

Curriculum Policy

'We teach the way you learn'



Approved by: Chris Coombs **Date:** September 2017

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Aims of the Curriculum

Our Place is committed to providing a broad, diverse and needs-led curriculum for children with moderate learning disabilities, severe learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders and associated social, behavioural and communication needs. We deliver quality education in ways that make learning a positive and rewarding experience. We ensure that all pupils participate in enjoyable and motivating learning experiences, inclusive of opportunities for success and celebration of progress and achievement, as well as preparation for their transition to the adult world. We make learning accessible, meaningful and transferable to all aspects of our pupils' lives, enabling them to help shape their own futures and achieve their full potential.

The curriculum has been developed to comply with the requirements of the National Curriculum and the post 16 Foundation Learning curriculum.

Our specific aims are to enable all pupils to:

- Communicate effectively through the use of speech, signs, symbols, ICT and the written word
- Listen attentively, with understanding
- Acquire information from various sources and record findings in a variety of ways
- Develop reading, writing and spelling skills
- Develop mathematical skills that are useful and functional in various situations in the home, school and local area
- Maximise their independence and problem solving
- Gain scientific knowledge of the way the world works
- Use ICT
- Develop awareness of self and sensitivity to others; acquire a set of moral values, make good choices and develop self-discipline and appropriate behaviour
- Be aware of the geographical, historical, social, moral and cultural aspects of their environment, and of times and places
- Acquire sufficient control of self and of tools, equipment, and instruments to be able to use music, drama and several forms of arts and crafts as a means of expression
- Develop agility, confidence and physical co-ordination and extend fine and gross motor skills
- Develop self-confidence and self esteem
- Adopt a healthy life style and stay safe now and in the future

The Curriculum at Our Place – Structure and Delivery

Our curriculum framework has been designed to ensure that we offer a wide range of motivating, challenging and nurturing learning experiences that are truly inclusive and accessible to our pupils, who have exceptionally complex and diverse needs. Our curriculum is broad based, balanced and pupil-centred, and incorporates relevant aspects of the National Curriculum, taught within a framework of social and communication skills development. Each young person has a totally individualised curriculum built around their needs and own personal interests.

We provide a fully-differentiated structure and approach to learning. Schemes of work are written for each young person, reflecting their individual learning needs, abilities, interests and preferred learning styles.

The following subject areas are taught:

1. Communication & Literacy
2. Numeracy
3. Science
4. Social Skills
5. ICT,
6. Cookery
7. PSHE and Citizenship (including SMSC and British Values)
8. Physical Education
9. Art and Creative Studies
10. Music
11. Nature based education
12. Practical skills

Subject and skills based approaches are used and learning is broken down into small, sequential and achievable steps. Yearly, termly and half termly targets, together with an individualised scheme of work for core subjects, form the pupil's Individual Education Plan.

The ages, learning needs, abilities and personal interests of our children are reflected in the curriculum throughout their school career. The curriculum is developed to enable and empower the pupils and prepare them for the choices, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It takes into account the behavioural and psychological needs of the young people and is designed to help them deal with the adult and outside world as they grow to maturity. Priorities and targets detailed in the pupils' IEPs and EHC Plans are incorporated into all areas of learning in all settings, with regular monitoring and review.

Accessing the community and relating to a wide range of people is considered a priority area of learning, and pupils are supported as appropriate to access facilities and become involved in the life of the local community.

- The Waking Curriculum

We focus on the development of life skills through our waking curriculum. These skills are fundamental for participation and achievement and permeate the whole curriculum. Consistency across both residential and educational areas is provided and teachers and home keyworkers meet to share targets and progress.

- SMSC

The teaching of Spiritual, Social, Moral and Cultural Education permeates the whole of the curriculum. Specific topics relating to religious and cultural festivals and customs are taught through Communication and Literacy, PSHE and Citizenship.

- Teaching Style

We employ a positive, enthusiastic and encouraging attitude, to support the development of motivated learning and to foster self-esteem.

Our approach to working with all our pupils is in the Gentle Teach style. However, should a situation arise that cannot be de-escalated then trained staff may use, for safety reasons and as a last resort, the Managing Actual & Potential Aggression – Restrictive Holds from the Positive Options training, if such action is part of the Individual Behaviour Plan for that pupil.

