

# Learning Walks Policy



*Learning together in a changing world, creating success for all.*



## Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre

### Learning walks policy

**Trinity Fields is a Rights Respecting School, a Healthy School, Investors in Families School, an ECO School, a MOVE school and an Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) Flagship School.**

This policy should be read in conjunction with our pupil friendly and adult version of our “**Shared Values and Aims**”.

#### School context

Trinity Fields is a **Rights Respecting School**; we are committed to the principles and values of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across all areas of our work. We are a school where pupils are at the heart of everything we do. We successfully achieved UNICEF’s “Rights Respecting School Award” in **January 2017** and we have a well-established record of developing pupil engagement at all levels.

Refer to pupil friendly “**Pupil Participation**” policy and our whole school “**Pupil Participation**” policy for further details.

We are a **Healthy School**; we take responsibility for maintaining and promoting the health and wellbeing of the Trinity Fields team (pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors etc.). This includes teaching pupils about how to lead healthy lives by enabling them and staff to take control over aspects of the school environment that influence their health and wellbeing. We achieved the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes National Quality Award in **March 2018, with re-accreditation in December 2020**.

Refer to “**Health and Well-being for Pupils**” policy and our whole school “**Health and Well-being**” policy for further details.

We are an **Investors in Families School**. We are committed to developing active and effective relationships with parents/carers and families and recognise the value of close partnership working to improve outcomes for our pupils. We were the first Special School in Wales to achieve the Investors in Families Quality Mark, and regularly share our excellent practices with other settings.

We demonstrate our commitment to the Rights to Action agenda and value and support the important role that families play in the education of their child. We strive to promote social inclusion and a sense of wellbeing for families through positive participation in their child’s education.

During the re-accreditation process (2019), the school’s work was judged to be of a very high quality. Family and Community Engagement are fully embedded and it was evident that the school works hard on its journey towards excellence. The assessor was very pleased to award the school the **Diamond Standard**.

We have demonstrated through a national annual assessment that we have the capacity to play a strong leadership role in developing inclusion best practice across a network of schools; as well as being committed to extending those networks and develop classroom-based research.

Refer to “**Inclusion**” policy and to **IQM assessment reports** for further details.

In **summer 2022** we gained our **Platinum ECO Schools Award**; the Eco-Schools programme is designed to be pupil-led and looks at the impact of our actions on the environment.

Our sustained journey towards attaining the Platinum Award showcases pupils’ ideas and helps to inspire others to make the right environmental choices.

More recently (2019), the school started its journey towards becoming a **MOVE school**; successfully accredited at Silver level in **December 2021**. The MOVE Programme is an activity-based practice that enables children and young people with physical disabilities to sit, stand, walk, and transition as independently as possible.

**Our overarching philosophy is summarised in the following statement:**

**“We believe that everyone at Trinity Fields is entitled to have access to the very best learning experiences. These will be provided within a safe, caring and stimulating environment that will enable all learners to achieve their full potential through learning opportunities that meet their individual needs”.**

### **Education in Wales: Our National Mission**

Our work with pupils and their families will be developed building upon Wales’ National Mission. This national mission is ambitious, innovative and confident ensuring that we all take responsibility for all of our pupils to have equal opportunities to reach the highest possible standards.

Trinity Fields will continue to develop as a learning organisation to ensure it has the capacity to adapt to and explore a range of new approaches which results in improved outcomes and well-being for all of our pupils.

In order to realise our shared vision and approaches in delivering Wales’ transformational curriculum that will enable all of the pupils at Trinity Fields to make the progress commensurate with their individual needs we are committed to the 4 key enabling objectives, detailed in “**Education in Wales: Our national mission (2017)**”. These are:

- **Developing a high-quality education profession.**
- **Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards.**
- **Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellent, equity and well-being.**
- **Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system.**

The core purposes and values that are associated with these prestigious national awards are encapsulated in our vision and aims:

**“We believe that everyone at Trinity Fields is entitled to have access to the very best learning opportunities. These will be provided within a safe, caring and stimulating environment that will enable all learners to achieve their full potential through learning opportunities that meet their individual needs”.**

### **Rationale**

This updated policy takes account of Estyn’s supplementary guidance: lesson observations and learning walks (autumn 2017).

