



whinfell school see things differently

Curriculum Policy

Updated September 2018
Next review September 2019
By Deputy Head

Curriculum Policy Statement

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Cambian Whinfell school mission statement and Autistic Spectrum Disorder policy which outlines the vision, aims, roles and responsibilities of the school. It also needs to be read in conjunction with individual subject policies, safeguarding, SMSC and assessment policies and in conjunction with the Whole School Literacy Policy.

Across the curriculum British Values are promoted and all individual policies and practice are such that they do not impede the Equalities Act 2010. Rights of protected groups as identified in the Equalities Act are duly recognised and catered for.

In particular the policy seeks to support the schools objectives of helping each young person to achieve their full potential **academically** and **socially**. Whinfell school believes that it has a dual purpose role in not only helping young people to reach their academic potential but to also provide an education which will help develop their social skills, in particular their communication, interaction, social imagination and flexible thinking skills through a daytime and waking curriculum. We believe that we will support a greater level of independence and quality of life.

The Curriculum policy supports the frame-work of Cambian Whinfell as being a school for young people on the autistic spectrum who may have associated learning or emotional difficulties and who will benefit from the high level of support, the structure and the therapeutic milieu that we offer.

It actively promotes the principles of individual human worth, respecting diversity and encouraging the development of self-control. This policy supports a holistic approach, aiming to raise self-esteem, reduce anxieties, provide strategy for success.

Aims of the curriculum

As a school we place great emphasis on preparing our young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities inherent in taking as full a part as possible in wider society.

We aim to develop:

- Self-esteem, self-confidence and individuality
- Social interaction & communication skills
- Knowledge and understanding
- A willingness to apply themselves to learning situations
- Self-motivation and the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort.
- A sense of enquiry and the ability to question and investigate through a range of means
- An interest in learning and the ability to work independently
- Creativity, critical awareness and sensitivity
- The ability to work as a member of a team and to be a tolerant group member
- Strategies to be successful in society including organisational skills
- Problem solving technique
- Tolerance of others, of their opinions, beliefs and cultures
- Self-control
- Literacy, numeracy and competence in the use of information technology
- Strengths, interests and skills relevant to adult life, employment and independence in a changing world
- Trust in themselves and others
- Appropriate moral and spiritual values
- An ability to recognise their own achievements as well as others in school and beyond
- Respect for fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- Empathy skills
- As a school we place great emphasis on preparing our young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities inherent in taking a full part in wider society.

Our aim is to provide

- Programs which are broad and balanced based on an appropriate key stage of the national curriculum but which recognise individuality in ability and learning style. Providing content through a format which motivates and young people can access. Providing programs of learning which build on previous knowledge and skills that will challenge without raising anxiety. Learning experiences which work within each young person's zone of proximal development, providing whatever scaffolding is necessary for success and progression to occur and to gain accreditation to the highest level.
- Opportunity to help develop relationships with adults and peers. Opportunity to develop trust and confidence
- Community awareness and experience community life and projects
- Opportunity to learn and practice independent living skills
- Opportunities to gain accreditation and celebrate success
- A cross curricular approach wherever possible which is motivating and adds flexibility to be able to investigate areas of interest
- Time to explore personal interests with a structured, holistic and multisensory approach
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural themes which are investigated thoroughly through the curriculum and further explored through the waking curriculum
- Opportunity to learn and practice skills to be able to gain and maintain employment
- Individual programs, often delivered in a 1:1 setting, unless to encourage social skills and then may be delivered through group gatherings. Such group activities like our therapeutic outdoor learning program, morning and after school meetings still maintain individual support.
- A therapeutic approach in delivery of the curriculum. Additional therapeutic input is dependent on need. We may offer hydrotherapy, or dance therapy, music therapy or therapeutic outdoor learning etc
- Therapeutic input tailored to individual needs through the Clinical Therapy team (OT, SALT, EP and counselling).
- Access to up-to-date, impartial careers guidance which enables pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of options and to fulfil their potential.

Curriculum principles

Entitlement

We are committed to the principle that all of our young people regardless of ability, need, race or cultural background have a right to the highest quality of education and support we can provide.

We ensure:-

- An individual broad and balanced curriculum
- Appropriate levels of expectation and genuine challenge based on extensive individual assessment
- A flexible approach which aims to match teaching delivery to individual learning styles
- A holistic, therapeutic approach for maximum progression
- Relevance, continuity and progression in learning
- Opportunity for young people to progress in academic, personal and social domains
- Detailed ILPs drawn up to meet Statement needs and which are reviewed and renewed termly.