- Teaching Methods

All of the pupils have individual timetables with a high level of support. Staffing is on a ratio pupil 1:1 staff or higher dependent upon the activity. This high level of support means that a wide range of teaching and learning methods can be used to accommodate the different learning styles of individual pupils and overcome barriers to learning. We use Free Flow, Semi structured and highly structured methods, according to individual needs.

We also use:

- Gentle Teach
- Intensive Interaction
- Sensory Integration
- Picture Exchange Communication System
- Symbols, photos and objects of reference
- Makaton
- Specialist computer programmes
- Social Skills Training
- Social Stories
- Alternative and augmentative communication
- TEACCH

Students access community and work placements where appropriate

Curriculum Planning

Long term plans are produced for each academic year consisting of three terms and schemes of work are produced half-termly. Planning is flexible and will reflect the children's changing and developing learning priorities, abilities, personalities and interests at any given time.

The schemes of work are evaluated, reviewed and modified if necessary to ensure that the curriculum content is balanced and offers an appropriate pace of learning for all pupils. Any changes in specific learning priorities or pupil motivation / interest are accounted for and included. The outcomes of sessions are discussed with staff, influencing future planning in order to guarantee that differentiation and diversity remain relevant and up to date.

For our Primary Curriculum delivery we have been working in conjunction with Fort Royal Special School in Worcester. We are now in the process of delivering this according to the framework which they have developed and shared. Topics are delivered termly and tailored individually to the needs of our primary age pupils, using and adapting the topic boxes from Fort Royal.

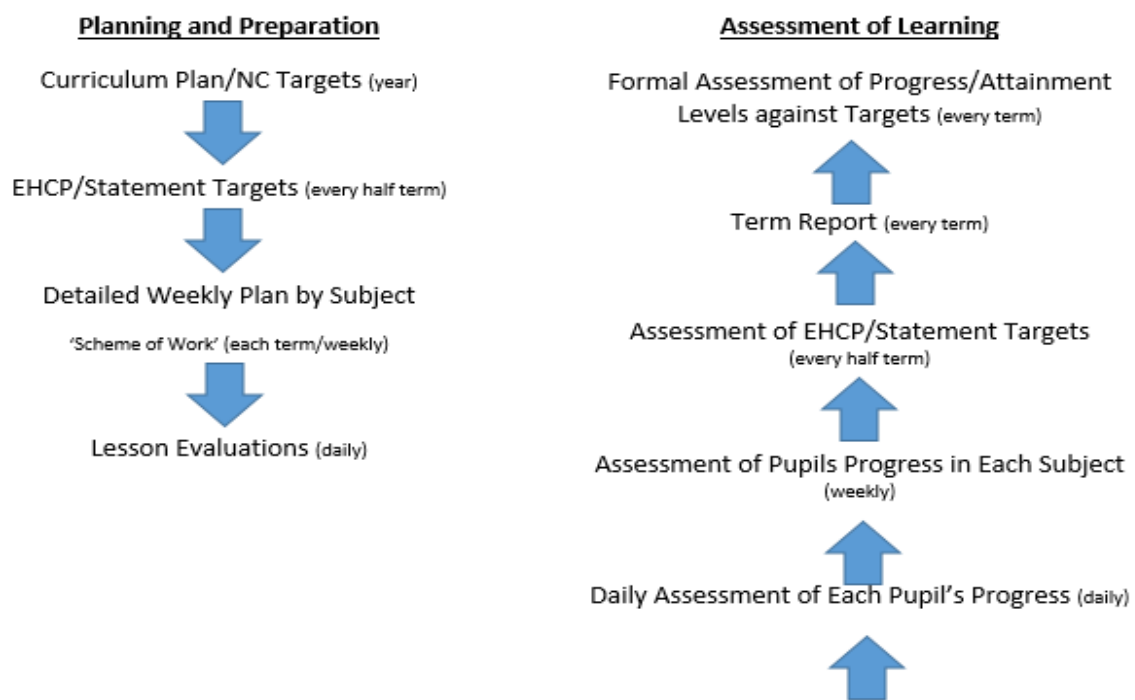
Resources

A wide range of resources enable the pupils to access the curriculum through their individual learning style, this includes individual topic boxes for the Primary Curriculum delivery.

