



Curriculum Policy and Guidelines

Approved by: School Committee

Date: 4th December 2023

Signed by:

Last reviewed on: November 2023

Next review due by: Autumn 2024

The Oaks Secondary School provides education for pupils aged from eleven to nineteen years with special educational needs primarily in the area of Cognition and Learning. We are part of a federation of schools which include Evergreen Primary School and Croft Community School.

The pupils' needs are varied and diverse with some having an autistic spectrum condition, complex learning difficulties and disabilities and others severe or moderate learning difficulties. Some pupils may also have additional physical, sensory, and/or social, emotional, mental health and behavioural needs.

Some pupils with a more severe autistic spectrum condition are taught in specialist classes within the school.

Introduction:

- This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the whole school curriculum at The Oaks Secondary School.
- The school curriculum comprises all planned learning experiences. The National Curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum
- This policy provides an overview of the curriculum and should be read in conjunction with individual subject policies
- This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

Curriculum Philosophy

Our definitions of Learning

'At The Oaks we MOTIVATE our pupils to develop a love of learning and enquiring minds. We EDUCATE our pupils to prepare and equip them with knowledge and skills for life beyond school. We acknowledge and CELEBRATE all our positive achievements'

Children have a right, clearly identified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.

We believe that setting high expectations and having positive attitudes can give every child the confidence that they need to enable them to flourish and thrive.

The curriculum of any school is central to meaningful and effective education. It is concerned not just with the 'what' is taught but also 'why' and 'how' it is to be delivered. Our curriculum intends to provide opportunities that we believe are essential for life beyond school. Skills for **learning**, skills for **work** and skills for **life**

The curriculum is the responsibility of all members of the school staff. It must reflect not only the needs of the children but also take into account the views

of the pupils, their families, prospective post school placements and Governors.

We aim:

For all our pupils to become:-

- ambitious, confident and resilient learners who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- effective communicators,
- successful learners who enjoy learning, make good progress and achieve their potential.
- as independent as possible with high self-esteem and self-confidence.
- positive contributors to the local community
- part of a school community which teaches them to have strong moral, personal, social development skills.

To provide a curriculum which engages and challenges pupils with widely differing abilities and learning styles.

For our pupils' time in school to be positive, stimulating and rewarding so that their self-esteem and confidence can develop along with practical skills and the ability to use and apply their knowledge.

To nurture in all our pupils, sensitivity and respect towards others through an understanding of rights and responsibilities.

To encourage and facilitate partnership with parents and all who contribute to the development of each pupil, recognising that understanding and involvement are the key to effective cooperation.

To foster caring and trustful relationships between all members of the school community.

We believe therefore our curriculum should:

Be accessible and relevant to the needs of each individual pupil.

Incorporate the National Curriculum to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.

Be broad and balanced and delivered through highly structured and motivating individual teaching programmes and through well planned and differentiated group activities.

Include knowledge, skills, application and activities which prepare pupils for adulthood.

Ensure continuity of learning through the school by careful monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment and maintaining comprehensive records of progress.

Focus on experiential learning, with knowledge, application / understanding and skills being developed through first-hand practical experiences and provide opportunities for independent enquiry and problem solving.

Have well organised cross curricular links and include a broad and accessible enrichment programme which will allow pupils to apply their learning in a relevant and meaningful context.

Develop and maintain positive links with the local community.

Develop pupils' awareness and understanding so that they can recognise their own self-worth and value themselves as part of the wider society.

Celebrate pupils' achievements both in and out of school using praise, positive reinforcement, careful display and records of achievement using a range of media.

Statutory requirements

At The Oaks School we are committed to the latest government guidelines which are that:-

- Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based.
- The school and its curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.
- The school will prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

On 11 September 2013 the Secretary of State for Education published the new National Curriculum framework following a series of public consultations. The new National Curriculum, which we have adopted, came into force from September 2014. English, mathematics and science were phased in for key stage 4 pupils from September 2015.