By providing courses of study tailored to the needs, interests and aspirations of our young people through cross curricular, or topic based programmes and using a huge variety of teaching methods to suit individuals, students will be given the opportunity for making good progress. Many features of the curriculum are common to all students but the support and scaffolding is individual. None of our young people are denied access to any part of the curriculum on grounds of ability.

Access

The principles above present us with a responsibility to find ways of ensuring that our young people are engaging in learning, motivated and able to succeed. Education staff are expected to ensure that young people who are having difficulty or becoming de-motivated are identified early and provided with appropriate support, encouragement and different teaching styles and work so that they may continue to participate at the most appropriate level for them. This may mean their curriculum design and plan is altered to enable them to be successful. Although we strive to engage our young people in their learning as much as possible, **we will always put their emotional state first as if this is not right, progress will be limited** and it would certainly not be conducive to reaching maximum potential. Our young people have the right to access a happy and positive experience in the learning environment and all staff at Cambian Whinfell are expected to provide an unconditional positive experience for every young person. Young people will access their curriculum by offering strategies and systems appropriate for each student.

Expectations of staff

It is expected that staff put principles into practice. Staff are expected to actively promote and seek to secure the curriculum aims and in particular to:-

- To have high but realistic expectation of young people
- Have a flexible approach to teaching and a willingness and ability to match teaching methods to learning styles of each individual
- Respect our young people and their individuality and provide the necessary scaffolding to enable them to succeed
- Allow individual learning plans (ILP) to support planning and drive education planning forward
- Follow the principles specified within our Autistic Spectrum Disorder policy to enhance practice
- Develop curricular plans which are individual based and informed by previous assessment. Planning should demonstrate progression and continuity, show how the needs of young people are being addressed as well as the aspects of the national curriculum being covered
- Serve as good role models. Endeavouring to be regarded as using appropriate social communication, humour, adopting empathic behaviour management and being fair and consistent in their approach. Education staff should endeavour to be seen to be sociable, using appropriate humour (excluding sarcasm), be polite and well mannered. Communicate effectively using methods which will enable young people to understand and respond
- Encourage, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally through praise in the learning environment
- Provide work that meets needs and aspirations guided by a long term curriculum plan which offers both depth and challenge and which motivates and inspires the young people
- Work in partnership with authorities and parents/guardians, assess, record and report to create good relationships, from which the young people will indirectly benefit, in line with Whinfell procedure or authority/parent
- Involve the learner in the process of learning by discussing work, giving regular feedback through assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging self-evaluation using after school get together meeting to allow the young person to celebrate their efforts and achievements
- Use assessment and reflection to inform future planning
- Contribute to placement plans and ILP targets on a monthly basis to help monitor the effectiveness of strategies and set appropriate and meaningful targets
- To work in partnership with other staff, parents/guardians, social workers, psychologists and Clinical Therapy Team (CTT) along with the wider community to achieve shared goals
- Keep parents/guardians, social workers/authorities regularly and fully informed about progress, achievements and concerns on a regular basis
- Contribute to review reports and ILP assessments on a half-termly basis
- Plan lessons which satisfy National Curriculum frameworks, are cross curricular and include ICT, literacy, numeracy, social, moral, cultural and

spiritual, personal and health education, and teach wherever possible using the suggested strategies outlined in the ILP

- Provide the necessary support strategies and resources to allow our young people to access and contribute during communication.

Curriculum Structure

The school operates an eight teaching-period day, each session lasting 30 minutes. We have five teaching periods in the morning. This is broken up by a break of thirty minutes and a lunch period of one hour. There are a further three periods after lunch. In addition to this we begin our day with a whole school morning meeting of thirty minutes and a whole school reflection period at 15:00 which lasts approximately fifteen minutes. On two days a week we have a 'basic skill' session which focus on individual numeracy and literacy and is done with class tutors.

We value our morning meeting as it is an opportunity to present a planned programme to our students as a group and all of the staff, care and education on duty attend, helping all to become involved. Themes are delivered which are often further worked on in class throughout the day. They provide opportunity to develop social skills as well as moral, spiritual, cultural, citizenship & personal, social, religious and health education. Our after school meeting including all education and care staff on duty is a time of reflection & celebration, but also an opportunity for evening care staff to share each child's success plus an opportunity for them to get a feel for how their day has been, therefore being better prepared for the evening.

