



Curriculum Policy

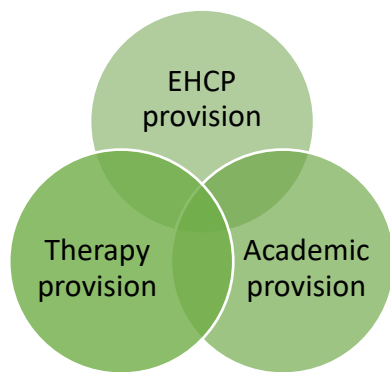
Created:	September 2023
Reviewed:	March 2024
To be reviewed:	March 2025

Curriculum Intent

At Ashley Park School, our vision is to cultivate a learning environment that embodies the values of ambition, collaboration, and trust. We are committed to providing a child-centred education that acknowledges and nurtures unique abilities, tailoring our approach to meet individual needs. Through everything we do, we aim to demonstrate and foster our school values of Ambition, Collaboration and Trust (ACT).

As a SEN school delivering education to a diverse group of young people, our curriculum has been adapted and tailored to meet individual needs; we believe all young people deserve the right to an education that will support them to become happy and confident individuals with qualifications and achievements that will support them in their future. Our staff team is dedicated to creating a curriculum that is flexible and ensures it is based around young people's individual needs.

Curriculum Design



Each individual child's curriculum experience is unique and is made up of three strands: EHCP provision, therapy and academic provision. We recognise that, for students to make progress, both academically and in a broader personal and social sense, the correct therapy and EHCP provision must be in place. The balance of these strands will change over time. When students begin their journey at Ashley Park, the therapy and EHCP strands are at the forefront of their curriculum as, without the correct provision in place, we know students will not be ready for academic progress.

We recognise that our pupils have individual strengths, needs and challenges and therefore one set curriculum pathway is not appropriate. This means that our pupils will follow different curriculum pathways, depending on their individual profile. When pupils first start at Ashley Park, we take time to build relationships and make assessments, in conjunction with families and other professionals, to make sure they are placed on the correct curriculum pathway.

In line with our core values, we strive to create a curriculum that is ambitious for all. We work collaboratively with teachers, clinicians, students and families to ensure we choose the right pathway for each individual and cultivate relationships of trust to best support learning and development.

Curriculum Aims

We strive to create a curriculum that is broad and balanced, based around the following criteria:

Accessible: carefully tailored to meet the needs of all students, adapting all aspects of learning to enable all our students to achieve and succeed

Meaningful: linked to our school context and community, aligned with students' experiences and interests, helping students to make connections between aspects of learning and skills

Collaborative: where students are able to make decisions about the direction learning may take, with students and teachers working together to make learning fun, creative and relevant

Personalised: carefully pitched differentiated and ambitious learning tasks, to provide every child with an appropriate level of challenge and support

Sequenced: learning 'building blocks' which are carefully sequenced across each subject/area of learning to enable progression in all areas of learning at a pace to suit each student

Nurturing: supporting students to develop their social, emotional and independence skills, embedding these within the daily practices and teachings of school life

Purposeful: providing relevant opportunities for students to gain skills and qualifications which will support them in life after education, enabling them to be valued members of their communities

The curriculum can be accessed through different pathways according to each young person's need, previous experience and level of attainment. Young people at Ashley Park School have needs arising from Autistic Spectrum Conditions, Learning Difficulties and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Conditions. They experience barriers to learning related to cognition and learning including memory, communication and interaction, language and concept development, flexibility of thought, sensory processing, social awareness and behaviours associated arising from their conditions.

The curriculum and teaching and learning approaches used are designed to reduce barriers to learning and ensure good progress and positive engagement. It is the expectation that all young people will access a curriculum and attend lessons in order to fulfil their potential. Approaches used to plan and deliver the curriculum are devised to meet the needs of individual learners, for some this will be through specialist subject focused approaches. For others it is more appropriate to base approaches on a suitable project or areas of interest.