The statutory curriculum for maintained schools consists of:-

1. The National Curriculum (ages 5-16)
2. Religious Education (ages 5-18) Maintained schools must follow their locally agreed syllabus
3. Sex Education (ages 11-18)

All maintained schools in England are legally required to follow the statutory national curriculum which sets out in programmes of study, on the basis of key stages and subject content for those subjects that should be taught to all pupils.

All schools must publish their school curriculum by subject and academic year online.

All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), Citizenship, Careers Education Information and Guidance (CEIAG) and British Values drawing on good practice.

Schools are also free to include other subjects or topics of their choice in planning and designing their own programme of education relevant to their pupils' individual needs and abilities.

At The Oaks we work within the government's statutory requirements, adapting programmes of study to meet the needs of our pupils. At KS4 we offer a range of alternative courses, vocational opportunities and accreditation. At KS5 we offer a life Preparing for Adulthood (skills) based curriculum supported by appropriate accreditation opportunities

Aims:

At The Oaks Secondary School our aims are to develop a curriculum which:

- Recognises and meets the individual needs of each pupil
- builds on prior learning and prepares for future learning
- facilitates the development of each pupil's communication and independence skills together with their intellectual, moral, physical, social, spiritual and creative ability.
- meets statutory requirements but remains flexible and relevant to the varying needs of our pupils.
- Monitors, measures, assesses and records the progress of each pupil in a systematic way.
- Allows the setting of achievable but challenging targets and outcomes that promote an ethos of improvement and development.
- Prepares pupils for adulthood (PFA) and for transition to Further Education, Training, Employment or Supported Living.
- Provides unbiased CEIAG in order to prepare and equip students to achieve their aspirations.
- Enshrines, the principles of UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Charter, British Values and positive Citizenship.
- Provides for a personalised learning journey linked to EHCP targets which equips students to maximise their potential and supports them to attain their aspirations.

During their time at The Oaks Secondary School we will support and teach our pupils to:

- Participate and achieve as independently as possible in all aspects of school life.
- Develop positive self-esteem, a sense of worth and respect for themselves and others.
- Communicate effectively.
- Access and use technology.

- Understand the world in which they live.
- To stay healthy and develop their physical abilities.
- Appreciate and engage in aesthetic and creative activities.
- Develop their mathematical, problem solving and thinking abilities.
- Develop a sense of curiosity and scientific enquiry.
- Develop their spiritual, moral and cultural appreciation.
- Increase their knowledge through direct teaching and research
- Be active and productive members of society.

Curriculum Entitlement:

The Oaks Secondary School offers a broad, balanced curriculum that provides a shared entitlement to all pupils as contained in the following documents:

- 'The National Curriculum' subject documents – DFCFS/QCA / 2014 2015
- The National Curriculum in England: Framework for Key Stages 1-4 – December 14
- The National Curriculum in England: secondary education – December 14
- Religious education in schools – October 19
- Sex and Relationships Education July 2021
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic education – guidance Feb 20
- National Curriculum and Assessment: information for schools – guidance September 2014
- Rochford Report – October 2016

In addition, pupils are provided with opportunities across all curriculum areas to acquire, develop, practise, apply and extend the following key skills of:

- Communication (including literacy)
- Application of number
- Information technology
- Working with others
- Improving own learning and performance
- Problem solving.

This, in turn, contribute to the PFA areas of Health, Independent Living, Employment and Friendships, Relationships and Community

Curriculum Organisation:

- The Oaks secondary school curriculum is delivered through 5 pathways.
- Each pathway is designed to meet the needs of a particular group of learners however our commitment to personalised learning means that individual learners can access alternative pathways at any time

