assurance processes.

- The trust provide an annual safeguarding audit including SSR
- An external review of safeguarding annually
- Internal Kings behaviour audit annually.
- Bi-annually external review of behaviour
- Termly phonics audits
- PP review after the planning document is reviewed internally.
- Annual SEND review by a NASEN SEND reviewer
- Curriculum subject areas on a cycle – with core at least annually.
- Annual financial audits (through the Trust)

Audits are planned as per the Trust calendar.

### Teacher Responsibilities:

Teachers are directly accountable for the high-quality delivery of the curriculum designed by Heads of Departments (HODs). They are responsible for:

- Delivering the pre-planned curriculum knowledge using adaptive teaching strategies that cater to individual pupil needs, ensuring inclusivity and engagement.
- Following the King's Academy Trust teaching and learning steps to maintain a consistent, evidence-based approach to instruction.
- Regularly assessing and tracking pupil progress towards achieving the ambitious end-of-year and key stage targets set by SLT. This involves inputting accurate data that reflects pupil development, identifying any potential barriers to progress.
- Implementing classroom-level interventions and adjustments to address underperformance or other pupil needs.
- Providing clear explanations to HODs during department health checks regarding why specific pupils may be below, near to, on, or above target and discussing any strategies or support being implemented to improve outcomes.

The teacher feedback cycle can be seen below:



### 1. LESSON VISITS

Lesson visits by SLT and/or subject lead. With targeted feedback linked to the Teaching & Learning Policy.

### 2. LEARNING WALKS

An agreed focus is to communicate to staff, including a description of what success looks like. Feedback is targeted to the focus.

### 3. BOOK LOOKS

SLT and/or subject lead look at books with reference to curriculum documents, T&L, feedback and presentation policy.

## TEACHERS FEEDBACK AND MONITORING CYCLE

### 4. DATA AND ASSESSMENT

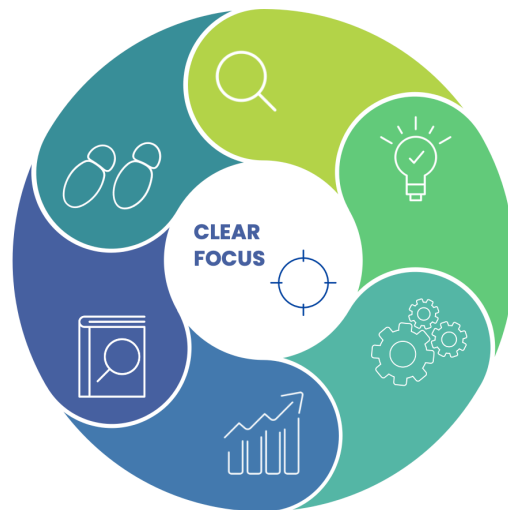
SLT and/or subject lead analyse pupil performance data and other Key Performance Indicators.

### 5. DELIBERATE PRACTICE

Based on the information garnered in stage 1 – 4 an area for further development is identified – linking back to the T & L Policy. Deliberate practice through CPD.

### 6. SELF REFLECTION

Use of IRIS Technology for personal reflection on development areas. A process of Plan, Do, Review. This helps plan the focus for future cycle.



### Subject Lead (Head of Department) Responsibilities:

Subject Leads hold a critical level of accountability for ensuring their department's overall performance aligns with school-wide goals. They are responsible for:

- Developing a well-structured, high-quality curriculum that is ambitious yet achievable for pupils.

- Using CASPA analysis and termly progress data provided by teachers to identify trends, anomalies, and pupil progress rates. They track how many pupils are below, near to, on, or above target, ensuring they understand reasons behind these outcomes.
- Conducting departmental health checks, questioning teachers about pupil progress, and identifying areas where additional support or intervention may be needed.
- Creating and implementing strategies to address identified gaps in performance, whether at the pupil, class, or teacher level.
- Presenting department-level findings to SLT in termly meetings.
- Supporting teachers through professional development or guidance in implementing curriculum changes or interventions effectively.

### **Form Tutors**

- The Form Tutor plays a central role in the daily pastoral care of students, serving as their primary point of contact and advocate. Their responsibilities include:
- Conduct daily form-time check-ins to ensure students are emotionally and mentally prepared for the school day.
- Monitor students' emotional well-being, appearance, and readiness to learn, referring concerns to pastoral leads where necessary.
- Develop a nurturing and supportive relationship with each student in their form group, creating a safe space for them to express concerns or ask for help.
- Reinforce the school's behavior policy (A.C.E.R. values) by embedding the principles of Aspiration, Care, Emotional Regulation, and Readiness to Learn during daily interactions.
- Model and teach self-regulation strategies to help students manage their emotions.
- Monitor attendance, punctuality, and engagement during lessons, working closely with subject teachers to address any barriers to learning.
- Act as the first point of contact for parents, sharing updates about their child's progress, well-being, and any concerns.
- Build positive relationships with families, helping them feel included and supported in their child's education.
- Address any social difficulties or conflicts sensitively, ensuring students feel respected and valued.
- Mediate minor conflicts between students and provide restorative conversations to help them reflect and repair relationships.
- Support students in understanding how their actions impact others and how they can make amends.

At Acer Academy, many classes will follow a primary model and so alongside being a form tutor they will have class teacher responsibilities, teaching a wide range of subjects.

### **Key Principles of Moderation at Acer Academy**

Given the diversity in abilities and needs, moderation should prioritise both personal progress alongside comparison with peers or national benchmarks. Work is evaluated against individualised learning outcomes or EHCP targets, where applicable. Moderation acknowledges alternative ways of demonstrating learning, such as oral presentations, visuals, videos, or practical tasks, especially for students with communication difficulties or sensory processing need and so informs part of SLT's quality assurance with regards to teaching and learning at Acer Academy.

Our rationale for moderation not only confirms the attainment of pupils, but also the consistency of work delivered by the range of staff and how they are meeting the aims of the Acer curriculum. Moderation ensures that all staff have a shared understanding of expectations for students' work, regardless of class or teacher.

### **What Moderation Looks Like in Practice**

Moderation involves collaboration and discussion among teaching staff and senior leaders to review and evaluate pupils' work. The process may include the following steps:

- Teachers select samples of work from a range of students, ensuring representation of different abilities, needs, and stages of progress.
- Samples include not only written work but also alternative evidence (e.g., photographic evidence, annotated teacher observations, or audio recordings of verbal responses).
- Regular moderation meetings are held, often termly or half-termly, led by Heads of Department or senior leaders.
- Teachers bring pupils' work to discuss:
  - Whether the work meets the learning objectives and success criteria.
  - Consistency in marking and feedback across staff.
  - Evidence of adaptive teaching.
- Cross-curricular moderation ensures consistency in expectations across subjects, particularly for transferable skills like literacy, numeracy, and communication.
- Cross-year moderation (e.g., Year 9 and Year 10) ensures continuity of expectations as students transition between key stages.

