

## Curriculum Policy

### Aurora Hanley School

|                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                           |
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| <b>Policy Reference:</b>                                                                                                                                    | HAN2                                                                                      |
| <b>Applies to:</b>                                                                                                                                          | Aurora Hanley School                                                                      |
| <b>Associated documents:</b>                                                                                                                                | Independent School Standards document<br>Marking and Feedback Policy<br>Assessment Policy |
| <b>Approved by:</b>                                                                                                                                         | Head of School-Julie Martin<br>Principal- Tracy Whitehurst                                |
| <b>Implementation date:</b>                                                                                                                                 | September 2026                                                                            |
| <b>Next review due by:</b>                                                                                                                                  | September 2027                                                                            |
| <i>This policy has been reviewed to ensure it promotes safeguarding and does not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups</i> |                                                                                           |

## 0. Summary of changes since previous version of policy

### 1. Aims

Aurora Hanley School recognises that all students should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. All students 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 the focus on the individual needs of the learners. Each student has a tailored curriculum based upon their baseline assessment, previous academic outcomes and long-term learning targets. Students will be taught in small groups, individually, and when appropriate within the community-so that skills are generalised to real life settings and pupils are prepared for life in the wider world. High aspirations are held for all pupils. Our curriculum develops pupils' experiences, knowledge, self-confidence, ability to communicate and independence.

Our curriculum is designed to build the practical, everyday skills identified through a clinical assessment tool into the wider curriculum so they are integral to what we deliver every day, whilst also empowering parents/carers to reinforce these skills within the home environment. This sits alongside high-quality learning experiences based on a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our curriculum is designed to broaden our pupils' horizons, widen their cultural capital and empower them to be curious about the world around them. Through personalised support and a nurturing approach our students will become compassionate, independent learners who are well prepared for the demands of the 21st century in modern Britain.

#### **Our curriculum Intent is:**

- To ensure each young person leaves us with a recognised qualification in English and Maths, and a suite of wider qualifications/accreditation which prepare them for their next step.
- To develop every young person's social and emotional growth and life skills, so that they are better able to engage successfully with others and the wider world.
- To ensure each young person has a positive destination to move onto, and that they have the confidence and resilience to take their next step.

#### **To do this we will ensure that:**

- › all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- › all students 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
- › we promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils
- › we encourage personal development, so that all pupils are well prepared to respect others and contribute to wider society and life in Britain
- › we promote fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- › we support all pupils in developing healthy lifestyles and developing positive relationships
- › we provide opportunities and experiences that develop pupil's communication skills
- › we ensure the teaching and learning of functional skills, knowledge and understanding including access to vocational pathways in KS4/5
- › we 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                 | Lower School | Upper School Vocational | KS3 | KS4 | KS5 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| <b>Core subjects</b>                |              |                         |     |     |     |
| English                             | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Maths                               | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Science                             | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   |     |
|                                     |              |                         |     |     |     |
| Vineland skills/PSHE                | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Food Tech/life skills               | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
|                                     |              |                         |     |     |     |
| <b>Foundation subjects</b>          |              |                         |     |     |     |
| Art                                 | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | *   |
| History                             | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | *   |     |
| Geography                           | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | *   |     |
| RE                                  | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   |     |
| ICT/Computing                       | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| PE                                  | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Music/Performing Arts               | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | **  | **  |
| Design Tech                         | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | *** | *** |
| Citizenship                         |              | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Social education/Travel training    | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Careers                             | ✓            | ✓                       | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Kings Trust Qualification (Post 16) |              |                         |     |     | ✓   |

\*GCSE History /Geography may be an option if we have a viable group of students who wish to pursue this course

\* In some years, art or photography GCSE may be offered to meet needs of cohort- dependent on capacity

\*\* Some options on Feel-good Friday are linked to music/Performing arts

\*\*\* All Pupils participate in Food technology across all year groups. Some students participate in elements of Design technology linked to Woodwork.

## 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy takes into account the requirements of the Independent school standards.

## 3. Scope

Pupils at Aurora Hanley School have a range of needs including; Autism Spectrum Conditions, Social and Communication Difficulties, high anxiety and Sensory Processing Disorder. Pupil needs are in most cases a 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. 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.

At Aurora Hanley School we are utilising the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales-3 (VABS-3) in school to underpin the curriculum. This is a standardised clinical assessment with a strong evidence-base and robust reliability and validity. Adaptive skills are the practical, everyday skills needed to function in the environment; including communication, daily living skills and socialisation. Often, adaptive skills can be under-developed in individuals with Autism Spectrum Conditions. Hence, the rationale for utilising the VABS-3 tool in school, so that we are not only supporting the young people with their academic development, we are supporting the development of the life skills they need to function independently.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 The Leadership Team will:

4.1.1 Ensure that the curriculum policy is adhered to.

4.1.2 Ensure that staff have adequate skills, knowledge and training to deliver the curriculum.

### 4.2 Staff will:

4.2.1 Deliver the curriculum in line with this policy, seeking advice and support where required.

## 5. Definitions

N/A

## 6. Curriculum

In Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 pupils will follow programmes of study which deliver the skills and knowledge identified in the National Curriculum. The curriculum will embrace 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 will be embedded across all curriculum areas and informed by the Vineland assessment tool.

Studies in key stage 4 support pupils to attain relevant qualifications so that they can and do progress to the next stage of their education or pathway. For some, this may be onto 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 which supports and meets their educational, emotional and mental health needs, where they can continue to sit GCSE and related qualifications and gain independence and life skills where this is appropriate. We will support young people through individual pathways to enable them to successfully navigate to the next stage of their education or employment.

Qualifications offered meet a range of abilities in a variety of subject areas, from photography and Home cooking to more traditional GCSE qualifications. 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 attend college and work placements, with support from staff.

The school is regularly visited by outside speakers and we arrange educational visits to give pupils the opportunity to access learning through members of the community and experience learning through a wide range of sources. 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, enabling pupils to apply skills and learning to real-life contexts.

Outdoor Education programmes include adventurous 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.

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 recognize 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. We recognize that many of our young people are highly vulnerable. We teach our

pupils to keep themselves safe and have a focus each year for every age group on consent and appropriate and inappropriate touch, and how to report any concerns.

SMSC and PSHE are central to all aspects of our curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to respect the law and to act consistently with their own beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. We enthusiastically promote fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and are presented in a balanced manner. The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is not allowed.

Religious Education is delivered as a discreet subject and also referenced within other subjects as and when it is relevant. The RE curriculum incorporates learning about other religions so pupils have a broader understanding of the diverse world that they are living in.

## **6.1 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 also 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 each individual'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. Part of the preparation for transitioning into adulthood will include support with travel training and transitioning into buildings and organisations that house a larger number of young people as well as accessing opportunities (including work experience) within the community.

## **7. Support, Advice and Communication**

For further advice or guidance related to this policy please contact the Head of School.

## **8. Monitoring Arrangements**

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of School and Principal.