- Within each pathway there are schemes of learning designed to teach pupils the knowledge and skills for, life, learning and work with various weighting according to their aspirations and potential.
- Subject leaders have an overview of the knowledge to be taught and applied in each area of the curriculum
- There are four levels of planning and documentation (see below)
- Staff at The Oaks Secondary School work closely with colleagues from outside agencies e.g. Sensory Support Service, Speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, community nurses, social workers etc. who may provide written guidance and support for individual pupils.
- Therapy programmes are as far as possible, carried out in classrooms as part of daily/weekly routines.
- The use of therapeutic environments e.g. hydrotherapy pool, active zone, interactive room and alternative therapies such Lego therapy, Rebound therapy and Social Communication groups and are planned for as part of individual pupils' curriculum.
- Cultural and Curriculum Enrichment, The rights Respecting Schools Award, educational visits, community links, residential opportunities, work experience and vocational programmes broaden the subject curriculum offer

Curriculum Planning and documentation:

There are four broad levels of curriculum planning:

Curriculum Model

This document describes the fundamental Skills for Learning, Work and Life that we aim to teach our learners. It highlights the aims and characteristics of the overall curriculum. It clarifies the learning pathways on offer, lists the assessment opportunities and therapies available to all learners.

There is an overview of the content, balance and sequence of learning within each pathway. For each individual pathway the document describes the learner characteristics, the aims and focus of the pathway. The assessment tools used and opportunities for external accreditation are explicit. The areas of learning and the curriculum subjects for each pathway are identified, organisation of coverage is shown

Long-term plans (Intent) set out intentions for learning in each subject area or pathway phase (Action Plan, Policy, Rationale & Subject overview). Long-term plans:

- Help to secure pupils' shared entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Show how learning is sequenced and builds on prior knowledge
- Provide breadth and balance across a whole key stage.
- Explain why the subject is important and how it contributes to PFA, RRS and SMSC
- Identify strengths, areas for development

Medium-term plans (Implementation) are units of work which are studied over a term or half-term and descriptors of the learning outcomes for each unit of work. (Schemes of Learning). Medium-term plans:

- Show when the teaching will happen and with whom.
- Set out the main focus of the teaching and learning.
- Define intended learning outcomes for the scheme of learning.
- Provide information on possible experiences, teaching activities, vocabulary and resources.
- Identify differentiated learning outcomes.
- Provide broad descriptions of what most pupils will be able to know and apply at the end of the unit.
- Highlight cross curricular links

Short-term plans can enable individual teachers to design and implement learning opportunities which promote progress and achievement for all learners. These type of individual lesson plans should be used during formal observations and will:

- Set out the detailed intentions of teaching and learning in the classroom on a weekly/daily basis.
- Identify objectives drawn from the schemes of learning and rationale document
- Identify learning outcomes for individual pupils for the lesson.
- Take account of pupils' individual support needs as identified in their EHC plan.
- When short term planning teachers are expected to consider and contribute to pupils My Plan, Numeracy, literacy and behavioural targets

Curriculum Management:

The role of the Curriculum Leader is to:

- Take the lead in curriculum development and review.
- Monitor the implementation of the curriculum and advise the Executive Head and Head of School on any action needed.
- Keep up to date with curriculum developments and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.
- Carry out an annual audit of the curriculum and report to the Executive Head teacher, Head of School, senior leadership team and curriculum co-ordinators.
- Attend relevant in-service courses provided by the Local Authority and other agencies and cascade information to colleagues.
- Ensure all schemes of learning take in to account ethnicity, gender and disability equality legislation.
- Work with the Head of School to create and implement the timetable on an annual basis.
- Liaise with colleagues and parents to assist students to make curriculum choices that aid them in achieving their aspirations and preparing for adulthood (PFA)

- To quality assure all curriculum documentation to standardise and to ensure statutory requirements and the needs of the learners are met
- To provide information to Governors

Curriculum Co-ordinators:

The role of Curriculum Co-ordinators is to:

- Be the lead professional for the curriculum area and ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum, national strategies and any other requirements of the LA and DfE are carried out.
- Disseminate subject information to enable equality of access
- Ensure that all deadlines relating to coursework and external deadlines relating to the individual subjects are met.
- Support colleagues in order to improve their professional development and classroom practice.
- Gain colleagues' support in the development of the curriculum area.
- Manage and plan for the development of the subject and the procurement of resources.
- Identify staff training needs
- Facilitate and lead internal moderation
- To pass completed course work to the exams officer for despatch, with all relevant paperwork in a timely manner

Resources:

Curriculum Co-ordinators are responsible for ensuring that there are suitable resources and equipment available to deliver the schemes of learning, across the key stages for their subject. Storage and allocation of subject-specific equipment is the responsibility of the subject curriculum co-ordinators.