Moderation may involve external moderation or support, such as:

- Local authority advisors or SEND specialists.
- Partner schools with expertise in autism and SEMH.
- Exam moderation.

Any discrepancies in assessment are discussed, and plans for addressing them are created.

## **3. Strategic objectives**

### **Strategic Objectives for Acer Academy (2025-2026)**

These strategic objectives and KPIs are designed to ensure that Acer Academy can effectively support its students, engage families, and foster a thriving school community in its opening year. Each objective aligns

with the core mission of providing a safe, tailored, and inclusive educational experience for children with complex autism and SEMH.

The objectives for the first year of opening have been compiled into a development plan. This can be accessed by following the link below.

[Development plan](#)

### Adopting the Trust Reporting Schedule and Framework

Acer will adopt the trust-wide reporting schedule and framework to ensure consistency and alignment across all schools. This approach will allow us to systematically evaluate and track performance at both the school and trust levels.

Each school within the trust will provide comprehensive updates through their headteacher's report, which will feed into the trust's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These reports will include key areas such as:

- Attendance rates, including breakdowns for specific groups
- Behaviour and personal development metrics
- National outcomes, covering EYFS, Phonics, KS2, and KS4, with a specific focus on both inclusive data and data excluding SEND
- Leadership and management updates, including stakeholder voice feedback collected within the last six months
- Staff professional development, training, absence, and vacancies
- Compliance updates and any notable achievements

These school-level contributions will be used to populate the trust KPI framework, enabling the trust to maintain a high-level overview of performance, identify trends, and provide targeted support where necessary.

You can see a blank version of the trust KPI framework below, which outlines the key areas we will monitor and report on consistently across all schools.

[Trust KPI](#)

## 5. Leadership and governance – Lisa Southwood

**SLT Structure, role and responsibilities for Acer Academy.**

	Executive Headteacher	Head of School	Assistant Headteacher Behaviour and attitudes	Assistant Headteacher Teaching and Learning	Inclusion Manager
Responsibility for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust Wide Support</li> <li>Strategic oversight of:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of Education,</li> <li>Personal Development,</li> <li>Behaviour and Attitudes,</li> <li>Leadership &amp; Management</li> </ol> </li> <li>DSL</li> <li>School Improvement / SEF / SDP</li> <li>Consultations</li> <li>Recruitment</li> <li>Staff Structure</li> <li>HR</li> <li>Finance</li> <li>Governance structure</li> <li>Organisational management oversight (Timetable, school day, school calendar)</li> <li>Safeguarding</li> <li>ECT Induction Tutor</li> <li>Performance Management &amp; performance management structure</li> <li>Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>Succession planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data</li> <li>Outcomes</li> <li>Progress</li> <li>Behaviours for Learning</li> <li>CPD Overview</li> <li>Autism Lead</li> <li>Site and environment</li> <li>Pupil premium</li> <li>Staff and pupil well-being including workload</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback</li> <li>ECT mentor</li> <li>DSL</li> <li>Designated teacher (LAC / CFC)</li> <li>Quality of teaching</li> <li>Community Outreach</li> <li>Evidence for learning</li> <li>Core curriculum responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal development</li> <li>Behaviour</li> <li>Attendance lead</li> <li>Inclusion</li> <li>Senior mental health lead</li> <li>SENDCO</li> <li>DDSL</li> <li>PSHE curriculum</li> <li>Enrichment lead</li> <li>EVOLVE</li> <li>AP Lead</li> </ul> <p>50% teaching capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation Curriculum responsibility</li> <li>Subject lead of identified subjects</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>SMSC</li> <li>British values</li> <li>Academic intervention lead</li> <li>Phonics leads</li> </ul> <p>60% teaching capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TA Manager</li> <li>DDSL</li> <li>Pastoral lead</li> <li>Parent / school liaison</li> <li>PEPS</li> <li>Pastoral Intervention lead</li> <li>TA CPD</li> <li>Multi-agency liaison</li> <li>Attendance champion</li> </ul>

The above structure will be fully in place once Acer is at full capacity.

### **The Board of Trustees**

The Trust Board is responsible for the effective operation of the Trust and each academy. It provides ongoing challenge and support to the executive team and to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs).

The Trust Board meets on a termly basis plus any extraordinary meetings. There are three standing committees: Finance and Resources, Audit and Risk, and Pupil Outcomes.

The Board fulfils its statutory duties in line with the approved Terms of Reference, although a number of responsibilities are delegated to committees (including LGBs) and the CEO. Further delegation from the CEO to headteachers, executive headteachers and the wider Trust executive takes place in accordance with this Scheme of Delegation.

The operation of the Board is set out in the Trust's Articles of Association, which have been adopted by the members in October 2020. The key responsibilities of the Board are: -

- To establish and oversee the strategic direction of each academy and challenge and monitor its performance.
- To ensure the quality of the educational provision at each academy.
- To be a responsible employer.
- To ensure compliance with all the relevant legislation, including (but not limited to) that relating to the health and safety of its employees, students and visitors.
- To ensure all finances are effectively managed.

- To challenge and monitor the financial governance and strategy of the Trust including through the delegation of certain functions to the Audit and Risk Committee.
- To ensure regular effective communication with Local Governing Bodies via the Chairs Group.
- To approve the admissions policies of individual academies or free school
- To consider proposals for growth of the Trust or change of strategic direction.

## **Standing Committees of the Trust Board**

### **Finance and Resources Committee**

The Committee meets a minimum of four times per year and the three key areas overseen by the Committee are: -

- Financial operations of the Trust.
- Facilities & Estates including Health & Safety. December 2023 5
- Human Resources. Further details can be found in the Committee's Terms of Reference.

### **Audit and Risk Committee**

The committee meets a minimum of three times per year.

The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for overseeing and approving the Trust's programme of internal scrutiny and ensuring that risks are being addressed appropriately. The Committee reports to the Board on the adequacy of the Trust's internal control framework, including financial and non-financial controls and management of risks. The Committee is also responsible for having oversight of the external audit and findings, and advising the Board such that there is an appropriate, reasonable and timely response by the Trust's management team to findings by external auditors.

Further details can be found in the Committee's Terms of Reference.

### **Local Governing Bodies (LGB)**

The Local Governing Bodies (LGB) are committees of the Trust Board; and they are focused on the quality of educational provision and outcomes, tailored to the local context. LGBs have a crucial role to play in developing the local character of the member academies and to act as their ambassadors. LGBs are focused on the improvement of student outcomes and the quality of provision in the best interests of all the students.

The objectives of LGBs are to be accountable to the Trust Board for:

- Ensuring that guiding principles, policies, culture and charitable objectives of the Trust are faithfully upheld, revisited and reinforced in the best interests of the Academy's students.
- Ensuring with the Headteacher that pupil outcomes are optimised.
- Ensuring local processes are in place and are adequate for safety, health and compliance.