This means that total formal contact time is 24 hours per week, in-line with government recommendations for Key stage 4 and in excess of those for Key stage 3. It includes get-together meetings which we see as valuable learning opportunities.

- Teaching contact time for all pupils is 22 hours and 30 minutes
- Additionally reflection account for another 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Key worker time 30 minutes per week (1hr every other week).

Key Stage 3: Year 7, 8 and 9

Pupils study:

- English/Literacy
- Maths/Numeracy
- Science
- Humanities - geography, history, RE
- Art
- Physical Education (which includes, therapeutic outdoor learning (TOL) gym, squash, hydrotherapy, dance therapy, swimming, social games, cycling, rock climbing etc)
- Personal, Social, Health Education
- Citizenship
- Person Centered Development (which addresses general communication, speech and language, social interactive skills through strategies highlighted in ILP's, life skills and independent living programmes). Delivered through CTT.
- Modern Foreign Language (discrete lessons or through theme days)
- Computing
- D & T – Food and Nutrition/Resistant Materials
- Work Related Learning (inc work experience, community activities and enterprise)
- SMSC through morning meetings, humanities and citizenship

As appropriate pupils may be entered for ASDAN awards, unit awards and entry level certificates and Functional Skills.

Time allocations vary from student to student depending on their needs.

Key Stage 4: Year 10 and 11

Pupils study:

At key stage 4, individuality is given considerable emphasis. Aspirations, strengths, needs and recent experience of education are carefully considered to develop a curriculum which will motivate, fulfil requirements and provide the necessary knowledge and skills to take them on to higher education, work and semi- or total independent living.

Beyond Cambian Whinfell each individual young person is provided with their individual options and their preferences are taken into consideration and discussed at the transitions review in year 9.

Our small class groups enable each student to follow their own pathway preferences and so 'traditional options' are not used universally. A 'tailor-made curriculum' for each student, with as much input from the student as possible is created. The content is dependent on ability, needs, aspirations, interests and requirements.

Subjects taught are:

English (Language and Literature), Maths, Science, PE, DT, Computer Science, Geography, PSHE/Citizenship, Work Skills, Catering and hospitality and art.

Students will be entered for courses at the appropriate level including GCSE, L2 BTEC, entry level certificates and functional skills awards. Pupils also follow the ASDAN AOPE and COPE awards.

TOL

Pupils throughout the school also work towards the John Muir Awards through the TOL syllabus.

Work Experience

In addition to the above, we have excellent links with local employers and organisations who provide the opportunity to gain vocational qualifications such as NVQs in catering and hospitality or car mechanics.

It is essential that students have a broad and balanced curriculum but one which meets their needs and aspirations and does not over burden them.

The level to which each subject is studied will be dependent on ability which may also determine the amount of time allocated to the subject.

Key Stage 5 and beyond (16+ Years)

This will be dependent on needs, aspirations, ability and interests. Young people may enrol at a local college, be in-house educated, or indeed a mixture of the two. Post-16, young people will continue to receive education in accordance with their Study Program. In addition to specific subjects, all boys will continue tuition in literacy, numeracy and PSHE. They will also follow work related and independent living/ life skills programmes. All studies will be challenging and accredited wherever possible. Each young person will have access to the gym, swimming pool and will be encouraged to do regular physical and outdoor activities.

Young people may attend college and follow level 1, 2 or 3 courses in subjects such as performing arts, music, motor vehicle mechanics, air cabin crew, animal care, photography or ICT depending on aspirations.

All young people will be encouraged and supported in work placements to help develop the necessary skills and experience to gain and maintain suitable employment for life beyond Whinfell.

We are extremely flexible as to what young people do and where needed, college placements will be supported, however **all young people** will be supported to improve their:

- Independent living skills
- Social communication skills
- Social interaction skills
- Life skills
- Work based skills
- Ability to plan and organise
- Basic numeracy and literacy is directed towards independent living and work. Where appropriate young people will work towards adult literacy and numeracy qualifications at either level I, II, III or functional skills.
- Work experience

We are able to offer A-Level studies in Art, Geography, Maths, English and Creative Writing. Suitability for A-level studies is based upon the subject leader's knowledge of the young person's potential and their aptitude for the subject.

