

Curriculum Policy

(Including Intent, Implementation and Impact)

Policy Reference:	<i>BBS3</i>
Version Number:	<i>5</i>
Applies to:	<i>Aurora Beeches School</i>
Approved by:	<i>Head of School</i>
Implementation date:	<i>July 2023</i>
Next review due by:	<i>July 2024</i>
<i>This policy has been reviewed to ensure it promotes safeguarding and does not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups</i>	

1. Aims

The Beeches School for pupils with autism and other related diagnoses, recognises that all pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. All pupils need to work at a level which is appropriate to their understanding, relevant to their chronological age and at a rate that suits their individual abilities. Learning and teaching is approached with a focus on the individual needs of the learners. Each pupil has a tailored curriculum based upon their baseline assessment, previous academic outcomes and long-term learning targets. Pupils will be taught in small groups, individually, and when appropriate within the community. High aspirations are held for all its pupils, through the curriculum, pupils' experiences, knowledge, self-confidence, ability to communicate and independence are developed.

- To ensure all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- To ensure that all pupils have an equal right to access high quality teaching in all areas of the curriculum that addresses their individual needs and supports them to make at least good progress
- To promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils
- To encourage personal development, so that they are well prepared to respect others and contribute to wider society and life in Britain
- To promote fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- To support all pupils developing healthy lifestyles and develop positive relationships
- To provide opportunities and experiences that develop pupil's communication skills
- To ensure all pupils have meaningful pathways towards their next destination and for pupils to have meaningful involvement in decision making related to this

Curriculum Overview

Subject	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
Core Subjects		
English	✓	✓
Mathematics	✓	✓
Science	✓	✓
Citizenship Studies (PSHCE)	✓	✓
P.E. - Outdoor Activities	✓	✓
Curriculum Subjects		
ICT – Digital Skills	✓	Optional choice
Humanities	✓	
Philosophy and Ethics	✓	
Geography	*	Optional choice
History	*	Optional choice
Bushcraft	✓	Optional choice
Art and Design (Project Based Learning)	✓	✓
Prep for Adulthood (Life Skills)	✓	✓
Careers	✓	✓
Cooking (Catering)	✓	✓
Motor Vehicle		Optional choice
Animal Care (enrichment)	Optional choice	Optional choice

(* taken as separate choices in Year 9) Certificated qualification studies begin in year 9
(Motor Vehicle can only be studied from 14 years old)

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice/legislation: This policy considers the requirements of the “Independent school standards”.

3. Scope and Vision

Pupils at Aurora Beeches School have a range of needs including ASC, social and communication difficulties, high anxiety and sensory processing issues. Pupil needs can be complex mix of the above and may also include Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties. Most have a history of failed educational placements and partly due to the covid pandemic, some have been at home away from any social situations for a substantial amount of time. The Young People are characterised by a lack of self-esteem and confidence, a reluctance to trust and a fear of challenge. This means that teachers must be creative and tailor approaches to each young person to build resilience and confidence.

We have organised our school across two areas with Key Stage three, pupils based in the school (house) and Key Stage four, pupils based in the Cottages. Class sizes are no larger than 6 pupils, with individual support to best address the pupils’ needs, both academically and socially. Break and lunch times are highly staffed with planned activities to support pupils in the less structured times of the day. This ensures the support needed for those who may be anxious around social situations.

We have high aspirations for our pupils, we will support them to be successful in achieving their goals. We want our pupils to have a purpose and pride in their achievements. Each pupil’s experience at Beeches school will prepare them for the next stage of their life, through gaining employability and independence skills. We want our pupils to be recognised for their talents and abilities.

4. The Curriculum

The whole school curriculum is based upon four key areas, Communication, Writing, Reading and Maths (CWRM), whilst providing all pupils with opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding across key themes; Mathematical, Numeracy, Scientific, Physical, Aesthetics supported by vocational learning options, the focus upon CWRM offers the key to a pupil unlocking their potential. Upon entry into the school pupils are baselined and assessed in these four areas and tailored programmes are provided for those needing extra support. All pupils are screened to assess current levels of phonics, which is used to inform appropriate levels of intervention that is delivered as 1:1 or small groups where appropriate.

Key Stage 3 pupils will follow programmes of study which deliver the skills and knowledge identified in the National Curriculum. The curriculum embraces all areas of academic learning at a level that is related to individual educational needs and provides suitable levels of challenge. Opportunities to develop pupil’s personal, social and health awareness and understanding are embedded across all curriculum areas.

With a project-based learning approach, pupils are encouraged to investigate environmental concerns and propose ways to reduce the impact we have on climate change. This cross curricular approach further develops essential skills needed to succeed in all other subjects, including CWRM which underpins their learning opportunities.