- Ensuring the Board is updated as appropriate through agreed mechanisms.
- Ensuring with the Headteacher that the highest standards of student behaviour are achieved and sustained.
- Promoting the culture and ethos of Kings Academy Trust at all times. For a comprehensive description of the operation and authority of the LGBs please see the LGB terms of reference.

### **Local Governing Bodies Remit & Structure**

In order to assist with the discharge of their responsibilities, the Trustees have established either a Local Governing Body (LGB) or Local Governing Body Hub (LGB Hub) for each of its academies as appropriate. Local Governing Bodies are for one school, and LGB Hubs have been created for multiple schools to work together where this has been deemed beneficial.

Each LGB or LGB Hub is a committee of the main Board established pursuant to Articles 100 to 104 (inclusive) of the Articles of Association of the Trust (the 'Articles').

Trustees may review these terms of reference at any time but shall review them at least annually. These terms of reference may only be amended by the Board of Trustees.

Members of the LGB or LGB Hub shall be known as 'governors'

The Trustees have the right to appoint such persons to the LGB or LGB Hub as they shall determine.

The composition of the each LGB or LGB Hub shall be as follows: -

- a. Chair.
- b. Vice Chair.
- c. The Headteacher or Executive Headteacher.
- d. One staff governor.
- e. A minimum one and maximum of two parent governors.
- f. A minimum of three and maximum of five community Governors.

### **Appointment and Removal of Governors**

#### **Staff Governors**

- The Trustees/Directors shall invite nominations from all staff employed under a contract of employment or a contract for services or otherwise engaged to provide services to the school and, where there are any contested posts, shall hold an election by a secret ballot.
- All arrangements for the calling and the conduct of the election and resolution of questions as to whether any person is an eligible candidate shall be determined by the Trustees. The Trustees may delegate the running of the election to the LGB.

#### **Parent Governors**

- Parent governors shall be elected by parents of registered pupils at the school. They must be a parent of, or have parental responsibility for a pupil currently at the school or who has attended previously when they are elected.

- The Trustees shall make all necessary arrangements for, and determine all other matters relating to, an election of the parent governors. The Trustees will delegate the running of the election to the LGB or LGB Hub.
- Where a vacancy for a parent governor is required to be filled by election, the Trustees shall take such steps as are reasonably practical to secure that every person who is known to them to be a parent of a registered pupil at the school past or present is informed of the vacancy and that it is required to be filled by election, informed that they are entitled to stand as a candidate, and vote at the election, and given an opportunity to do so.
- Any election of persons who are to be the parent governors which is contested shall be held by secret ballot. The arrangements made for the election of the parent governors shall provide for every person who is entitled to vote in the election to have an opportunity to do so by post or, if they prefer, by having their ballot paper returned to the school by a registered pupil at the school.
- Where the numbers of parents standing for election is less than the number of vacancies, the governors may appoint a person who is the parent of a registered pupil at the school or, where it is not reasonably practical to do so, a person who is the parent of a registered pupil of another school run by the Trust

#### **Term of Office**

The term of office for any governor is four years. Governors can vote to re-elect any governor at the end of a four-year term of office providing they are still associated with the academy and remain eligible.

#### **Quorum**

The quorum for a meeting of the LGB or LGB Hub , and any vote on any matter at such a meeting, shall be any governors, or where greater, any one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the total number of governors of the LGB at the date of the meeting, which must include at least one governor appointed by the Trust.

#### **Frequency of meetings**

Each LGB or LGB Hub shall meet once per term and shall hold termly committees for: -

- Pupil and Staff Welfare including safeguarding/SCR.
- Standards and Effectiveness including KPI.

#### **The governing body has the following core strategic functions, and establishes the strategic direction by: -**

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school.
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets.
- Meeting statutory duties.

#### **Accountability is ensured by: -**

- Monitoring progress towards targets.
- Monitoring and evaluating school and student progress and attainment.
- Monitoring and evaluating any school action plans or similar.

- Monitoring and evaluating the planning, development and delivery of the curriculum of the school. • Being a source of challenge and support to the Headteacher and Senior leaders.
- Acting as a link governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the Governing Body through the committee structure on the progress on the relevant school priority.
- Listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community;
- Ensuring the school staff have the resources and support they required.

**For governing bodies to carry out their roles effectively, governors must be: -**

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously.
- Acknowledged as the accountable body by school leaders.
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task.
- Prepared to undertake any relevant training to further build knowledge and skills within the governing body.
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

**Committees**

A committee shall be set up for Standards and Effectiveness in order that KPI data can be reviewed with senior leaders. The school(s) need to collect data on pupil progress, pupil attainment, attendance and behaviour and then share this with Governors at least 7 days in advance of the meeting to give Governors time to prepare. The committee will require 3 Governors to attend. Senior leaders can then be challenged and supported over their KPI data.

A committee shall be set up for Staff and Pupil Welfare including safeguarding. 3 Governors will be on this committee (including a parent and staff governor) and meet termly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or nominated deputy). Governors need to be satisfied the Single Central Record is up to date and meets all requirements, that all staff have had appropriate training, and any matters of concern.

**6. Curriculum strategy**

The Trust has a proven track record of managing budgets across a variety of school settings.

A financially viable budget will be set for each academic year which ensures there is an appropriate balance between educational needs and available funding. Key decisions around class sizes, leadership time, levels of support staff etc will be made in line with the Trust's key metrics that are being developed for the school. The Trust uses the IMP budget management system and is currently setting up the ICFP (Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning) module which will assist with the implementation of key metrics.

Staff will only be appointed once affordability is known, and control measures are in place to ensure budget overspends cannot take place. The Trust is also developing a hub model of school organisation where all of the special schools within the Trust will be led by an executive head teacher, with efficient and cost-effective leadership teams for each establishment.

## **Curriculum Design**

At Acer Academy, our curriculum is built on guiding principles designed to ensure that every pupil thrives academically, socially, and emotionally. These principles align with our motto: Successful – Confident – Responsible.

We emphasise discrete teaching within a highly structured timetable to provide pupils with the security and routine essential for meeting their autism needs. This structure enables them to feel safe, supported, and ready to engage with learning. Independence and preparation for the future are at the heart of our approach. Qualification pathways are carefully chosen to equip pupils with the skills and knowledge needed for the world of work, ensuring they leave us ready to contribute meaningfully to society.

Enhancements to the curriculum, such as relevant trips, visits, and extracurricular activities, are vital. These opportunities enable pupils to apply their learning in real-world contexts, develop social skills, and broaden their horizons. We aim to strike a balance between a pre-planned, mapped-out enhancement cycle—ensuring pupils experience a wide range of opportunities at each key stage—and responding to unique, timely events, such as attending a curriculum-linked theatre production.

