

# Learning Opportunities Curriculum Policy



If you have any questions about this policy or any other aspects of school life at Learning Opportunities please contact me at the school.

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# CURRICULUM POLICY

## Contents

### PAGE NUMBER

2. Introduction  
Curriculum Statement
3. Balance of the Curriculum  
Delivery of the School Curriculum
4. Allocation of Curriculum Time  
Educational Trips
6. Quality of Teaching and Learning  
Management
7. Monitoring & Review  
Complaints  
Equal Opportunities

The Curriculum Policy has been written and approved by a team with a range of experience, and will be reviewed annually.

Date Created: July 1996

Previous Review Date: September 2019

Next Review Date: September 2021

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the delivery of the curriculum at Learning Opportunities. It should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy and individual subject policies.

Underpinning this policy is our commitment to provide a curriculum based on the following three statements.

### **Learning Opportunities Statement of Curriculum Intent**

We are committed to providing a curriculum with breadth that allows all of our students to be able to achieve the following:

Improve their literacy and numeracy skills and use these skills in real life situations.

Achieve success in examinations at an appropriately challenging level.

Enjoy learning.

Experience life outside the classroom, experiencing the real world and natural environment.

Have the necessary skills and knowledge to transfer to post-16 education.

### **Learning Opportunities Statement of Curriculum Implementation**

We are committed to providing:

Experienced staff who have the necessary subject knowledge to inspire students.

A curriculum that works progressively towards realistic and aspirational outcomes.

A safe, well-resourced learning environment.

An assessment system that informs planning ensuring students are appropriately challenged.

A curriculum that covers the statutory components alongside a range of enrichment activities.

A curriculum that includes opportunities for emotional and behavioural learning.

A curriculum that focuses on individual strengths and needs.

### **Learning Opportunities Statement of Curriculum Impact**

We will ensure:

All students leave the school with at least 1 certificate or qualification.

All students make progress towards appropriate outcomes.

All students have obtained a place at an appropriate post-16 provider.

## **BALANCE OF THE CURRICULUM**

All students within the school have an EHC Plan. In developing our curriculum, we recognise the importance of addressing these needs as well as meeting the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.

In order to ensure all students are able to meet their EHCP outcomes we prioritise within the curriculum and deliver strands at the level which is appropriate for the stage of learning the learner is at. Compensating for specific learning difficulties is an integral part of this process.

### **Planning and assessment.**

Formative assessment is central to all aspects of planning and assessing progress. Students are taught from their individual starting points at the most appropriate stage of the National curriculum and EHCP outcomes and targets are set and monitored from the individual stage the child has reached.

Progress is recorded on Classroom Monitor as ongoing assessment for all subjects which are available within that platform. Depending on the stage of learning this is tracked using either the Rising Stars Framework or external examination syllabi.

Planning takes the form of a long term plan for each subject which outlines the content of the curriculum across Key Stage 3 or 4, ensuring that a variety of topic based units allows coverage of study. The selection of specific areas may be modified in order to ensure that the curriculum in question is appropriate for the learners. Ongoing formative assessment highlights assessment objectives and targets at the appropriate stage and this stage then informs the medium term plans which are prepared in response to the previous half term's assessments. Aspects of SMSC, Every Child Matters, FBV and Citizenship are noted as they arise through curricular planning

Reading and phonics intervention is informed in the first instance through the analysis of reading age testing, both single word spelling and Group Reading Tests which assess comprehension and understanding. Other students may respond more successfully to other approaches, such as whole word recognition and sight reading. For many, a combination of the two approaches is appropriate. Reading and spelling progress is monitored both through the English assessments and through twice yearly reading tests.

### **The Delivery of the School Curriculum**

In Key Stage 3 students are grouped according to age and academic and social ability. Within these differentiated groups lessons are further differentiated according to individual ability. Where appropriate students will be taught within a primary based model where 1 teacher will teach a range of National Curriculum subjects.

At Key Stage 4 lessons are usually delivered to classes of students grouped according to year group, the exception being the integration of some year 12 students into year 11 groups if appropriate. Within each year group one class will predominantly follow a lifeskills curriculum whilst those who are able will be prepared for GCSE level qualifications. Where appropriate, students will cross between classes to access areas where they demonstrate a particular strength or where they require additional support.

Staff are generally qualified teachers and whilst not always subject specialists they are experienced in imparting information and skills to students with behavioural and learning difficulties in a stimulating, constructive and professional manner.

We aim to create a relaxed, friendly, informal and open classroom atmosphere. This is only possible where the foundations of positive relationships, high expectations of performance, and hard work have been established. Formal and informal methods of teaching are used as appropriate by all staff.

### **ALLOCATION OF CURRICULUM TIME**

#### ***At Key Stage 3***

At Key Stage 3 students follow a curriculum closely allied to the National Curriculum.

During the year all students will have opportunities to access learning in:

English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, ICT, Design & Technology (includes Food Technology & resistant Materials), Art & Design, Music, Physical Education, MFL (French), Religious Education, PSHE / Careers and Forest School.

#### ***Key Stage 4***

At Key Stage 4 the students generally follow one of two learning pathways.

- The first is the academic pathway. Students study a core curriculum of English, Mathematics, Science, ICT, Art and Design and PE. The intention is that this pathway will lead to functional skills or GCSE qualifications in at least 4 subjects. In addition they will have access to an accredited lifeskills programme.
- The second is a life skills pathway. Students focus on further developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills, supported through a comprehensive, accredited, Life Skills programme. The intention is that this pathway will lead to Entry Level Certificates in the core subjects and a life skills based subject.