Curriculum Matters

We take individual learning styles into consideration and have found that maximum progress occurs when young people are educated in small groups of not more than three pupils. Some pupils will benefit from all or most of their lessons being 1:1 but the majority of students will benefit from the social interaction that comes from learning in well structured small groups. This is especially so in English, art, citizenship, computing, music, PSHE, and MFL.

On occasions larger groups will come together, for example for morning meeting and reflection, drama, speaking and listening, team sports and social games & enterprise.

To take account of these differences and the range of ability in classes, all staff have a responsibility, when planning work, to differentiate in order to meet the needs of all the young people. This will involve at different times adapting tasks, providing different resources, developing extension work, providing a variety of learning styles and environments, setting individual goals giving different levels of support and working to different levels of accreditation. Some pupils work best on long term projects whilst others prefer defined tasks, some respond well to oral work, while others prefer written or 'hands on work'. Some find communication difficult and may benefit from working through ICT while some learn best in the outdoor environment.

For example staff may need to consider if a student will benefit from work which is:-

Project based

Theme based

Discrete subject timetabled and taught

Student initiated

Enquiry based

Subject led i.e. work all done through IT or through an interest.

Any students attending a college course will be supported to whatever extent is agreed between college and school in the service agreement. It may be that they require full 1:1 support provided by Cambian Whinfell in order to be successful. It may be that distance support is required and this will be provided. Support may be required for accessing learning or social skills.

Within lessons teachers will use the strategies highlighted in the ILP's for each student, which address the child's particular needs or impairments.

Young people learn best when they are enjoying their work and are interested. They then become motivated and engage in learning and hence our lead is often taken from the child, extended to meet the requirements of the national curriculum and ILPs..

Finding a balance as far as task length, number of tasks and how to break tasks up for each young person is essential. If not set correctly, anxiety levels will rise and progress will be minimal with students becoming demotivated. It is essential that the

holistic needs of the young person are put first above any other teaching objective.
Our young people can not learn if their anxieties are raised.

It is also important that teachers build time into their planning to continue developing relationships, again vital for learning to take place here at Cambian Whinfell.

(it is recognised that there will be times when it is beneficial to stray from the lesson plan in order to address a deeper personal issue).

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education (including 'Britishness' and 'radicalisation').

Elements of SMSC are delivered across the curriculum and within discrete lessons such as RE, citizenship and PSHE. Tolerance and harmony between cultural traditions is encouraged and promoted along with an appreciation and respect for both their own and other cultures. For example visits are made to church for Christmas service and to other religious institutions such as a local Buddhist temple. In addition morning meetings (which have a termly context) cover SMSC themes and make use of guest speakers such as local religious figures, the police, charity representatives and the local MP. Charity involvement is encouraged and pupils contribute to the Christmas Shoebox appeal, sports relief, bake for OAPs and collect for the food bank.

The school actively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. This is done whenever the opportunity arises within lessons and in conversation with young people. One of the themes of morning meetings is Britishness where among other things boys do a project called 'Creating my Own country' and a policeman from the 'Prevent' programme gives presentations on anti-extremism. We also visit council offices and the magistrates court and hold elections during 'Democracy Week'. We have regular visitors (eg local MP) and go on school trips to museums and places of worship.

The Learning Environment

Cambian Whinfell School caters for young people with a range of needs and diagnoses. We believe that young people have preferred learning styles of which the learning environment is part. Observational assessment helps us to determine preferred learning environments for each young person and we attempt to deliver wherever it is safe and possible to do so. Each room is equipped to cater for most preferred learning environments, each have discussion areas, single desks with P.C's, isolated 'stimulus free' booths, cushioned rug / carpeted area's for casual floor work.

We recognise that a lively, purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards and good working practises. Displays of the young peoples work, stimulus materials and appropriate resources are very important in setting standards and raising expectations. The structure and organisation of the classroom is also an important factor in developing effective working methods and a positive ethos. It is expected that classrooms are orderly environments and offer a learning environment which every young person feels safe, secure and able to apply themselves. To ensure that adequate resources are provided and accessible, and that young people treat the learning environment with respect.

It is also expected that our young people who benefit from low stimulus booths and cushioned carpeted areas be provided with a system that enables them to access the structure that they require, and that any systems developed be used consistently by every teacher and house staff as much as possible. These systems may involve colour coding work to be systematically undertaken from left to right, the use of story boards to help the young person organise, sequence, and re-tell events etc.