The curriculum policy also details subject allocations, ensuring clarity and consistency in how time is distributed across key learning areas. For a more detailed outline of our curriculum principles and structure, please refer to the full document, accessible [here](#).

## **Curriculum Policy**

### **Literacy and numeracy**

Our approach to English and Maths reflects the wider curriculum aims and principles, ensuring coherence with all subjects across the school. Key design aspects include:

- Learning is planned in a logical order, building on prior knowledge to ensure a clear progression of skills. Curriculum maps ensure consistency and prevent gaps in learning.
- Clearly defined expectations outline what pupils need to know and do at each stage, with key vocabulary identified to support understanding and communication.
- Content is divided into manageable sections to support cognitive load and ensure deep understanding, all building toward specific, measurable goals.
- Assessments are directly linked to the curriculum, measuring progress against intended knowledge and skills. Teachers use backward and forward links to adapt teaching based on prior and future learning.
- Regular revisiting of key knowledge reinforces learning, and common misconceptions are identified to support non-specialist teachers and deepen pupil understanding.

- Learning connects to wider aims, including cultural relevance, local context, and SMSC development, ensuring students grow academically, socially, and morally.

Acer's English curriculum will follow the same principles as Oakwood Academy, our other secondary special school.

The English curriculum focuses on:

- Fostering an enduring love of language and literature through high-quality stimulus.
- Supporting pupils to become active readers, writers, and communicators.
- Developing practical and functional skills for life.
- Encouraging pupils to express their views and opinions with confidence, both orally and in writing.
- Valuing and celebrating diversity in culture and language.

The curriculum emphasises breadth and depth, with reading, writing, and communication skills at its core. Live feedback and reflective tools, such as purple polishing pens, are used to engage pupils and improve their work. Cross-curricular links and SMSC opportunities ensure the English curriculum is enriching, inclusive, and meaningful for all learners.

An Acer English policy is available below in draft format. This draft has been informed by best practice and will be finalised once the subject lead is in place, ensuring it reflects the specific needs and expertise within our school.

### [Draft English Policy](#)

At Acer Academy, we believe that developing literacy is not confined to discrete English lessons; it is a fundamental focus that must be embedded in all aspects of school life. Literacy skills—reading, writing, speaking, and listening—are essential for pupils to access the curriculum, communicate effectively, and succeed in their academic and personal lives.

This draft literacy policy outlines how we aim to develop pupils' literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum. It provides a structured framework for supporting pupils in building the confidence and competence they need to thrive, ensuring that every teacher takes responsibility for promoting literacy within their subject area. By embedding literacy in all aspects of school life, we ensure pupils are equipped with the tools they need to engage fully with learning and the world beyond the classroom.

### [Draft Literacy Policy](#)

At Acer Academy, our approach to Mathematics will follow the same planning principles as English. Across the trust, we will subscribe to the White Rose Maths scheme.

We have chosen White Rose Maths because we believe it is a well-sequenced and progressive scheme that develops granular knowledge, building pupils' understanding over time. The carefully prepared resources will enable teachers to focus on how they teach rather than what they teach, ensuring high-quality instruction.

Additionally, the scheme includes stretch and adapt tasks, providing differentiated support for all learners, regardless of their starting points. This will ensure that every pupil is challenged appropriately while receiving the support they need to succeed.

### [Draft Maths policy](#)

Acer's approach to Catch up can be found in the catch up policy.

### [Catch Up policy here](#)

At Acer Academy we acknowledge that our pupils will require enrichment opportunities to help them fully succeed as lifelong learners in the wider world. The high levels of deprivation within the school population mean that it will be of critical importance to have strategically planned visits, trips, outdoor learning, theme days and social opportunities. These are essential to achieving our vision of our pupils becoming active, confident members of society. We will provide pupils with the opportunities that may not be afforded to them outside of school. The school will be a hub for supporting other schools and parents, reducing the deprivation risk factors to the pupils. KAT have detailed plans for the financial viability of this and we can demonstrate that over a 5-year period it is both sustainable and viable. The budget is balanced and KAT has a consistent record of providing a financially sound budget.

Much of our enrichment programme will be devised using the pupils' EHCPs as guidance. Within the Trust schools, there is an active senior leader who develops a curriculum enhancement timetable to ensure all pupils and subjects receive a fair coverage of enrichment, these activities are usually completed within the school day and have clear curriculum links.

The enrichment programme will differ from KS3 into KS4.

#### KS3

Enrichment will focus on supporting pupils' access to subject specific learning, re-engaging pupils in school where they may have had a negative experience in the past.

#### KS4

The focus of enrichment in KS4 will surround life skills and the world of work. Within our current Trust schools, there are wide ranging work experience opportunities and tasters within different KS5 settings. We invite a range of public speakers in. Where pupils require further bespoke support we work with the

local authority to find a suitable alternative provision for our pupils which best suits their needs and gives them the highest possible path to success after leaving our setting aged 16.

#### After-school provision

We will also offer an after-school club programme as 'limited access to holiday clubs and after-school facilities is having a direct impact on children with SEND.' (The Childhood Trust, 2023). This matches our inclusive and aspirational ethos that all children should have equal opportunities regardless of their SEND or financial needs. Our after school club offer will match the needs of our pupils and so is flexible at the moment.

## ICT to improve learning

### Use of ICT in School

Acer Academy will leverage a wide range of ICT solutions to enhance learning outcomes and streamline school operations. In collaboration with Dataspire, we aim to create meaningful and effective IT systems that meet the needs of both staff and students.

### Key ICT Resources provided by Dataspire:

- **Wireless Screen Mirroring:** To facilitate interactive and dynamic teaching methods.
- **Laptops for Each Pupil:** Ensuring every student has access to digital learning resources.
- **iPads for Pupils:** Supporting flexible and creative learning opportunities.
- **Staff Devices:** Provision of computers, laptops, and iPads to enhance teaching and administrative efficiency.
- **Music Creation and Editing Software:** Enabling students to explore creative expressions in music.
- **Video Production and Editing Software:** Providing tools for multimedia learning and projects.

### ICT for Supporting Autistic Students

As a fully inclusive school tailored to the needs of autistic students, Acer Academy will use ICT as a powerful tool to address specific challenges and enhance accessibility. According to The National Autistic Society, autistic children may exhibit the following:

- Social communication and interaction challenges.
- Repetitive and restrictive behaviours.
- Sensory sensitivities (light, sound, taste, or touch).
- Highly focused interests and hobbies.
- Extreme anxiety.
- Meltdowns and shutdowns.

Therefore, our ICT strategy is designed to:

- **Support Sensory Needs:** Use tools like noise-cancelling headphones and apps to create calming environments. Create purposeful sensory rooms which calm and soothe sensory dysregulation, as well as provided an immersive learning opportunity
- **Facilitate Learning:** Incorporate educational programs such as Reading Solutions and Times Tables Rockstars to engage students in a fun and interactive way.
- **Offer Choice and Rewards:** Use ICT as a motivating tool for rewards and activities aligned with students' interests.

