Teaching and Learning

The aims of Orchard Community Trust (OCT) are to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil attainment and achievement.

Our schools promote calm, safe learning environments where pupils are encouraged to explore, investigate and become independent learners. Our schools have high numbers of disadvantaged pupils, high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and there are high numbers of mobility. All of our pupils deserve the highest quality teaching that we can provide.

The trust defines high quality teaching as:

- Subject knowledge which is consistently supported with effective and timely CPD
- Pedagogical choices which create challenge and enable success for all our pupils
- Feed-back which is insightful, impactful and timely
- Appreciative, understanding and considerate of individual pupil's needs
- An in-depth knowledge of the content being taught
- Having a clear picture of our pupils', knowledge, skills and understanding so that all pupils are successful and challenged
- Providing high quality feedback which moves learning forward
- Recognising the needs of our children allowing us to offer an inclusive provision

All schools in the OCT are inclusive and are committed to recognising the needs and aspirations of unique individuals by explicitly providing opportunities, and expecting, all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements.

Curriculum

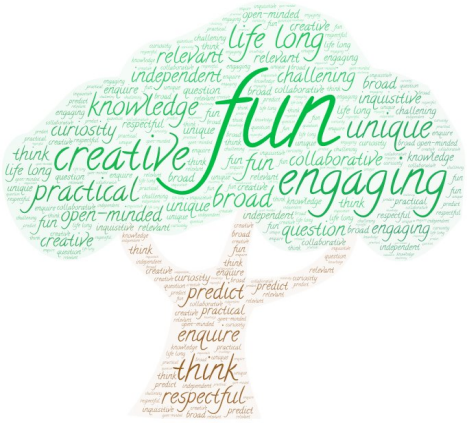
The curriculum aims of the Orchard Community Trust (OCT) are for our pupils to grow into resilient, articulate, independent individuals who are respectful of others. Each school's curriculum is designed to develop citizens of the future who have a clear sense of their potential within it. – our overarching aim is always to prepare our pupils to thrive and flourish, regardless of their background.

OCT schools offer a coherent, inclusive and relevant curriculum. We provide first hand, practical, creative opportunities that allow for pupil choice. They are taught and learn to work collaboratively and independently. Pupils are encouraged to communicate, explore, think, predict, question, enquire, explain, debate and challenge and be aspirational for life within and beyond school.

The curriculum engages and inspires the pupils to be learners for life by increasing their knowledge and skills, preparing them to contribute to, and understand, the world around them.

Reading

Reading is taught systematically, including the teaching of Phonics, in all of our schools. Programmes, schemes of work and approaches are all individual to each of our 7 schools and are based on best practice and the needs of our children. Please see details of the approach to the teaching of Reading taken by each school on the individual school website and within school-based policies and documentation.



Assessment

At Orchard Community Trust (OCT), we believe that the primary purpose of assessment is to improve students' learning and teachers' teaching as both respond to the information it provides. Formative assessment is a fundamental part of teaching and learning.

Feedback should be constructive for every child, focussing on successes and improvements against learning objectives and success criteria, enabling pupils to become motivated, reflective learners.

We use assessment as a means of identifying the achievements of our pupils and of identifying ways to help them to move forward and improve both individually and collectively. Assessment is both about the measurement of performance at a given point in time and an ongoing process of gaining information to promote future learning. It informs the target setting process and planning for groups of pupils and/or individuals. In our Trust, assessment is used as a tool to help raise standards.