Students continue to follow the requirements of the National Curriculum, whilst embarking on public examination courses leading to GCSE/Entry Level/Functional Skills and other qualifications.

Through lifeskills and/or specific careers lessons, all students at Key Stage 4 also participate in Careers and Enterprise Education. This includes either block or extended work experience placements and involvement in school based community events.

In addition, where appropriate, students access school / college link courses either for a carousel of taster courses or to follow a specific course in which they have shown a particular interest.

### **Educational Trips**

The purpose of Educational Trips is to address aspects of social, emotional and social interaction and to encourage and support language and communication opportunities. We also ensure that key skills objectives from the History and Geography National Curriculum are addressed at the appropriate stage for the abilities and needs of the students. These objectives are chosen to be realistic yet challenging and are recorded within our progress monitoring system for these subjects.

## Careers Education

Preparing students for their next step is an important element of life at Learning Opportunities.

During Key Stage 3 students receive careers education and guidance through PSHE.

Key Stage 4 students follow a more formal careers course that prepares them for applying to colleges and life in the world of work. In addition to school based lessons and external independent careers advice via CXK or similar, students have the opportunity to visit local colleges and participate in a range of link courses. Where possible, students also have the opportunity to participate in work experience during the year.

## Sex and Relationship Education

Whilst education of students in sexual matters is primarily the right and duty of parents / carers, we recognise that as a school staff have an important complementary and supporting role. Aspects of Sex Education, and related health education issues, are dealt with as specific topics within Science, Religious Education, Physical Education and the PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) programme at a level appropriate to the age of the students.

The Sex Education programme draws on the expertise of external professional staff from the school nursing service. Sex Education is presented in the context of a loving, caring, human relationship.

With Relationship and Sex Education becoming statutory in all schools from September 2019, we are incorporating 'Crossing the line', a scheme of work created by Childnet, looking at pornography, healthy relationships and body image online.

## FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES AND THE CURRICULUM

As a school we have a duty to 'actively promote' the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

These areas are promoted across a range of subjects and 'celebration days' and visits during the year. Coverage of the areas of FBV in subjects is monitored through its inclusion on medium term plans for each subject. Students are encouraged to have an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination across the whole school curriculum and particularly in PSHE.

## EVERY CHILD MATTERS AND THE CURRICULUM

Although the ECM agenda has been archived, we believe it provides a useful framework for ensuring we deliver positive outcomes. Coverage of the 5 themes is monitored through its inclusion on Medium Term Plans for each subject.

## SMSC AND THE CURRICULUM

SMSC development is an important part of daily life and learning at Learning Opportunities. Coverage of the components is monitored through its inclusion on Medium term Plans.

## CITIZENSHIP AND THE CURRICULUM

The Citizenship programmes of study are covered in a cross curricular way and coverage is monitored through its inclusion on Medium Term Plans.

### **SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS AND REPORTS** (Refer to relevant policies)

Termly reports are sent to parents / carers and the placing authority. In addition, comprehensive reports are provided for each Annual Statement Review and for the End of Year.

### **PASTORAL CARE SUPPORTING THE CURRICULUM**

Throughout Learning Opportunities there is a supportive pastoral care system, involving all staff, which helps students settle in to the routines of the school and monitor their progress through the school. It is generally a member of the SMT who contacts parents / carers when concerns are raised about a student's welfare or progress.

### **QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

It is the responsibility of all staff to plan their teaching in accordance with schemes of work and school policies. All lessons are structured and have a clear objective that is shared with students. Varied approaches to teaching and learning provide access for students with a range of learning styles and are expected to work at a level and pace that offer challenge appropriate to their abilities. Every effort is made to engage and motivate students and to promote enjoyment of the learning process.

Please see the Teaching and Learning Policy for more information.

### **MANAGEMENT**

The curriculum is organised by the Headteacher in consultation with SLT and all staff.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- Statutory requirements of the NC are met.
- Schemes of work are in place and reviewed at regular intervals.
- Policies in line with those of the school are maintained.
- Delivery of cross-curricular themes are interwoven within the curriculum.
- Delivery of cross-curricular skills are promoted.
- Assessment requirements are maintained and outcomes used to inform planning and target setting.
- Student progress is monitored
- Teacher performance is monitored

### **INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

The proprietor acknowledges their duty to provide equipment and resources which will enable the study and use of ICT/Computing where detailed within statutory requirements of the NC. Learning Opportunities is committed to the use of ICT to support learning.

All staff have a responsibility to develop the use of ICT in support of learning activities within their own curriculum areas.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be monitored by the Head Teacher, who will report on implementation, progress and recommend any changes.

Evaluation of the curriculum will be measured against a range of indicators, which include whole school and individual student indicators:

#### ***Whole school indicators***

- Ofsted inspections
- Examination results
- Destinations of school leavers
- Parent / carer and students questionnaires
- Student council meetings
- Individual student progress
- External validation

### **COMPLAINTS**

Any parent/carer or external agency who is concerned about the content, balance or structure of the school's curriculum is most welcome to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher. If there is a significant complaint that cannot be resolved they may raise this with the School Proprietor.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Learning Opportunities offers the curriculum equally to all students regardless of gender, sexuality, cultural background, race or religion. Within its current resources, the school attempts to discriminate positively on behalf of all students to compensate for any educational problems that are due to specific learning or medical difficulties, or social attitudes as a result of being in a specialist provision.

In accordance with the statutory requirements the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all students as far as is reasonably practicable.