- Remove Barriers to Learning: Implement assistive technologies such as symbol-based software (e.g., Widge) and text-to-speech functions to help students access and engage with the curriculum at higher levels.

### **Provision for SEND at Acer Academy**

At Acer Academy, we aim to be committed to providing exceptional support for learners with SEND, including those with complex autism and SEMH needs. Our approach to provision is individualised, ensuring that each student's unique challenges and strengths are addressed through a tailored support plan. For students with an EHCP, we offer specialised teaching strategies such as structured routines, visual aids, and sensory-friendly spaces to support their learning and well-being. Additionally, we incorporate therapeutic interventions, such as social skills training and emotional regulation support, to help students with SEMH needs navigate their interactions and manage their emotions effectively. The Academy ensures that trained staff members, including teaching assistants and specialist educators, provide consistent, one-to-one support, while also making adjustments to the learning environment to reduce anxiety and support sensory needs. By offering a nurturing, inclusive atmosphere, Acer Academy strives to empower SEND learners to reach their full potential and thrive both academically and personally.

Our SEND policy can be seen below

[SEND policy](#)

Some examples of our adaptation to meet the SEND needs of our students include:

Set work/choose times

Sensory breaks including time outside

Bespoke behaviour trackers

Visual behaviour prompts

Zones of regulation curriculum taught daily

Planned social skills opportunities

Use of sensory rooms

Mental health and behaviour check ins/journaling

Pastoral interventions

Adapted curriculum

**English as an Additional Language (EAL) at Acer Academy.**

At Acer Academy, we will strive to create an inclusive, supportive, and enriching environment for all students, with a specific focus on ensuring that students learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) have the necessary skills, resources, and opportunities to succeed academically, socially, and personally. Our EAL strategy will aim to integrate language development with curriculum learning while respecting the diversity and cultural backgrounds of our students. At Acer Academy, we are committed to fostering a culturally inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse backgrounds of our students.

### **Resources available at Acer for EAL learners**

1. **Visual Supports:** Using visual aids such as picture schedules, communication boards, symbol-based materials to support understanding of both language and routines. These can help students navigate classroom activities and social situations.
2. **Language Learning Apps and Software:** Incorporating language acquisition apps designed for EAL learners, which may include interactive activities and games that also help with social skills development. For example, apps that use visual prompts and storytelling to support both language and emotional expression.
3. **Social Stories and Role-Playing Materials:** Social stories in multiple languages and role-playing resources to help EAL learners with ASD understand social situations, appropriate behaviours, and how to interact with peers. These stories can be tailored to address both social and emotional challenges.
4. **Peer Buddies or Mentoring Systems:** Pairing EAL learners with peer buddies to help bridge language gaps.
5. **Adapted Curriculum Resources:** Providing curriculum materials that are simplified and adapted to the language level of the EAL learners. This may include translated worksheets, vocabulary lists, and multimedia resources that help students access content in a more manageable way.

### **[Draft EAL policy](#)**

### **Looked After Children**

Acer Academy will be committed to providing an inclusive and nurturing learning environment that ensures the success and well-being of all students, particularly those who are looked after children (LAC). Our curriculum strategy will be designed to address the unique needs of these young people, promoting their academic, social, and emotional development. By fostering a sense of belonging, resilience, and self-confidence, we will aim to close achievement gaps and support their aspirations. Through personalized learning pathways, strong pastoral care, and collaboration with carers, families, and external agencies, we will strive to empower each child to reach their full potential and thrive both within and beyond the school community. Please see the LAC policy below.

### **[LAC Policy](#)**

## **7. Quality of teaching**

At Acer Academy, we have clear pedagogical approaches grounded in research and tailored specifically to meet the needs of our pupils with ASD and SEMH. Routine and structure form the cornerstone of our approach to teaching and learning, providing our students with the stability they need to engage and learn effectively.

Our Teaching and Learning Policy outlines in depth the advocated approaches we expect to see in lessons at Acer. This policy ensures consistency in delivery and aligns with our commitment to high-quality education. The Teaching and Learning Policy can be accessed here:

[Teaching & Learning Policy](#)

As part of our trust's commitment to maintaining a research-informed approach to pedagogy, we subscribe to Step Lab. Step Lab is a cutting-edge tool that prioritises research-based pedagogy. This platform is accessible to all staff.

Step Lab breaks down our teaching and learning strategies into manageable, actionable chunks. During Teaching and Learning CPD sessions, staff are directed to explore specific approaches based on whole-school priorities or, following the first performance management cycle, to access bespoke chapters aligned with their personal feedback.

The program includes video examples, enabling teaching colleagues to see the advocated approaches being delivered in real-life contexts. Over time, these subscription videos will be replaced with our own generated content, showcasing techniques successfully embedded at Acer Academy. This will not only illustrate how effectively these techniques can be applied within our setting but will also allow us to share best practice tailored to the needs of our pupils.

### **Curriculum Structure to Support Students SEND needs.**

Each day includes a dedicated intervention slot that incorporates *Zones of Regulation*, EHCP-based interventions, mindfulness activities, and sensory time. This part of the day is intentionally low-demand, offering pupils the opportunity to regulate and recalibrate. It creates a safe space for reflection, addressing any challenges or issues from the day, so pupils are ready to begin the next day with a fresh and positive mindset.

Daily reflections encourage pupils to consider the challenges they faced, the successes they achieved, and the appropriateness of their responses. This promotes self-awareness and helps pupils develop strategies to manage similar situations more effectively in the future.

A *TEACCH* approach is embedded into our pedagogy to minimise unexpected activities that could dysregulate pupils. This structured approach ensures predictability, enabling pupils to focus on their learning without unnecessary anxiety or distractions.

Lessons are designed to be chunked into manageable parts, ensuring that pupils can experience regular success throughout the day. This avoids overly long tasks, which may become overwhelming and act as a barrier to progress. By breaking learning into smaller, achievable steps, we help build pupils' confidence and maintain engagement.

### **Improving the Quality of Teaching at Acer Academy**

At Acer Academy, improving the quality of teaching is a central priority, underpinned by a comprehensive approach to staff development and support. Our strategies are grounded in research and tailored to meet the unique needs of our pupils with ASD and SEMH, ensuring consistency and effectiveness in classroom delivery.

We achieve this through robust CPD programmes, designed to address whole-school priorities and individual staff development needs. CPD at Acer is aligned with our Teaching and Learning Policy and provides staff with access to Step Lab, a platform that translates research-based pedagogy into actionable strategies.