Resources are audited by curriculum co-ordinators as part of the school's self-evaluation process and any shortfalls identified. Any expenditure for each subject will be dependent upon financial implications and school improvement priorities.

- Resources are held in individual classrooms for English, Maths, Science, Resistant Materials, Textiles, Food Technology, Childcare, ICT, History, Geography, Art, Music, Careers, Enterprise, P.E., R.E., P.S.H.E and MFL (Cultural Studies).
- The library contains fiction books, non-fiction books for each curriculum area, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, poetry and reading scheme books.
- The technician is responsible for ICT equipment and software. He has a base in the green corridor.
- Additional technology resources are available throughout school
- The building has some purpose built resources such as the Active Zone, Interactive Room, Therapy Suite and Hydrotherapy pool
- Outdoor interactive/sensory garden spaces, MUGA, Sports fields, outdoor classrooms, outdoor gym and horticulture garden are available to all subject areas

Community Links:

Appropriate use will be made of the local and wider community thus enabling pupils to transfer the knowledge, skills, attitudes and concepts they have learnt to other situations and broadening the range of learning experiences available to them.

Pupils will be taught skills to provide services to the wider community through fund raising activities, volunteering, pop up restaurants and other events such as the Summer and Enterprise Fayres which are open to the community

Risk assessments will be carried out before each community visit and passed to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator for approval (see Educational Visits Procedures and Guidelines). The local and wider community should be involved in the life of the school through pupil participation in:

- Educational visits in the Local Community e.g. Shops, libraries, leisure centres, colleges
- Cultural visits to the cinema, theatre, art galleries etc.
- Educational visits to a variety of geographical locations e.g. parks, the coast, towns, the countryside etc.
- Educational visits to places of historic interest e.g. old buildings, museums, Hartlepool Historic Quay, Durham Cathedral etc.
- Educational visits to places of technological interest e.g. airports, railway station, factories etc.
- Study support activities e.g. residential experiences, careers fayre
- Opportunities to experience different cultures both in school and the wider community.
- Educational visits and experience of the work place – link with Auckland Project.

Health and Safety:

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of health and safety issues in relation to the different subject areas they teach or have specific responsibility for. As far as possible they should eliminate foreseeable safety issues in various environments and with different types of equipment.

It is fundamental that pupils also develop positive attitudes to the safety of themselves, others, equipment and apparatus and an ethos created where a respect for the environment is developed. Any specific issues relating to health and safety, which need immediate attention, should be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher/Health and Safety Officer.

Parental Involvement:

Parental involvement in all aspects of school life is encouraged. Fostering collaboration with parents includes:

- Sharing expertise and knowledge about their child, verbally and through EHCP and My Plans.

- Parents evening and pastoral support meeting
- Developing shared behaviour management strategies.
- Information workshops and family learning.
- Participation in Remote Learning
- Communication via home/school diaries, email and school website.
- Participation in celebrations or community events e.g. Enterprise Fayre.
- Open days and coffee mornings.
- Parental support groups.
- Fundraising opportunities - Friends of The Oaks School.
- Involvement in multi-disciplinary meetings including EHC planning
- Involvement in transition planning

Governors:

Governors are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school. They oversee curriculum development and each subject and phase coordinator has a link governor with whom they have termly meetings. Policies and action plans are submitted for approval according to statutory requirements.

R Farrow
November 2023

Appendix 1
Annual "Accreditation Offer" published on website