Assessment and Progression

Pupil's work is assessed daily and formal assessment is written up each week in their core subjects. Progression towards National curriculum and P level targets is assessed each term, and targets derived from the statement/EHCP are assessed every six weeks.

Pre-entry and Entry level qualifications may confirm a progression route with access to local colleges of further education.



Annotation and Marking

At Our Place the main aims for marking and providing feedback are to ensure that all pupils are challenged and their achievements celebrated as well as giving clear guidance for staff to inform next steps in learning.

For the majority of our pupils, the feedback needs to be immediate and should relate to the learning outcome of the lesson, without missing opportunities to comment on other learning. Feedback will be given at an appropriate level for pupils to understand. Generally feedback will be given immediately as verbal feedback (and/or signed where relevant), followed by making a written record either on pupil's work or on lesson evaluation document according to the evidence produced. As pupils become more confident they will be encouraged to assess their own work and comment on the work of others, leading up to peer assessment.

See Appendix 1 for the school Standard Annotation Codes that all staff use and, when ready, pupils start to use for self/peer assessment.

Accreditation

Our Place is registered with ASDAN and AQA to enable pupils to achieve certificated recognition for achievements. Progress and achievement are monitored and recorded through the standards and formative records contained within these Qualification and Award Schemes. All post 16 pupils take a QCF qualification in Personal and Social Development and Functional Skills English and Maths where appropriate, awarded by ASDAN. Individual units in a range of life skills are accredited by AQA. Our Post 16 students are also enrolled to work towards their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.

Transition

Pupils with Statements of Educational Need/Education and Health Care Plans are entitled to remain in full time education until the end of the school year in which they are 19. The decision as to when it is most appropriate for a pupil to leave is made through the review process.

The school aims to enable each young person to maximise their levels of independence and learning becomes progressively more skills-based, aimed at independent living skills and making choices and decisions relating to their own interests.

PHSE and Citizenship address Careers Guidance, FE opportunities and aspects of employment.

Safeguarding

Our Place has a full Safeguarding policy and all staff are trained and have current DBS.

Health & Safety

Our Place has a full Health and Safety policy. Pupil's access to off-site educational activities are subject to risk assessment.

Equal Opportunities & Valuing Cultural Diversity

Our Place has a separate Equal Opportunities policy.

Anti-Bullying

Teachers and TAs plan specific activities and tasks aimed at developing appropriate social behaviour, consideration and mutual respect.


Staff Development

School staff undergo mandatory training and are supported to undertake further study to develop their skills. Teachers are encouraged to visit other schools and observe other teachers at work. We will also welcome visits and observations from other schools.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Coombs". The script is cursive and elegant, with a large initial 'C'.

**Chris Coombs
Head of Education
Our Place Schools**

Appendix 1: Standard Annotation Codes

	<p style="text-align: center;">Our Place Schools Standard Annotation Codes (for staff and students)</p>
I	<p style="text-align: center;">Independent (Work was completed without help, including any subtle gestures)</p>
VP	<p style="text-align: center;">Verbal Prompt (pupils given verbal/signed instruction as to what to do)</p>
GP	<p style="text-align: center;">Gestural Prompt (pointing or gesturing towards what is required)</p>
PP	<p style="text-align: center;">Physical Prompt (specify degree of support e.g. hand over hand and if reduced during activity)</p>
M	<p style="text-align: center;">Modelled (Demonstrating activity/behaviour)</p>
GQ	<p style="text-align: center;">Guided Questioning (e.g. Questions that guide students to the right answer)</p>
CO	<p style="text-align: center;">Choice of ... (e.g. student was offered a choice of 2/4 symbols)</p>
SV	<p style="text-align: center;">Scribed Verbatim (Student's words were written as spoken)</p>
NS	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Steps (In learning - relating to unit of work/EHCP targets)</p>
VF	<p style="text-align: center;">Verbal Feedback</p>