For further details, refer to our CPD Policy

#### [CPD Policy](#)

Regular monitoring of teaching practice is conducted through lesson observations, learning walks, and data analysis to ensure high standards are maintained. Feedback from these activities informs personalised CPD plans, performance management cycles, and the allocation of bespoke support where needed. Over time, this reflective and collaborative approach builds a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring all pupils at Acer benefit from high-quality teaching that meets their diverse needs.

### **Monitoring Practice at Acer Academy**

At Acer Academy, monitoring practice is an integral part of ensuring high-quality teaching and learning. Through a supportive and developmental approach, we aim to provide teachers with constructive feedback to celebrate strengths and identify areas for growth. This process is designed to enhance professional practice while minimising unnecessary workload.

Key aspects of monitoring include lesson observations, learning walks, and regular reviews of pupil outcomes. Observations are conducted with a focus on collaboration and professional development, ensuring teachers feel supported in refining their techniques. Feedback is timely, actionable, and aligned with school and trust priorities to foster continuous improvement.

Monitoring outcomes are used to inform performance management and CPD planning, enabling staff to access targeted support and training opportunities. Additionally, our use of Step Lab ensures that staff have access to research-based strategies and video exemplars to address specific areas of development.

For further details on our approach to teacher monitoring and appraisal, please refer to our Teacher Appraisal Policy.

[Appraisal Policy](#)

## 8. Quality of learning – Amanda Ellis

The expectation around behaviour for learning at Acer tie in with the Acer behaviour policy which is referenced later in the document.

We also apply many of the Steplab approaches to high quality teaching and learning to ensure that pupils are ready to learn.

These strategies include:

- Gaining and securing attention:
- Structured entry to the classroom with a greeting from the teacher.
- Quick start from pupils with 'Do it now' task up in class and ready to be accessed.
- Tracking the speaker (where pupils needs do not prohibit this)
- Empty hands when the cue is given (where pupils SEND needs allow - some children will need fidget toys).
- Joining in with choral responses (where pupils needs do not prohibit this, a total communication approach will be used)
- Teacher scanning for confirmation of met expectation. With eye contact for the pupil (where pupils needs do not prohibit this)
- Pupils working to visible and narrated time expectations to provide structure.
- Specify action and time limit.
- Use a consistent symbol to indicate to students it is time to start.
- Positively narrate tasks starts to recognise students who have begun.
- Prime students to be considerate to others before showing students modelled examples.
- Use question, pause, name to encourage all students to have thinking time before a student is selected to answer.
- Let nervous speakers know in advance when you will be calling on them to answer so that they can prepare there response in advance with their preferred communication model.

We have a comprehensive approach to assessment, tracking, and reporting, ensuring every pupil's progress is accurately monitored and supported. This is devised from the successful approaches used in our other academies. Key elements include:

- **Baseline Testing:** Conducted on entry and at mid-year or phase transitions to establish accurate starting points for each pupil.
- **Tracking Systems:** A centralised data system ensures precise pupil-level tracking, enabling staff to monitor progress effectively and identify trends.
- **Standards and Targets:** Standards are set based on realistic yet challenging expectations, informed by baseline data, EHCP outcomes, and aspirational goals – we use Caspa as a tool to see how other children with similar need are performing nationally.
- **Target-Setting Process:** Individualised targets are reviewed regularly to reflect pupil progress.
- **Assessment, Recording, and Reporting:** Regular assessment cycles inform teaching and learning, with progress shared with parents through termly reports, meetings, and annual reviews.

Further information can be found in our assessment policy below

[Assessment policy](#) Draft

## 6. Staffing

### **General Principles**

Acer's education staffing plan aims to be centered around the principle of ensuring a diverse, highly skilled, and motivated workforce that fosters an inclusive and dynamic learning environment. We prioritise recruiting teachers and support staff who are not only experts in their fields but also passionate about advancing student outcomes through innovative teaching practices. Emphasis is placed on ongoing professional development, enabling staff to stay ahead of educational trends and technology. Additionally, we are committed to equitable staffing practices that reflect the diverse needs of students and communities, ensuring that all educators have the support they need to succeed and contribute to a positive, collaborative school culture.

### **Training and Development**

Our staff training and development plan focuses on both professional and personal growth, offering a variety of learning opportunities through workshops, in house training, peer support, external training from other schools and also external qualification programmes such as NPQs. We advocate a collaborative learning environment where educators are encouraged to share best practices, stay updated on the latest teaching methodologies, and enhance their subject expertise. Regular performance management and

feedback mechanisms ensure that each staff member's growth is aligned with our academy's values and educational goals, fostering a culture of excellence and innovation in the classroom.

INSET days and staff meetings early in the term will be targeted to focus upon.

Welcome,

- Introductions and who's who.
- Establishing the school ethos and vision.
- A detailed building tour, including fire exits, assembly points, and key areas (e.g., first aid room, sensory spaces).
- Explanation of structure of the day (e.g., timings, routines, breaks, and transitions).
- Introduction to key systems

Safeguarding and Child Protection

- Statutory safeguarding training (including KCSIE updates).
- Understanding Prevent Duty, peer-on-peer abuse, and reporting concerns.
- Introduction to the DSL and DDSL – sharing of the in school recording system (CPOMS)

Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures

- Fire safety training, including evacuation procedures and fire marshal roles.
- Lockdown procedures and drills.
- First aid training and managing medical needs (e.g., EpiPens, asthma, diabetes).
- Manual handling (if applicable for students or resources).

Pupils' Primary Areas of Need

- Training on pupils' specific needs
- Familiarisation with therapies and interventions (e.g., Zones of Regulation, TEACCH, sensory integration).

Advocated Teaching and Learning Approaches

- Introduction to the school's teaching and learning policy and frameworks including Steplab access
- Strategies for differentiation and scaffolding.
- Embedding inclusive practices in the classroom.

Policy and Procedure Awareness

- Overview of key policies (e.g., behavior, attendance, marking and feedback).

- Expectations for staff conduct, communication, and accountability.
- Whistleblowing and grievance procedures.

### **IT and Systems Training**

- Training on the school's IT infrastructure, including:
  - MIS - Arbour
  - Behavior tracking tools – Behaviur Watch
  - Platforms for teaching and learning

### **Behavior Management and Well-Being**

- Induction on the behavior policy and positive reinforcement strategies.
- Techniques for managing challenging behaviors or de-escalation.
- Staff well-being and workload management.

### **Performance Management**

At Acer Academy, staff performance management will be a key component of our commitment to continuous improvement and educational excellence. Our performance management system will be designed to support staff in achieving their full potential while aligning individual targets with the academy's broader educational objectives. Regular performance reviews will be conducted, combining self-assessments, peer feedback, and performance manager evaluations to provide a comprehensive view of each member of staff's strengths and areas for growth. We will also encourage ongoing feedback and open communication to foster a culture of accountability, collaboration, and professional growth. By focusing on constructive performance management, Acer Academy ensures that our staff remains motivated, engaged, and well-equipped to deliver high-quality education to our students.