The learning experiences are carefully planned and structured to ensure continuity and cohesion and that each young person is enabled to make the very best progress in the development of their knowledge and skills. Our planning is driven by the young people's needs, linked closely to their EHCP provision, and interests, whilst also being informed by the National Curriculum and Equals Adapted Curriculum. We will also tailor specific projects to ensure students are engaged and motivated to learn. We use a wide range of resources to support this, making sure they are closely matched to ability and developmental needs of individuals.

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for monitoring the planning and delivery of the curriculum utilising a quality assurance framework. This monitoring is organised into an annual timetable which enables leaders to evaluate teaching and learning across the curriculum. This is carried out alongside Subject leads, in order for them to action plan their subject in order to improve provision.

To ensure the young people are accessing the curriculum that is appropriate to their needs, we assess them informally around the time of referral by making visits to the young person, speaking with previous placements regarding current curriculum and progress, and reviewing the current EHCP. Alongside this, we would discuss their needs with parents and carers to gauge and overview of how they would be best placed within school.

On admission to the school, some young people have experienced multiple adverse experiences of previous educational settings. As well as this, these students will have most likely have significant gaps in learning and cognition, due to a combination of barriers to learning. The curriculum design focuses on scaffolding learning and building upon skills and knowledge with the aim of progressively increasing competency, taking into consideration the learner's cognitive load.

Our curriculum design acknowledges the differing strengths and needs of individuals and recognises the fact that some may need to spend far more time than others in a given area of learning and that for some individual's certain skills may remain always inaccessible and therefore need to be bypassed or replaced. The curriculum pace is flexible and aims to close learning gaps.

British Values

Ashley Park 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; however these values are also explicitly taught through assemblies, PSHE 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

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education

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 and visitors will be regularly reminded that it is inappropriate to share political views with any students or their families.

Curriculum Implementation

At Ashley Park School, we have created a flexible curriculum relevant for our students. We believe that reading is the gateway to learning and success for all, and as such our curriculum is underpinned by high quality texts carefully selected to engage and be accessible to all. We follow a thematic approach across the school, with carefully chosen themes and topics to engage our learners. Subject overviews for each half term are in place, which are then adapted and edited as appropriate by teachers. Each teacher, working alongside subject leaders, will carefully plan content appropriate to the needs, skills and interests of the

students in their class. The method of delivery is likely to be different across our classes to closely match the needs of students.

We maximise the opportunity to link learning to student interests and so, whilst overall aims remain the same to ensure progression, projects and topics for learning may be adapted to meet the needs of specific students and classes. This supports the development of a highly personalised curriculum.

As a specialist school, we can create a model a curriculum that best fits the needs of our students. This enables teachers to focus on those things that will have the most impact on young people's lives. Personalisation involves stripping away the less important areas of learning and focusing on the more important ones. This is critical to making the best of what is limited time in school and help appropriately prepare our students for life after their time at Ashley Park.

We have segmented our curriculum into pathways to encompass all learning journeys for our young people.

Discovery pathway – Students on this pathway need a highly adapted curriculum to meet their needs. This pathway focuses on key learning skills in core areas, experiences across curriculum subjects and independence skills. The teaching approach is highly adapted to the needs of students. Our Discovery pathway is a person centred, needs led approach rather than a subject content driven approach which has been developed in order to facilitate the planning and assessment of learning for young people who are working significantly below the expectations for their age-group. Students on this pathway are likely to experience significant challenges to communication and learning. Key Stage 1 National Curriculum guidance, alongside Equals Adapted Curriculum if appropriate, is used to support the learning of students on this pathway. Personal and social development, including independence with key daily skills, are a significant focus. This curriculum ensures that learning is ambitious for children; it is centred on what that person needs and wants at its very core, and means progress is achievable for all.



