



**Oak Tree
School**

Curriculum Policy

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Oak Tree School is committed to raising achievement and enabling vulnerable children and young people to recognise and fulfil their potential and support them through a personalised, engaging and relevant curriculum. Our priorities are to develop and improve core knowledge and skills required to make a manageable and successful transition to work, college and adult life. We will provide a safe, structured and supportive environment where our children and young people begin to accept and take responsibility for their actions, be encouraged and taught to make positive choices and decisions and therefore present and display socially acceptable behaviours.

All pupils attending Oak Tree School have a Statement of Special Educational Needs related to social, emotional and communication difficulties and associated challenging behaviours that have proven too severe to have been successfully addressed within mainstream schools.

At Oak Tree School we aim to:

- Help students to develop positive feelings of self-worth and confidence
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum, including a focus on independence skills that are inclusive and accessible to all and raise achievement and attainment
- Deliver activities that provide suitable learning challenges, giving every young person the opportunity to experience success and achieve as much as possible
- Devise individual approaches and interventions, in response to the curriculum, to match young people's diverse learning needs, interests and strengths
- Integrate health and therapeutic support, advice and programs into the curriculum
- Teach young people to have an awareness of their own spiritual development and to understand right from wrong

At the school we offer a flexible, personalised and engaging skill based curriculum providing both choice and challenge, focused on developing emotional literacy, core subject knowledge and offering a wide range of accredited outcomes. There is a strong focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning through the delivery of a range of social development programmes. The social, emotional, communication and behavioural needs require specific attention if appropriate learning and educational progress is to occur. Specialist support for the children and young people, through both the delivery of the programmes of study and personalised learning programmes, will be integrated into the curriculum and into teaching and learning. Support may be in the form of Speech and Language Therapy, Person Centred Counselling or Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for example. The curriculum is delivered by qualified, skilled, empathetic and experienced staff operating in a warm, safe, nurturing and state of the art learning environment.

We focus on meeting individual needs set in the context of each pupil's entitlement to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum and his/her desire to follow a course similar to those of their peers in mainstream school. Thus, whilst providing common curriculum opportunities for all, the school curriculum provides enough flexibility to meet the very differing needs of our pupils. Therefore, pupils benefit from personalised teaching/learning or individual curriculum timetables, which help to engage the learner and to recognize the value and importance of education in their lives.

All young people receive full-time supervised education, in which they experience a curriculum that includes a range of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative aspects appropriate to their age and aptitude. The over-riding aim of the curriculum is to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people in terms of individual learning, independence, personal growth and development.

All pupils have access to aspects of the National Curriculum and are offered the opportunity to take part in courses of study leading to examination entry at a range of levels. These courses include 'Foundation Learning' qualifications; a range of GCSE's including core subjects, a selection of vocational experiences and a variety of college courses. Placements are sourced to meet the needs and wishes of individuals or groups of pupils.

For pupils identified with numeracy and literacy difficulties, specialist teaching is available in addition to the support provided in the classroom. Where individuals require additional support in learning and behaviour it is highlighted on the 'Student Passport'. These documents identify classroom strategies, curricular targets, behaviour targets and trigger points. They are child-centred documents and are updated half termly after having structured conversations with the pupil. Any specialist intervention will focus on specific areas of difficulty, identifying appropriate strategies, assessment methods and time scales for evaluation.

It is felt that our school environment encompasses far more than solely learning the curriculum. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development is also a key aspect when considering the broader dimension of reaching potential. At Oak Tree School, SMSC development is present in the curriculum but also within a wide range of enrichment activities. All staff members take account of and respond to, within their curriculum planning, the need for SMSC development. In doing so, each pupil's emotional and social needs, their need to learn about themselves and their own feelings, relationships and how their behaviour affects others is considered. It is recognised that in order to achieve and succeed, pupils' self-confidence and motivation towards learning need addressing through the provision of satisfying and stimulating educational experiences and that pupils who progress take a pride in their efforts and that the successful completion of tasks develop their self-image. All teachers and support staff, along with the pupil's parents/carers, are encouraged to recognise and commend each pupil's achievements. This is facilitated through the use of a wide range of rewards.

Pupils are recognised and acknowledged for their effort and achievements made across a broad spectrum of personal, social, recreational and educational experiences. Increasingly, during their time in the school, pupils are encouraged to take a full part in their own assessment, recognising their own successes, areas that could be improved and/or receive additional support. In this way pupils are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their own learning. This is particularly important when making choices about Key Stage 4 curriculum options and the transition to post-16 education or training.

The school believes that it is of particular importance that all who work within the learning environment develop positive relationships. Thus all those involved in course delivery, management of pupils and the provision for individual needs work together to ensure learning. This will include not only staff from the school and the pupils themselves but also parents/carers and external providers such as college, work experience placements, etc.

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education

At Oak Tree School we are committed to developing our students Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education. As part of this provision, we ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject. This is closely monitored through lesson observations and monitoring of planning and the curriculum where appropriate. All staff at Oak Tree School, and visitors, will be regularly reminded that it is inappropriate to share partisan political views with any students or their families. Any breach of this will result in disciplinary action being taken at an appropriate level.

Fundamental British Values

Oak Tree School actively encourages pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, throughout the curriculum delivery, teaching and learning in the school. These values underpin all teaching and learning at Oak Tree School, however are also explicitly taught through assemblies, PSHCE and through the students taking an active role in the school council.

Specifically, we aim to ensure that pupils have an understanding and knowledge of:

- How citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens
- An understanding that bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account by the people, through the democratic organs of government
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law, and an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviours
- An understanding of the problems of identifying and combating discrimination