### **Terms and conditions**

At Acer Academy, our staff terms and conditions will be designed to foster a supportive and equitable work environment that prioritises the well-being and professional satisfaction of all employees. We will offer opportunities for career advancement. Clear guidelines for work hours, leave policies, and professional conduct will ensure a transparent and fair workplace, while our commitment to work-life balance will be reflected in flexible scheduling options where possible. In addition, we will provide a robust framework for performance management, where staff are regularly assessed and offered opportunities for feedback and development. By maintaining fair and clear terms and conditions, Acer Academy will aim

to attract and retain dedicated staff who are motivated to contribute to the success and growth of our students.

## **10. School organization**

### The school year and day

Acer Academy will follow the same calendar as all schools in Kings Academy Trust. See trust calendar below. Acer will fall in line with other schools in the trust with an earlier finish on a Friday. See example KS3 and KS4 timetables below.

### [Example Trust Calendar](#)

Form time begins at 8.45 daily and includes a “soft landing” for pupils which includes access to sensory time, quiet choose, reading for pleasure and compulsory registration and the ordering of school meals.

See example timetable below.

### School Day Timings

	8.45	9.15	10.00	10.45	11.00	11.45	12.15	12.55	1.40	2.25	3.15 – 3.30pm
Monday	Form time	Maths	English	Break	Science	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Spanish	PE	PE	Form time/reflection
Tuesday	Form time	English	Maths	Break	Humanities	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Life skills	Life Skills	Music	Form time/reflection
Wednesd	Form time	Maths	English	Break	Science	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Personal Development	Food Studies	Food Studies	Form time/reflection
Thursday	Form time	English	Maths	Break	Humanities	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Personal Development	Art	RE	Form time/reflection
Friday	Form time	English	Science	break	Science	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Computing	Personal Development		

Mon to Thurs 8.45am – 3.30pm (6 hours 45mins) Total = 27hours      27 hours + 5 hours 40 mins = 32hours 40 mins

Friday – 8.45am – 2.25pm (5 hours 40 mins)

**Total hours = 32 hours 40mins**

### Example KS4 timetable

	8.45	9.15	10.00	10.45	11.00	11.45	12.15	12.55	1.40	2.25	3.15 – 3.30pm
Monday	Form time	Maths	English	Break	Science	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Personal Development (includes RSE and citizenship)	PE	PE	Form time/reflection
Tuesday	Form time	English	Maths	Break	Careers	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	RE	Options	Options	Form time/reflection
Wednesday	Form time	Maths	English	Break	Science	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Options	Options	Options	Form time/reflection
Thursday	Form time	English	Maths	Break	Computing	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Life Skills	Life Skills	Science	Form time/reflection
Friday	Form time	English	Science	break	Science	Bespoke Intervention e.g. <u>ZofR/RARPA</u>	Lunch	Personal Development (includes RSE and citizenship)	Enrichment		

Acer Academy will offer options in at least one subject from each of these areas:

- arts
- design and technology
- humanities
- modern foreign languages

*Please note, this KS4 timetable is subject to change depending on the needs of the cohort in KS3 and will be reviewed during the phased opening of our school.*



## Eating arrangements

Acer has created a purpose built kitchen and canteen area for pupils to eat their lunch on site. Pupils can choose between a school dinner, or bring in a packed lunch. The canteen area has been designed for “family service” – where a staff member will sit with the pupils in a canteen booth and support social interaction during meal time. All meals will be pre-ordered daily so pupils are aware of their dinner choices. For pupils with PICA or ARFID we will work with the student and family to provide alternatives to support pupils’ overall health and general wellbeing. Similarly, for pupils who find the canteen to be an overwhelming environment, there are other spaces available for pupils to eat in a quieter, or less stimulating room supported by a staff member and/or another small group of pupils.

During the phased opening stage, we predict that pupils will eat together in the canteen, however as numbers grow we may swap to split lunches whereby some pupils have their outside break first and sit down meal second, and vice versa.

## Student organisation/settings/groupings

As at other schools within our Trust, we envisage needing separate pathways depending on the needs of the pupils. The pupils will be broadly working around age related expectations, but we do expect the need for adaptive teaching and differentiation to the curriculum due to the complexities of the pupils. Where possible, we wish to group pupils within their year group expectations although as we remain an inclusive setting, if pupils’ needs require them to be grouped on area of need we will support this if necessary. Please see the T&L policy and Catch up Policy for further information.

## **11. Student support services**

### Behaviour for learning and conduct outside the classroom

The behaviour management policy and pastoral arrangements will work together, hand-in-glove. Throughout Kings Academy Trust we use Paul Dix’s philosophy of relational practise. Acer Academy will be no different. The Head of School will work with a Paul Dix consultant to create a bespoke package for the complex needs of our pupils.

When dealing with misbehaviour from pupils with SEND, we consider whether their SEND has contributed to their misbehaviour and whether it's appropriate to sanction them.

Our legal duties for enforcing behaviour sanctions in school include:

- Taking reasonable steps to avoid causing any substantial disadvantage to a disabled pupil caused by the school’s policies or practices (Equality Act 2010)
- Using your best endeavours to meet the needs of pupils with SEND (Children and Families Act 2014)

- If a pupil has an EHC plan, the provisions set out in that plan must be secured and the school must co-operate with the LA and other bodies

To determine if it is lawful to sanction a pupil with SEND, consider whether the pupil:

- Understood the rule or instruction
- Was unable to act differently at this time as a result of their SEND
- Has a tendency to act aggressively due to their SEND

### **Behaviour and Attendance**

Behaviour is communication and autistic children and those with SLCN may communicate differently through their behaviour than their mainstream peers. This could include extreme or significant behaviours such as:

- Self-harming behaviours
- Smearing
- Obsessive and repetitive behaviours
- Extreme anxiety – causing shutdowns/ verbal & physical stimming/ meltdowns
- Difficulty transitioning out of feelings if distress
- Feeling emotions more acutely than neurotypical children
- Physical expressions in place of verbal communication e.g. hitting or throwing

(National Autistic Society)

The behaviour policy for Acer Academy will be designed to foster self-regulation, reflection and emotional control. It will work **with** their autism and will not punish them for their autistic behaviour. It creates a culture of acceptance. Zones of Regulation will be used to encourage children to identify what their feelings are and to initiate the appropriate responses to remain in, or work through, a particular zone. Staff training will be crucial and will be provided through KAT, drawing on experts from other schools.

### **[Behaviour Policy](#)**

#### **Welfare and support arrangements**

As discussed above Acer Academy will have a full pastoral team including of: TAs and Learning Mentors. A more senior member of staff will oversee this and coordinate all welfare and pastoral support arrangements. KAT also employs a Director of Safeguarding who works across the Trust schools and manages other safeguarding and pastoral staff within each setting. This model has served as an excellent measure for ensuring rigour when it comes to safeguarding our pupils. Acer Academy will employ both a Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Lead who will work with our Director of Safeguarding. All staff will receive regular safeguarding training and will feel confident in reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL/DDSL.