Explorer pathway – This pathway provides learning content linked to the National Curriculum but delivered at a level and in a teaching style that our students can access, with flexible approaches to learning. Our young people may have elements of the National Curriculum built into their personalised target setting or may access a minimised subject framework for one or more of the core subjects (English, Maths, science). Alongside National Curriculum content, students access a project-based approach to the wider curriculum, tailored to the needs of individuals and classes. The Explorer pathway leads to qualifications in KS4 such as ASDAN, Entry level and Functional skills qualifications, as appropriate. Some students on this pathway may also access GCSEs in some specific areas. In addition, there is an ongoing focus on personal development and independence skills.



Adventure pathway – Students following our Adventure pathway follow a range of discrete National Curriculum subjects to enable them to access higher level qualifications as appropriate. For some students this may include GCSEs. An element of project-based learning is still included as appropriate to engage and motivate students. Some students following this pathway are able access more formal teaching styles, approaches and assessments. This pathway consolidates knowledge and skills from the KS2 National Curriculum before moving onto KS3 and KS4 content as appropriate. Adventurer students will be able to access, with support, increasingly formal lesson structures and approaches to learning as



they progress through the school, tailored to their individual needs and interests. Progress is documented using Evidence for Learning (EFL) and through the use of more formal assessments in line with National Curriculum content.

Selecting the correct curriculum pathway

It is key to note that every child's learning journey is different and as a school we have varied expectations of progress dependent on that child's needs. Our young people will be assessed as above when they get referred to us and, using a multi-disciplinary approach, we will map out their curriculum using a pathway that best suits their needs at the time. This will be reviewed every term, and the pathways approach is fluid so that a student can move between pathways if needed.

In order to ensure the young people are accessing the pathway that is appropriate to their needs, we assess them informally around the time of referral by making visits to the young person, speaking with previous placements regarding current curriculum and progress, and reviewing the current EHCP. Alongside this, we discuss their needs with parents and carers to make a decision about where each student may be best placed within school.

At Ashley Park, we take many things into account when allocating pupils to class groups, including social needs, behavioural needs and learning needs. We know that each of our classrooms will feel different and there will be personalised approaches to learning. There are clear expectations for staff in terms of planning and approaches to curriculum, but we trust in their expertise and knowledge of their students to adapt learning to enable students to make the best possible progress.

Within each pathway, learning is linked closely to EHCP outcomes and targets for each pupil. We maximise the opportunity to link learning to student interests and so, whilst overall aims remain the same to ensure progression, projects and topics for learning may be adapted to meet the needs of specific students and classes. This supports the development of a highly personalised curriculum.

During this time, the young person will be assessed by a range of specialists at the school, which will further inform how the young person learns, as well as identifying interventions that may need to be in place in order for them to extend their learning.

Curriculum Impact

At Ashley Park, staff use an online platform called EFL (Evidence for Learning) to record student attainment and assessments across all subjects taught at the school. This enables us to monitor the impact of the curriculum in place.

Each student also has individual targets, linked to both curriculum areas and their EHCP outcomes, which is updated termly, or more often if required to show progress and identify next steps in learning. Individual targets are closely linked to each student's EHCP outcomes to ensure that the curriculum in place is meeting each student's core learning needs. These targets are reviewed regularly, every half term, to support monitoring individual progress. We recognise that 'progress' and 'success' will look different for each of our students. We maintain high expectations for each student based on an accurate assessment of their needs and challenges.

Students are encouraged to gain external accreditation for their learning from the earliest opportunity. This can be through a range of awarding bodies, such as the AQA Unit Award Schemes, Functional Skills, ASDANs and Entry Level Qualifications. The aspirational goal for all students is that they leave with the highest level of appropriate qualifications they can access, within their areas of interest and ability.

Extended Learning

The formally delivered curriculum is enhanced by days/sessions that are planned for enrichment purposes. This may include culture immersion days, community visits, trips or religious/spiritual activities. The aim of such events is to broaden young people's experiences as well as giving them an opportunity to apply their skills in varied situations.

