

Pathways School

Curriculum Policy

Policy Monitoring

Date of last review: September 2022

Reviewed by: Saima Ali Majid, Chair of Trustees
Neil Jones, Headteacher

Date of next review: April 2023

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedure.

1. Introduction

Pathways School is founded on the basis that every learner is a unique individual who will achieve to their full potential when they are enabled to engage with a curriculum individually tailored to meet their needs. We focus upon sustainable progress and skill acquisition, while ensuring that learning remains relevant and engaging.

2. Legislation

- Independent School Standards Regulations 2014
- National Curriculum programmes of study
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Equality Act 2010

3. Links to other school policies

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Careers Guidance Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- SEN Policy
- SEN Information Report
- SMCS Policy

4. Aims

Pathways School aims to make life fundamentally better for autistic people, their families, and carers.

We will achieve this by:

- Having Consistently high expectations and achievements for every individual.
- Ensuring high quality, inspirational and innovative teaching, and learning.
- Establishing and maintaining a safe, secure, caring, and enjoyable environment in which students can work, learn, thrive, and grow towards independence.
- Ensuring that our curriculum is broad and balanced and personally tailored to each individual student, underpinned by accurate and wide-ranging assessment.
- Including well-structured opportunities to learn skills in an intensive way, and then generalising these into natural environments, developing and extending learning.
- Designing and delivering content that is relevant, functional, and interesting for the learner.
- Offering opportunities for students to be creative and adventurous in their learning.
- Providing situations where students gain first-hand experiences using a wide range of resources.

- Supporting essential therapeutic activities such as speech and language and occupational therapy.
- Using strategies that minimise or alleviate sensory impairments, such as access to the sensory area and the provision of specialist equipment such as sound reducing systems.
- Collaboration with parents, professionals, and agencies, with the community and with the students themselves.

We ensure that our curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant, and differentiated by careful mapping to the requirements of the Independent School Standards which identify the following areas of experience to be included.

Linguistic

Mathematical

Scientific

Creative (Art Music)

Technological (ICT, Food technology, Design Technology)

Human and Social (PSHE Geography and History, RE, Work Related Learning))

Physical and Aesthetic (PE Art Music Dance Drama)

SMSC and Promoting British Values are taught as threads throughout each curriculum area

5. Functional Communication Skills

We place a strong emphasis on developing and enhancing students' communication skills. Our young people are encouraged to use their preferred method of communication, and where possible, we encourage vocal, verbal communication. Individual programmes are aimed at teaching students to express their needs: to interact socially; to develop listener responding, develop the ability to identify people, places, and objects; answer questions and have well developed conversational skills. Children and young people who are unable to express their needs vocally are taught to communicate using sign language or use another augmentative communication system, such as PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), iPad or other interactive device. Pathways School support staff on signing training courses as we are a signing community. Parents are given information, training, and materials to enable them to use the same communication system in a functional way at home.

6. British Values

Pathways School aims to ensure that our school ethos, curriculum, and approaches to teaching and learning reflect and promote British values as defined by the 2011 Prevent Strategy.

The five British Values are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty

- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

We recognise the multicultural, multi-faith nature of the United Kingdom and understand the crucial role that schools play in upholding and promoting these values. We teach all students to understand, appreciate, and respect diversity. By ensuring that we actively promote and reinforce British Values, Pathways School helps to prepare students for the diverse and dynamic community in which they will live and work.

The curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, and physical development of students, to enable them to make a unique and positive contribution to their community.

7. Personalised Curriculum

Pathways School is founded on the principle that our students achieve to the best of their potential when they engage in a personalised curriculum tailored to meet their individual needs within a fully inclusive learning community.

In planning the delivery of the personalised curriculum, Pathways School constructs Individual Education Plans (IEP) which serve as short and medium-term plans. The IEP is informed by the student's Education Health and Care Plan which contains the required elements of longer-term planning.