Over time we have developed a range of processes that are now well-established and that enable senior leaders and governors to gain first hand evidence about pupil outcomes, the quality of provision and leadership and management. The use of learning walks is one of the activities that allow us to gain this first hand evidence of what is happening within our school.

Learning walks will focus on a specific aspect of the work of pupils across a number of classes, for example standards in literacy or ICT or the quality of targeted support for our pupils with more complex needs.

Due to the focused nature of learning walks and the spread of activity across a number of lessons/classes/areas of the school then the focus will be on what pupils are doing rather than the quality of teaching; this will continue to be evaluated as part of our termly lesson observations.

## Aims

Learning walks can have a variety of different purposes. In our school these will include:

- **Monitoring or auditing** practice in a particular area throughout the school;
- **Sharing good practice** and promoting consistency across the departments;
- **Checking pupil progression;**
- Identifying any **training or development needs for staff;**
- Providing **quality time for reflection** and to stimulate professional discussion;
- Ensuring colleagues **observe practice** across the school and **develop a better understanding** of whole school working practices.

## How learning walks will be undertaken

Learning walks will form a part of our structured and well-established processes to evaluate the quality of provision within our school and will be undertaken in line with the following principles:

- A designated learning walk team will decide on a focus prior to all learning walks; this might be looking at the effective use of resources, pupil engagement, the learning environment, group work, observing new initiatives, questioning etc.
- The purpose and the focus of learning walks will be shared with the whole staff team in the week prior to the learning walk taking place.
- Details of who will be involved and the date of the learning walk will be provided.
- Learning walks will take place on a termly basis and evidence from these will feed into our self-evaluation and school development planning processes.
- Classes or groups can expect to be visited by observers who will spend no more than 10 minutes in the classroom/area.
- Feedback from learning walks will be recorded on a learning walk feedback form; these will reflect the focus of the learning walk. These will be analysed by members of the learning walk team and shared with the whole staff to highlight good practice, positive news and to celebrate what we do well at Trinity Fields.

## What are our protocols?

We expect all those who are taking part in learning walks to be respectful and professional at all times. In addition to this the following protocols apply:

- A lead person for the learning walk must be agreed to ensure all protocols are understood and that the time allocation is adhered to;
- Participating staff are involved in any pre-walk discussions;

- Prior to the learning walk, staff should explain to pupils, wherever appropriate that visitors will be coming to their classroom;
- Participants **must** adhere to the agreed focus of the walk;
- No judgemental comments must be made;
- Disruption to pupils' learning must be kept to an absolute minimum;
- Participants should not speak to one another whilst in classrooms/learning areas.

### **Pre learning walk discussions**

This should take place just prior to the classroom visits. All those involved in the learning walk should have a clear understanding of the:

- Protocols and purpose;
- Timetable;
- Focus of the walk;
- Names of those involved;
- Classrooms to be visited;
- Proforma that will be used for gathering evidence.

### **The learning walk**

Participants should spend a maximum of 10 minutes in each classroom. They will '**look and listen**' to the learning and make notes that are relevant to the focus. Participants may speak to pupils and staff only if the learning allows for such interactions. Any discussion should be brief and unobtrusive.

After leaving a classroom/area participants should have a few minutes discussion between each visit; this should be quiet and confidential with the purpose of sharing their observations. The evidence gathered must be specific to the focus. This is not a time for open discussion or judgements.

### **Post learning walk discussions**

At the end of the classroom visits, all those involved in the learning walk convene for a focussed debriefing session. They share the observations collected and identify any patterns which may have emerged.

### **Outcomes**

The outcomes from learning walks might include:

- Short written reports highlighting strengths and areas of excellence.
- Brief suggestions of areas that need some further development.
- Identification of good practice and a plan on how to extend that practice across the school.
- A change of policy, practice or routines.
- The need for further information that is required to gain a more detailed picture.

### **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed as detailed in the school's policy review cycle. It may also be necessary to review and amend it sooner to reflect both local and national changes.

<b>Signed</b>		<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Signed</b>		<b>Chair of Governors</b>
<b>This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review cycle.</b>		

As a Rights Respecting School we are committed to embedding the principles and values of the United Nation Conventions for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

This policy enables our pupils to access and enjoy the following articles of the convention:

**Article 12:** Every child has the right to be heard.

**Article 28:** Every child has the right to an education.

**Article 29:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

**Article 42:** Every child has the right to know their rights.