Intent

- Beeches School are committed to embedding environmental matters through the curriculum. This will enable pupils to develop into thoughtful, respectful adults who contribute to wider society and life in Britain.

Implementation

- Every pupil will develop enquiring minds around global, national and local environmental issues, through project-based studies which incorporate cross curricular skills.

Impact

- To develop an awareness of the world around them and embed sustainable habits to help reduce the effects of global warming and climate change. This also supports the Aurora objectives to achieve net zero by 2030.

Key Stage Three (year 7)

Intent

- To create safe, caring and stimulating environments for all pupils on the first step of their secondary school journey.
- To support all pupils to work towards age-related expectations in English, Communication, Writing, Reading and Maths as a platform for future learning.
- To understand barriers and support learning to ensure seamless transitions from the primary curriculum to a secondary curriculum.

Implementation

- Class sizes do not exceed 6 pupils with 1:1 support in line with individual EHCP needs. All pupils are assessed for current knowledge and skills including phonics level, broadly following the National Curriculum, ensuring any gaps in Key Stage two knowledge are included in all planned learning.
- Pupils have a visual timetable to support independence, with regular opportunities for outside learning, including bushcraft, PE(Outdoor Activities) where they develop their social and team building skills. A timetabled library session ensures opportunity for quality time to read for pleasure.
- Movement and sensory breaks are planned into the lessons to ensure all have access to an alternative space to relax and self-regulate if needed.
- All teachers ensure EHCP targets and needs are addressed, resources are fully accessible for every pupil.

- Weekly staff meetings discuss progress and if required, interventions are developed in close partnership with our Therapy Team. Interventions can be 1:1 or small group work depending on the need and requirements of the EHCP.
- Therapy team offer weekly activities such as mindful colouring, crafts, yoga sessions and pupil drop in opportunities to support pupils' emotional and mental wellbeing.
- All pupils have a Positive Behaviour Support Plan which is created and maintained by the Therapy Team and the pupil to ensure ownership to the pupil. All staff regularly read pupil PBSPs to inform of the strategies that are most effective and personal to the pupil.

Impact

- Increased confidence in Communication, Writing, Reading and Maths skills as a base for future learning.
- Nurture a love of reading for pleasure.
- Confidently use a range of resources including IT skills for preparation for independent learning.
- Begin to trust and develop friendships with peers through outdoor activities.
- Students will be confident to ask for help and accept support from trusted members of their class teams. They will begin to demonstrate emotional resilience and be able to regulate their emotions with support from staff.
- Pupils will begin to recognise success both academically and emotionally and start to develop a toolbox of self-regulating strategies.

Key Stage Three (year 8 & 9)

Intent

- To ensure pupils become confident learners and reduce any gaps in Key Stage two knowledge so that they can fully access the Key Stage three curriculum.
- Further promote independence and emotional wellbeing, enabling full engagement and successful achievements.
- To prepare for study in Key Stage Four and increase self-confidence to achieve high aspirations.
- To fully explore all future options available and confidently choose an appropriate pathway to become well prepared to respect others and contribute to wider society and life in Britain.

Implementation

- Learning is based on the National Curriculum that is taught by subject teachers, with the emphasis on Mathematics and Literacy but is augmented with the continued access to addition of social skills, Citizenship (PSHCE), life skills (Preparation for Adulthood), outdoor learning including bushcraft, PE (Outdoor Activities), cross curricular and creative opportunities.
- At the end of year 8, pupils can choose their path of study that will begin in year 9, setting the basis for the qualification subjects.
- Assessments will be made to ensure accurate level of qualifications and ensure stretch and challenge opportunities throughout.

- Through annual review meetings, pupil, parent/carer and tutor meetings, transition plans can be made for future aspirations and smooth transition into Key Stage Four study.
- Year 9 pupils will have the opportunity to mentor year 7 pupils with their reading skills, in “library sessions”.

Impact

- At the end of year 9, pupils will have the self-confidence and skills to transition to Key Stage four and follow an accredited pathway to support their future aspirations.
- Have the skills to cope with difficulties and know how to seek support using their toolbox of strategies to solve a problem.
- They will exhibit greater levels of resilience both for learning and in social situations.
- They will manage challenges in an increasingly mature manner and will have begun to set goals for their future adult life.
- They will have a higher stamina for learning and maintain a high level of engagement in the classroom.
- Pupils will identify how therapeutic activities and sessions are supporting their independence and understanding of their diagnoses and the challenges that may bring.
- Pupils will have increased confidence in their skills and qualities and be able to share them with others.
- Pupils will be developing healthy and sustained lifestyles and friendships which will give them a strong sense of self.
- Pupils will have increased self-esteem and see themselves as mentors to other peers.