8. Individual Education Plans

All students have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which details short term and medium-term targets.

Targets on the IEP are taken from the National Curriculum (NC), Essential for Living (EFL) Curriculum, Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Programme (VBMAPP), ASDAN and AQA Unit Award scheme, these are directly related to the EHCP outcomes for each student.

Emphasis is on functional communication, independence, and self-help skills. IEPs are discussed termly with parents/carers, and progress against targets are reviewed and reported on termly, as well as at each student's Annual Review and in annual reports. Targets set on IEPs are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound).

Reporting on student progress to the Board of Trustees and external agencies is enabled through an analysis of the IEPs. Progress is reported using the percentage of target completion against each EHCP area.

9. Pathways to Learning

Students join us with varying levels of skills previously acquired and often patchy learning profiles. We identify three tracks or cohorts of ability, **Early Learner, Intermediate Learner, and Advanced Learner**.

Initial and ongoing assessment establishes which cohort a student is working within. We select the most appropriate pathway to learning based upon the individual learner's profile.

The Assessments we use include: the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised (ABLLS-R), the Verbal Behaviour- Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP), Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS), Essential for Living (EFL).

9.1 Early Learners and Intermediate Learners

The Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment establishes whether a student will learn new skills better individually or in a group. Typically, students on entry to Pathways will not have developed the skills to learn successfully in a conventional class group set up. To benefit from group learning it is essential that students are taught and will have mastered some pre-requisite learner skills.

Students should have a requesting repertoire of at least 20 strong requests; be able to follow simple instructions readily; be able to do basic imitations; be able to receptively identify and label their favourite things and common objects and pictures; be able to look to the instructor for instruction and be able to tolerate delayed reinforcement. They should also be able to sit in a small group for at least 5 minutes without disruptive behaviour and be able to wait without touching stimuli.

Early Learner and Intermediate Learner Students that are mainly taught in 1:1 session benefit from a distinctive teaching methodology, based on the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). Teaching focuses on creating a positive and motivating environment, by ensuring that children experience a high level of success in their learning. Where appropriate for students, curriculum delivery is of a 'small steps' approach, where tasks are broken down into smaller components, and taught systematically, hence building up students' skills in a methodical way.

While all students at Pathways School have a personalised curriculum, to avoid duplication of content for Early Learners we adopt a Long-Term Curriculum Map. This plan identifies a rolling programme of themes to be covered within each key stage.

9.2 Advanced Learners

Advanced Learner Students that have developed effective group working skills access a curriculum made up of, English, Mathematics, Science, ICT, Design and Food Technology, Personal Social and Health Education, Physical Education, Geography, History, Dance,

Drama, Music and Art. Early Learners and Intermediate Learners access elements of the wider curriculum as appropriate, documented in Individual Education Plans.

9.2.1 Linguistic

The English Curriculum covers speaking and listening, reading, and writing. We aim to ensure that English/Literacy skills are used in as many functional contexts as possible. For Advanced Learners the English curriculum is delivered mainly in group sessions and is maintained within student's 1:1 session throughout the whole school. Groups are taught using the Silver Step AQA Entry Level Certificate Schemes of Work. We use a Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme (SSP) Jolly Phonics to help students to learn to read. Jolly Phonics is primarily designed for 3 to 7 year olds, therefore Pathways teachers will design personalised, age appropriate reading materials to supplement the core scheme.

9.2.2 Mathematical

The Mathematics Curriculum covers using and applying numbers, shapes, space, and measures. We aim to ensure that mathematical skills are used in as many functional contexts as possible. The mathematics curriculum for Advanced Learners is delivered mainly in group sessions and is maintained within students' 1:1 session throughout the whole school. Groups are taught using the AQA Entry Level Certificate subject content.

9.2.3 Scientific

The Science Curriculum for Advanced Learners includes Biology Chemistry and Physics and is taught through Teacher devised assignments that link with the AQA Entry Level Certificate in Science Schemes of Work. The Engage and Teachit resource libraries are used to assist in planning lessons

9.2.4 Creative

Dance, Drama, Music and Art make up the Creative Curriculum.

