

# Curriculum Policy



**Approved by:** Penny Harris (Director)  
Jane Cox (Director)

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All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are also generated and reviewed placing safeguarding at the heart of all that we do.

## 1. Policy Aims

The purpose of this policy is to provide information for staff, other professionals, families and other interested stakeholders. This policy is underpinned by the school's vision and curriculum intent and describes our tailored approach to the curriculum, the context behind our approach, and the reasons why such a bespoke approach is required at On Track.

This policy does not contain the detail and content of our curriculum. This can be found on the school website.

A school's curriculum includes what is 'taught' - planned learning opportunities, along with what is 'caught' - all other interactions that students experience during their time at school. The curriculum is the basis for any school to provide a meaningful and effective education to the students who attend. At On Track we believe in taking a broad and balanced approach which identifies and meets the needs of our students. The curriculum, alongside our Thrive approach, provides consistency throughout the school, whilst recognising age and stage related aspects of learning and individual special educational needs.

The development of the curriculum at On Track is the result of the hard work, knowledge, skill and passion of all staff, and other professionals with whom we work. We believe it is important that specialists are involved in curriculum design and content. Specialist staff have worked diligently to develop the curriculum and there is a sense of ownership within subject departments. Consistency is vital for students with SEN, and therefore careful consideration is taken when making changes to the curriculum.

This policy begins by describing the context, vision and intent of our curriculum. This underpins the fundamental need for a bespoke curriculum to meet the needs of the students at On Track. This policy also references our curriculum maps and approach to assessment.

## **2. Context**

On Track school is a special school for students aged from 7-18. We are spread across 3 sites:

- Saunders - where most of our KS2 and KS3 students attend;
- Narita House - where most of our KS4 students attend and our offsite learners are based;
- Castle House - where a selection of our students with complex needs attend.

We have approximately 60 students across the age range. At On Track we support students with a wide range of learning needs such as: Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), Autism (ASD) and children with Complex Needs and/or behaviour that challenges.

Many students come from the local area, however some students travel from across North Devon. Our students are predominantly, though not exclusively, of white British origin.

Due to the complex nature of the students who attend On Track, it is our responsibility to provide them with the most appropriate curriculum - a personalised approach to academic learning, enrichment, Thrive, independent skills and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), including RSE.

We believe that On Track is a safe, happy and stimulating school that takes a flexible approach to supporting students' individual needs. Our staff work hard to ensure that a nurturing 'Thrive' approach supports all students throughout their education, providing a bespoke curriculum offer to each child depending on their needs.

At On Track, all aspects of school life are designed to support, nurture, inspire and empower students, through a mix of academic pursuits, creative approaches, outdoor learning and independent life skills. The roles of communication, relationships and a trauma-informed approach are key in all we do, and support our approach to learning.

Our curriculum is designed with each students' EHCP at the core, facilitating greater involvement of students, families and other professionals in their learning and development.

## **3. Vision**

Our overarching vision and curriculum intent is:

On Track aims to enable young people to:

- Experience positive academic and social achievement and success
- Develop skills and knowledge in preparation for adult life
- Become lifelong learners

This underpins our hopes and aspirations for our students during their time with us, and beyond into adulthood. We provide ambitious but achievable challenges so that students experience success and achievement, promoting their confidence and sense of self-efficacy.

## **4. Curriculum aims**

At On Track, our curriculum aims to achieve excellent outcomes and develop students' academic achievement, independence, and social and emotional development as they transition through school and move towards adulthood. Our curriculum promotes preparation for adulthood by ensuring students have access to an age and stage appropriate education that encourages all students to engage in learning and identify as successful learners who are able to achieve. Our curriculum aims to ensure our students: enjoy learning, developing curiosity, creativity and confidence; engage in the opportunities that our curriculum provides whether this is academic,

social, emotional or a more bespoke provision, and develop their knowledge and skills applying this in relevant situations, such as:

- Being equipped with skills that support them to be numerate
- Communicating and expressing themselves effectively and with confidence
- Building independence, resilience and resourcefulness
- Equipping students with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to be active members of their communities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Leading an active and healthy lifestyle, and making healthy choices
- Learning strategies to develop socially and emotionally, to develop a positive sense of self and good mental health and to have positive relationships
- Having positive interactions with the community and gain a sense of belonging

Our curriculum provides a broad and balanced education for all students. It is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning.

Our curriculum is developmental and child-centred and recognises that each student will follow a different pathway of learning. We promote the inclusion of all students and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as pertinent to their circumstances. As students move through the school, the skills they need for independent living in adulthood become an increasingly relevant part of learning.

These include:

- Communication
- Academic achievement (including Literacy and Numeracy)
- Accreditation and Qualifications
- Healthy lifestyle and choices
- Independence
- Relationships
- Self-respect, dignity
- Self-esteem
- self-confidence
- Self-regulation

At On Track our curriculum aims to:

- Deliver an adapted academic curriculum (based on the National Curriculum) at a level appropriate to student attainment;
- Offer a broad and balanced curriculum;
- Provide stimulating activities and tasks;
- Set ambitious, achievable targets for individual students;
- Develop effective communication skills;
- Develop technology skills which engage students in the advancing world of technology;
- Encourage the tolerance of opinions and beliefs and reflect the multicultural nature of modern Britain;
- Develop cultural capital so that students are successful in society, their career and the world of work;
- Develop self-confidence and skills towards independent living;
- Encourage a caring, respectful attitude towards each other;
- Ensure continuity and progression;
- Enable access for all students;
- Use enrichment activities to enhance the education offered to students;

- Engage the skills of specialists within school and other professionals within the community.