Key Stage Four (year 10 & 11)

Studies in key stage 4 support pupils to attain relevant qualifications so that they can progress to the next stage of their education, for some this may possibly be into courses that lead to higher-level qualifications and into employment. Aurora will provide opportunities for young people to stay within an educational setting post 16. Pupils are supported to explore opportunities offered by Aurora as well as other suitable educational provisions. Our goal is for the individual to access support which maintains and continues to meet their Educational, Emotional and Mental Health needs, where they can continue to gain related qualifications and gain independence and skills for life.

Intent

- For every pupil to achieve their academic goals to ensure a positive outcome to future education and employment.
- For every EHCP target to be met or exceeded in all areas.
- For every pupil to leave Beeches School with independent life skill accreditations to ensure they can fulfil their individual potential, ready for the next stage of their education or employment as increasingly confident and independent young adults.

Implementation

- Pupils will study in the Cottages where there is a more mature feel with less “school like” furniture to promote positive adult behaviours and transition opportunities into adult life.
- Pupils follow a qualification pathway to suit their needs. As well as the core subjects, pupils can choose the option of the humanities subjects of either Geography or History to take at either AQA awards or GCSEs depending on ability.
- Outdoor activities, including bushcraft, PE(Outdoor Activities) and cooking (catering) sessions are maintained to promote healthy living.
- Opportunities to visit work placements and other colleges enable pupils to make an informed choice of post-16 transitions.

Impact

- At the end of year 10, pupils will have had the opportunity to sit functional skills English and Maths qualifications.
- At the end of year 11, pupils will have the opportunity to sit all external qualifications along with any other internally marked qualifications and vocational accreditations. This will allow them to access further education or employment.
- Will have developed effective coping strategies to manage difficulties they may encounter and regulate their emotional responses.
- They will have developed social skills that allow them to operate in a variety of situations including within the local community.
- They will hold key life skills to prepare them to live independently.
- Pupils will recognise where to find help or information when they need help and effectively communicate this to unfamiliar people.
- Pupils will have the skills to sustain healthy, positive relationships.
- Pupils will hold a sense of self-awareness and recognise their areas of strength as well as difficulty. Pupils will begin to have a sense of place in the community and an understanding of the world we live in.

Integral to our curriculum is a wide range of educational experiences that extend beyond the classroom. Trips and visits extend the range of environments in which pupils learn and broaden their experiences of the wider world. Outdoor Education programmes include activities that enable pupils to enjoy taking part in physical and social tasks, in a range of environments and locations which are free from the constraints of a classroom. Pupils have opportunities to develop social skills, self-confidence, tolerance and team working skills whilst developing positive attitudes to health and fitness.

Additionally, the school provides learning experiences which enable pupils to develop the skills needed for independent living. All pupils have access to a tailored and certificated life skills programme, using AQA Awards to accredit their learning. This includes programmes of study from budgeting to a variety of social and independent living skills to prepare all pupils for adulthood.

Pupils can make choices regarding the courses they study and the types of qualifications they work towards. Qualifications offered meet a range of abilities in a variety of subject areas, from vocational to more traditional GCSE, or functional skills. The school has a strong belief in the value of vocational educational programmes and provides access to suitable courses and accreditation. Vocational studies can include opportunities for pupils

to engage in animal care, motor vehicle and catering, attend employment engagement opportunities and work placements, with support from staff.

The school provides Sex and Relationships education. Pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The role of SRE is to both explore and challenge conventional notions of masculinity and femininity, describing sexuality in a positive sense. It provides pupils with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to feel happy and supported in their own sexual identity, and to respect others' sexual identity. Those involved in the delivery of SRE will be committed to securing a safe environment which encourages open discussion of both the positives and dangers of sexual activity. The biological aspects of human reproduction are delivered through the science curriculum. We recognise that parents have the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of the school's program of Sex and Relationship Education, other than those elements, which are required by the Science National Curriculum.

5. Curriculum Transition

The school prides itself on providing effective and vital support for pupils as they make transitions through the various stages in their education. We carefully manage the transition of our pupils throughout the school and in preparing pupils for further education. Detailed assessment and planning allow the full team of professionals to ensure that all support is cohesive and leads to the fulfilment of everyone's targets. Pupils and their parents/guardian/carers are provided with advice about the transition process and included in discussion prior to decisions being made about next steps.

The school promotes independent career advice and at regular intervals all pupils meet with external Careers Advisors to guide and advise on choices. During the academic year the school has opportunities to attend guest speakers and careers fairs. These are tailored to the needs of the cohort and Key stage and are at times bespoke to the individual. These opportunities we believe enable our pupils to begin to make informed choices about their future.