All of our students take part in carefully selected learning projects. Some of these projects are rooted in a specific curriculum area, whilst others may be linked to life and independence skills or personal interests. Our aim is to help nurture and develop skills, knowledge and talents which will be useful for life.

Staffing and Resources

The education team consists of class teachers and subject specialist teachers, as well as experienced teaching assistants. Our clinical team includes Speech and Language Therapists, Art Therapists, Occupational Therapists and a therapy assistant. We have small classes of a maximum of six students and there are usually three members of staff: a teacher and two teaching assistants with each class, depending on the needs of specific students.

Working with Parents

We encourage parents to visit whenever possible and, in particular, to attend the annual review meetings. Teachers communicate at least weekly with parents, via email or phone call, to discuss progress. Parents are also invited to parents' evenings to enable further discussion and sharing of student work. Additional meetings are arranged as appropriate during the year. The clinical team also make contact with parents as appropriate to discuss provision and progress.

Review

We will review the curriculum annually to ensure it meets the needs of all our students and we continue to develop a curriculum that is tailor made to each individual. This is particularly relevant as Ashley Park is a new school with currently only KS3 students on roll. Clear pathways are in place for the curriculum at KS4 and these will be reviewed and adapted when our students reach this stage of their educational journey.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – What does excellent teaching & learning (implementation) look like at Ashley Park School?

All staff at Ashley Park School are committed to providing a 'child-centred education that acknowledges and nurtures unique abilities, tailoring our approach to meet individual needs'. Many of our children have really struggled to engage positively, regularly and safely in education prior to joining our school so it is imperative that our staff are highly skilled in addressing each child's needs so they can begin to form and sustain a positive attitude to their learning. Forming positive relationships based on trust is the foundation for this approach.

Excellent planning will;

- identify every child's current reading age and Blank level assessment and identify how the lesson will be made accessible to every child's needs
- identify students' current attainment and progress and set appropriate curriculum targets
- identify any student underperformance and actions around addressing this
- use EFL to support assessment and planning for next steps in learning
- identify keywords to be learnt in the lesson and the method of sharing these
- consider each child's preferred learning style, needs and interest.

Excellent teachers will;

- be professional and fully committed to helping every child achieve their best
- encourage and maintain positive relationships with everyone in the room
- understand exactly how best to help any child who may need emotional support and be flexible to how this might change in a lesson
- engage children from start to finish in positive learning activities relevant to the curriculum pathway they are following
- be passionate about learning, inspiring their students to engage positively in the learning process so they make excellent progression
- ensure tasks are differentiated well so all learners can access the lesson regardless of ability and needs
- ensure every learning activity has a clear purpose, with clear learning objectives, linked to the sequence and progression of skills for the subject they are delivering.
- Take a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour and respond in a way that focuses on the feelings and emotions that might drive certain behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself.
- use blank level assessments effectively to inform their questioning
- allow students the opportunity to read and access appropriate learning material
- reward students for positive behaviours and score them against the four goals of our curriculum at the end of every lesson using a differentiated approach according to the students' needs.
- Provide children with an excellent range of engaging and well-resourced activities

Excellent lessons will;

- take place in an organised, calm and fun learning environment where ALL of our children feel safe and well looked after
- be high in both nurture and structure with predictable routines, expectations and responses to behaviour
- engage each child from start to finish, ensuring progression and developing curiosity and interest
- have learning objectives shared, with visuals to support understanding
- have differentiated keywords displayed with symbol supported text where appropriate for the learner
- have clear plenary activities to check in on each student's learning
- be part of a progression towards an aspirational outcome

Include regular 'in the moment' feedback for students so they can experience success, support and know where to go next in their learning

Excellent Teaching Assistants will;

- be fully immersed in the learning experience
- provide both nurture and structure, alongside predictable routines, expectations and responses to behaviour
- understand how best to support each child in the lesson be skilled at forming positive relationships
- take a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour.
- respond to behaviour needs in a way that focuses on the feelings and emotions that might drive the behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself
- support teachers in forming a positive learning environment in every lesson