## **5. Curriculum organisation, progress tracking and assessment**

Although the National Curriculum, accredited qualifications and further education opportunities are important for the students at On Track, it is sometimes more important to consider students' individual needs and the skills that will support them in adult life.

At On Track we use our bespoke 'Milestones Assessment Framework' to closely track students' progress. It is however important to note that the school's vision and the intent of the curriculum mean that the holistic needs of each student takes precedence over academic attainment alone. For the students at On Track, our curriculum must incorporate opportunities for students to develop a meaningful depth of knowledge and understanding, including generalising skills over time. This is especially important where students are studying life skills or targets that fall outside of tradition.

The 'Milestones Assessment Framework' sets out a coherent and progressive pathway of learning in each subject. The Milestones provide a discreet language with which we can understand, plan for, assess and discuss students' attainment and progress when working with students who are often working well below age-related expectations (ARE). For example, a student aged 15 (who would be in Year 10 in a mainstream setting) may be working at Milestone 9. The Milestones are designed to ensure that students who are working below age related expectations are taught relevant content, knowledge and skills to carefully fill gaps in their learning, and to provide ambitious opportunities to make rapid progress and achieve.

The starting point for a student's programme of study is the individual student. A timetable, taken from the full available curriculum, is designed to meet their needs and delivered in a way that is enjoyable and will engage each student. Each academic year, a student's EHCP is reviewed. The long term targets for this are used to populate a student's Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). The PLP features termly, yearly and long term targets for each EHCP area. These targets are incorporated within the curriculum subject areas each term. All students study English, Maths, PSHE and Thrive, and usually Science and ICT. These subjects are a significant feature of our curriculum and are considered supportive to a developmental approach.

Students in the early stages of their education journey will access the Support & Nurture Pathway (Milestones 3-6) which enables them to develop trusting relationships, feel comfortable within the school environment and re-engage with learning. The curriculum acknowledges what learners can do by supporting and developing their strengths and abilities. Progress is measured in small increments so that it can be recognised, measured and celebrated. The Support & Nurture Pathway enables students to make academic progress while focusing on developing their understanding of the world around them, their place within the world, and of social interactions and relationships. Students working within the Support & Nurture Pathway have opportunities to achieve accredited qualifications at an appropriate level, such as AQA awards.

The Inspire Pathway (Milestones 7-12) is a flexible approach, designed to support students who are ready and able to learn but who struggle due to their individual needs. It gives teachers the opportunity to support student's strengths and fill their gaps, whilst using the best approach to meet their learning needs. Students following our Inspire Pathway access a personalised curriculum, structured around their specific needs and interests. Students working within the Inspire Pathway have opportunities to achieve accredited qualifications at an appropriate level, such as Functional Skills and WJEC.

The Empower Pathway (Milestones 13-18) consists of adapted National Curriculum subjects, along with independence skills and more bespoke subjects to suit their individual interests. Students working within the Empower Pathway, tend to be able to access more formal learning with subject specific knowledge and skills. Students have access to a wide range of subjects, modified in the light of their developmental and academic level and their special educational needs. Independence skills also form a large part of the curriculum. There is generally a higher level of formal teaching / structure within this Pathway and the aim is to achieve accredited qualifications at an appropriate level, such as GCSE and BTEC.

## **6. Responsibilities**

The Directors are responsible for:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation;
- Ensuring that a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets;
- Ensuring that proper provision is made for students with different abilities and special educational needs.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation and of this policy;
- Curriculum priorities and aspirational targets are set;
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and special educational needs;
- The school is teaching a broad and balanced curriculum which includes: English, maths, science, ICT, PSHE, RSE, Humanities, The Arts, Careers, Sport and Fitness, Outdoor Learning;

To ensure a collaborative approach, shared responsibility and distributed leadership, selected staff will take on Head of Department (HoD) roles. This may be because they have particular expertise in this area, or a special interest.

HoDs are responsible for a comprehensive monitoring system, including:

- Meetings with other Heads of Department;
- Auditing of planning;
- Learning walks focused on subject implementation;
- Auditing school resources;
- Analysing assessment data and accreditation;
- Observing lessons with specific focus;
- Book scrutiny;
- Pupil voice.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning, preparing and resourcing series of engaging lessons (MTPs) that meet the requirements of the curriculum maps
- Differentiating learning to meet the individual needs of students;
- Using a range of quality first teaching (QFT) strategies, techniques and resources in order to meet students needs;
- Delivering high quality lessons;
- Attending training as appropriate;
- Formative assessment for learning and the administration and recording of summative assessments following the assessment cycle.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

## **7. Post 16**

Much of the work within On Track Post 16 is based on the absolute belief that, fundamental to our role, is planning and preparing young adults for life beyond On Track. Within our Post 16 provision, all aspects of the curriculum are based on this ideology fulfilling the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes as required by the Department of Education. PfA identified four key outcomes in relation to preparing young people for adulthood. These are:

- Employment
- Health
- Independent Living
- Community Participation

We actively encourage choice-making, ensuring that students are key participants in making everyday decisions, as well as those about their futures. We modify the curriculum to ensure that we concentrate on building important skills in preparation for adulthood whilst supporting individuals to reach their full potential. Students have access to employability opportunities and we have strong relationships with external partners.

## **8. Legislation**

This policy is written to comply with the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Health and Safety issues are described fully in the school's Health and Safety Policy. All HoDs have a responsibility to ensure that curriculum procedures pay due attention to Health and Safety issues. All staff are provided with equal opportunity of access to professional development and training in relevant curriculum areas and within budget resources. Training needs will be linked to Performance Management Appraisals and the School Development Plan.

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Careers policy