Schemes of work and lesson planning

Each department is required to have schemes of work for all of its courses / programmes related where appropriate to the national curriculum and examination board requirements. These schemes of work are followed by departmental co-ordinators and their delivery monitored by the Head of Education. Schemes of work set out how the content of the course is structured so that skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively and show how teaching is organised. All staff will use medium and short term planning of similar format. It is expected that planning takes place in sufficient detail to ensure that young people achieve high standards and are given the opportunity to achieve their potential. There should be a clearly identified learning outcome as the focus of every lesson and it must be clear that learning is ongoing and related to planning.

All teaching staff are expected to complete lesson plans which help plan future lessons. These clearly state a SMART learning outcome and are informed by what went on in the previous lesson. They reflect the success in meeting the learning outcome and previous learning and assessment after the completion of each session. This is an agreed method of recording lessons and evaluating using this acquired knowledge to plan future lessons which will be progressive and appropriate.

Homework

Cambian Whinfell recognises the importance and value of homework as an extension of class work and a vehicle to practise skills, acquire new ones and develop good study habits.

Our young people are encouraged to complete work in-house, but this is not enforced. As self-esteem rises and our young people begin to feel successful in the learning environment, they will often request additional work or time in the classroom. This is both encouraged and practised. They are provided with a time slot of between 15.15 and 16.00, where staff are available for support.

We endeavour to provide a wealth of learning opportunity throughout the waking curriculum by tight communication between education and care. The evening and weekend activities often provide additional learning opportunities to provide a more enriched understanding. Often social skills considered in class are practised during the waking curriculum, often supported by social stories. Meal times, evening activities and bed time provide a wealth of learning opportunity for our young people who have difficulties with communication, social interaction and social imagination.

Many of our strategies used in class for helping young people to re-tell stories or events are used by house staff. Social stories help provide consistency in our approach as both education staff and residential staff use them which the young people. The MDT team inform our practise through regular weekly meetings which highlight strategies for individual boys.

Special Educational Needs

It is expected that all education staff plan, prepare and support each young person who attends Cambian Whinfell and to be able to access the curriculum, regardless of their ability or needs. All of our young people have special educational needs but are encouraged to become independent and to take responsibility within the school. All of our young people are being continually assessed and sometimes with the aid of assessment carried out internally and / or externally by the Clinical Therapy Team (CTT) and external specialists. Targets for the individual education plan are put forward and agreed during review meetings where parents / guardians, social services and educational authority representatives have an input. Strategies to help achieve these quantitative targets are developed and inform the whole waking curriculum. They are evaluated in lessons and the pupils are scored accordingly. This helps to give them ownership of their ILPs and helps staff track progress. It is an expectation of staff to address targets in the planning, delivery and evaluation stages of each lesson. It is the job of the Head of Education to gather sufficient information to be able to set, monitor, assess and set appropriate targets. Progress with targets is monitored in half-termly meetings and ILPs are updated on a termly basis as a joint staff effort, including residential staff input. Formal review meetings are held on an annual basis. Monthly meetings are held for education staff to monitor and review targets along with progress and a written report is kept.

Each young person has a named key worker who is there for the young person as an additional support.

Differentiation

An individual approach is taken to: planning, teaching style, resources, expectation and the curriculum offered. Differentiation in lessons is indicated in lesson plans and by deployment of learning support.

Assessment Framework

Assessment is continual but may vary in form. Teaching staff are expected to plan for assessment and to use data gained to inform future planning. Half-termly meetings are used to update, report and record how effective is the learning taking place and how well the strategies provided in the I.L.P's, are working.

Assessment is carried out by:

- Observational assessment
- Summative assessment where appropriate
- Formative assessment
- Analytical
- Diagnostic
- Objective and subjective testing
- Multiple choice
- Online, paper based, verbal and practical, internal and external testing
- External moderation
- Specialist assessment

We report via the following ways

- Daily logs
- Class points and signature sheets
- Lesson plan evaluations
- PEP and CLA documents
- Weekly telephone call home
- Weekly written reports
- Care plans
- Individual learning plans
- Newsletter
- Verbal
- Termly Academic Reports
- Deputy Headteacher's Report to parents
- Annual reviews