All staff receive up to date information from the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KSIE,2024) document. We have used this information to ensure that we as a school provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge. Including, but not limited to:

- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

At Acer, and throughout Kings Academy Trust, we have a robust method of tracking outcomes, ensuring every child is reaching or exceeding their educational and social targets.

We will offer a range of pastoral interventions to meet the pupils needs and these will be tracked using SDQs and MOATS. We also use RARPA to track a range of skills which pupils need further support with, outside of the academic curriculum offer.

Due to the increased vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND, we recognise the importance of providing the pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to safeguard themselves and what to do if they feel worried about something they have witnessed/been done to them. Our PSHE curriculum will be age and stage appropriate, including compulsory Relationships Education and online safety. Our Personal Development curriculum ensures pupils are regularly taught how to stay safe both in and outside of the home, including online.

One of the key roles of the Local Governing Body is to ensure that we are compliant with all statutory requirements. They need to check that all Health and Safety checks have been completed to ensure the buildings are safe. Through Pupil and Staff Welfare Committee they need to check that DBS's are in place for all staff and that staff have all undertaken statutory annual safeguarding training and that fire drills and Health and Safety checks have been carried out. At Standards and Effectiveness Committee, they need to check data to ensure that pupils are making the progress that they should and are attaining well. They will scrutinise KPI data termly. Teaching and Learning Walks will enable them to go into classrooms, look at books with senior staff and middle leaders to ensure standards are being maintained to a high level.

### Attendance

Attendance is overseen primarily by our pastoral team, but as a Trust we use further support from EWO services and other services provided through Salford LA. Our Trust policies outline expectations for students, parents, and staff regarding attendance, punctuality, and reporting absences. Arbor MIS will be used to monitor and track daily attendance, with a first-day response initiated by the office team. Weekly attendance will be monitored by the senior pastoral lead and a member of SLT and reported on during the weekly SLT meeting. Intervention and support will be provided at the earliest opportunity through the pastoral team.

## Transition arrangements

For students joining the school we will follow the procedures laid out in our transition policy.

This includes:

- home visits
- shared video introductions
- a staggered transition program.
- clear communication channels with families
- social and emotional support
- early assessment to identify the right curriculum pathway.
- in-school information sharing so all stakeholders are aware of pupils' needs.

## Student numbers

Please see the chart below indicating expected numbers from opening through to year when school will be full

	Year of opening	+1	+2	+3	+4
Year 7	13	13	12	13	13
Year 8	13	13	13	12	13
Year 9	13	13	13	13	12
Year 10		13	13	13	13
Year 11			13	13	13
Year 12					
Year 13					
Totals	39	52	64	64	64

## **12. Working with others \_ Catherine McLaughlin**

### Working with Others: Including Parents and Multi-Agency Support

Acer Academy is dedicated to fostering strong partnerships with families and a wide range of external agencies to ensure the holistic development, safety, and well-being of all students. Our collaborative approach ensures that students receive comprehensive support tailored to their individual needs, both academically and pastorally.

## Collaboration with Parents and Families

We believe that parents and carers are integral to their child's educational success. To this end, Acer Academy will:

- Maintain regular and open communication with families through meetings, newsletters, and digital platforms.
- Provide opportunities for parents to engage in their child's learning journey through workshops, parent evenings, and collaborative goal-setting sessions.
- Offer access to support services and resources to empower families in supporting their child's development.

Our strong pastoral team will aid parents/carers by directing them to support services whenever necessary. This is discussed at further length in the Acer behavior policy.

## Multi-Agency Partnerships

Multi-Agency collaboration is paramount as a safeguarding method, but adding to this Acer Academy will work with other external agencies to create the best possible educational outcomes and to provide further specialist support. These partnerships include:

### Local authority

Local Authority SEN Team: To ensure that students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate support and resources. Kings Academy Trust have a strong partnership with the local authority and we support each other through open communication with regards to the support needs our pupils need through annual reviews and provision mapping.

Transport Services: To facilitate safe and reliable transport for students who require assistance. Where pupils require extra support, or a bespoke package to help pupils get to school on time and safely, we will liaise with transport services provided by the local authority, and those other private transport services who we have long standing relationships with if necessary.

### Health and wellbeing

School Health, Specialist Nursing, and 0-19 Teams: To address students' health needs and promote overall well-being. Our school nurses attend our safeguarding supervision. During these times, we draw upon their specialist knowledge of mental and physical health to better understand potential safeguarding concerns. Our specialist nursing team also create further communication with more focused health services such as CAMHS and our local children's hospitals. In addition to the school nurses, we regularly link in with the Learning Disability team to provide targeted support for students with complex learning

disabilities and autism. This team also helps support parents/carers at home. We envisage utilising support from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) to address mental health challenges and provide therapeutic interventions as well as SIASS (Special Educational Needs Information Advice and Support Service) and Salford Parent Carer Forum to offer guidance, networking and advocacy for families of children with SEND.

### Therapy

Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy (OT) Services: The sensory needs of autistic pupils is not widely known and although all of our staff will have training on understanding the different types of sensory needs our pupils may have, we still need to liaise with occupational therapy experts to create sensory diets for our pupils. By incorporating pre planned sensory diets into our school day, we give our pupils a better chance of success. As discussed in the behavior policy, we do not give sensory breaks as a reward, but as an entitlement. Likewise, we will liaise with physiotherapy services where applicable to support pupils with their physical needs.

Speech and Language Therapists: Speech and language is often an area for development for our autistic students due to their often times limited communication and interaction skills. Not only do we work with SALT to create bespoke targets for pupils to achieve, but we utilise ELKLAN trained staff to deliver interventions regularly throughout pupils' timetables to enhance communication skills and support language development.

Educational Psychologists provide us with insightful support mechanisms with their excellent understanding of pupil's needs and behaviours. EP services also assess and support students' learning and emotional well-being.

### Safeguarding

Of course, it is without question that to effectively safeguard our children and families we will work with children's social care, including the Children with Disabilities Team, seeking advice from The Bridge wherever necessary. Furthermore, we as a Trust, have strong links with local policing teams, fire rescue, youth justice teams and charities such as Barnardos, Early Break, 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and the SARC team at St Mary's. We will work with early help services, attendance officers as further safeguarding and wellbeing support. Acer Academy will always safeguard vulnerable students and ensure they receive appropriate care and protection both in school and in the wider local area.

By leveraging these partnerships, Acer Academy aims to create a robust support network that empowers students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Regular multi-agency meetings, case reviews, and joint planning sessions will ensure that interventions are coordinated and effective. Our inclusive approach ensures that no student or family is left behind, fostering a school community where everyone feels supported and valued.