Dance and Drama enable students to express themselves and to explore how both disciplines have contributed to our culture as well as using it as a tool to explore other topics such as citizenship and history.

Music is an opportunity for skill acquisition as well as individual and group enjoyment. Many students enjoy performing musically although we recognise that others may find this an aversive experience and therefore opportunities are planned carefully. We regularly welcome guest performing arts companies who run workshops for our students, and we enjoy visits to the cinema and theatre.

The Art curriculum at Pathways School is designed to engage, inspire, and provide opportunities for learners to express themselves creatively. Projects, activities, and work meet our four key aims:

- Enable students to produce creative work, exploring ideas, materials and recording experiences
- Have opportunities to work in both 2D and 3D

- Use art of other artists to influence their work
- Explore art in other cultures.

Each academic year is ended with our themed Art Exhibition.

9.2.5 Technological

Computing is taught mainly through individual teaching. All students have an allocated computing target on their IEP. This is a skill that is functionally the most appropriate for each individual student and may be a cross curricula target, such as manding (requesting) for items using a high tech Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) application, such as Proloquo2go.

Food Technology and Design Technology help develop a range of functional and work-related skills including cooking skills, health and safety and food hygiene. Students are also encouraged to explore different tastes, try out new varieties of food, recipes, and ways of preparing food.

9.2.6 Human and Social

Human and Social components of the curriculum are Geography, History, Religious Education, Work Related Learning and Personal Social Health and Economic Education. Personal, Social, Health and Economic development (PSHE) alongside Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural (SMSC) learning are fundamental for children and young adults with SEN and we emphasize the need for these to be integral to everything we do within our school. We promote our students' spiritual, health, social and cultural development and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life.

PSHE areas involve:

- An understanding of self
- Developing personal autonomy
- Developing confidence
- Building relationships between people
- Knowledge and understanding of the world around
- An understanding of appropriate behaviour
- A sensitivity to the needs of others
- Taking responsibility for one's own actions
- An awareness of and respect for the variety of belief, language, and culture in society.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is part of the PSHE curriculum and is accessed appropriate to age, needs and developmental levels. At all times RSE teaching stresses social, ethical and health issues. Prior to formal sex education lessons, parents will be informed and may visit the school to discuss relevant issues.

Pathways School is not affiliated to any religion or denomination. The school's Religious Education is of a broad and balanced nature and all religions are respected and valued. We use the Equals scheme of work, and we aim to recognise and celebrate special holidays

and festivals in all religions. A parent or carer has the right to withdraw a child from religious education. This can be done by writing to the Headteacher.

Geography and History are studied during Key Stage 3 and achievements accredited through the AQA Unit Award Scheme.

Work-related learning is covered in Key Stage 4 and activities use the context of work to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding around employment. Our aim is to enable young people to develop career awareness and employability skills.

9.2.7 Physical and Aesthetic

The Physical Education curriculum engages students in a range of sports and activities; and ensures that each student:

- better understands and recognises their strengths
- is challenged to try new things
- develops and broadens key skills for life e.g., turn taking, following rules, hand-eye coordination, listening to instructions, interacting with others, self-help skills etc.

All students are encouraged to take an active role in all aspects of PE and student participation is key. Throughout the school day we focus on promoting healthy lifestyles and this is strengthened through the PE curriculum.

10. Accreditation

The AQA Unit Award Scheme is invaluable as it is an important pathway for our students to receive accreditation for their achievements. It provides a wide range of units which are differentiated, making accreditation accessible to all students regardless of their ability. Furthermore, through allowing amendments and writing our own units, we can expand and customise units to our student's individual learning interests and needs. Some Advanced Learners will achieve AQA Entry Level Certification, and all students work towards ASDAN Certificates in Personal Progress, Personal and Social Development and Employability.