

**Home Tree School**  
**CURRICULUM – TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY**

**Legal Status:**

Regulatory Requirements, Part 1, paragraph 2(1) (a) to 2(2)(i) Quality of Education Provided (curriculum) (teaching) of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.

**Applies to:**

- the whole school inclusive of activities outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

**Related Documents:**

- Vocational Curriculum Policy, Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy, Differentiation Policy,
- Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy, English as an Additional Language Policy,
- Marking Policy, Homework Policy, Gifted and Talented Students Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Policies
- Subject Policies including, where relevant, Schemes of Work (Programmes of study)

**Availability:**

This policy is made available to parents/guardian/carers, carers, staff and students from the school office.

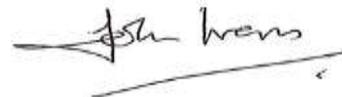
**Monitoring and Review:**

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher.

The Proprietor undertakes a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date:

Melanie Higgs    Sept 2020  
Headteacher

John Ivors  
Proprietor, Cambian Group

Home Tree School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential

## Ethos and Vision

Home Tree School strives to deliver high quality personalised education experiences for 12 to 18 year olds with on-going social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

We aim to provide our young people with the foundations to fulfil a bright future by reintegrating them back into education and society. Through a vibrant, well-structured and empowering learning environment, we nurture and develop each student's individual strengths, talents and aptitudes.

We take an individualised approach, recognising the unique worth and importance of each student by providing a broad and balanced curriculum that meets each learner's needs. For those with special needs, an individualised programme of support to access the curriculum and achieve the outcomes of their EHCP is put in place.

At Home Tree we endeavour to celebrate and promote the achievements of our students, no matter how small. This is done through praise and rewards, empowering them to progress further. We feel it is imperative that the school provides a safe and nurturing environment that allows all staff and young people to feel secure and ready to progress. We focus particularly on developing the self-esteem, independence and awareness of our young people. Our students are encouraged to aim high and aspire to the future, whilst being supported by our team to do so.

## Timetable and Attendance

Where possible we ensure a full timetable. We do however have students at various stages of illness and recovery. This may mean that these individuals have a reduced timetable and / or have attendance that is impacted.

*'All pupils of compulsory age are entitled to a full time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-intergration package.'* DfE November 2016

## Mental Health and our curriculum

*'On 1 September 2014 a new duty came into force for governing bodies to make arrangements to support pupils at school with medical conditions. The statutory guidance in this document is intended to help governing bodies meet their legal responsibilities and sets out the arrangements they will be expected to make, based on good practice. The aim is to ensure that all children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.'* DfE 2015

We view each student and their needs as individuals. Our aim to reintegrate them into education, during various stages of illness and recovery, does impacts the curriculum offered. It maybe that they start with a timetable that is enrichment based due to their lack of ability to focus academically for long periods. However, some students may be able to manage a full day of academic study from the start of their journey. We monitor their mental health closely and align their curriculum to match their needs.

We encourage the use of strategies to manage their mental health throughout the curriculum and will adapt teaching styles to accommodate their needs and support this.

## Curriculum

Home Tree School is committed to providing a curriculum which ensures that all of its students acquire and develop skills appropriate to their age and aptitude in the following areas:

### **Linguistic** (English Language, literature, reading, writing, modern languages)

The ability to convey information, emotion and ideas effectively are an essential attribute for every individual. Home Tree school provides a nurturing and supportive environment which hones, develops and increases the

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student's communication skills through the disciplines of reading, writing, listening and speaking. These imperative aptitudes form the basis of not only the subjects of English Literature, Language and Modern languages but are embedded in every subject across the curriculum. Improved communication skills are the bedrock of increased independence, confidence and self-esteem – all vital to the well-being of our students here at Home Tree School.

### **Mathematical** (Numeracy, Mathematics)

Modern British society requires individuals, who are able to think critically about complex issues, analyse and adapt to new situations, solve problems of various kinds, and communicate their thinking effectively. The study of mathematics equips students with knowledge, skills, and procedural habits that are essential for successful and rewarding participation in such a society. To learn mathematics in a way that will serve them well throughout their lives, students need classroom experiences that help them develop mathematical understanding; learn important facts, skills and develop the ability to apply the processes of mathematics in functional and applicable environments. The Home Tree School maths curriculum contains the ingredients needed for all students to reach these attainable and rewardable goals.

Essential to the school's ethos is the overriding opinion that Maths is a powerful learning tool enabling students to identify relationships between mathematics and other curriculum areas, including science, music, and language. Therefore the study of mathematics is embedded across the curriculum in all subject areas.

### **Scientific** (Science, Biology, Physics, Chemistry)

Fundamental concepts such as nature, materials, matter and forces are key ideas that provide a framework for the acquisition of all knowledge. They also help students to integrate scientific understanding with knowledge in other subject areas, such as mathematics and humanities. The fundamental concepts that are addressed in the curricula for physics, biology and chemistry are matter, energy, sustainability, change and continuity. Increasingly we teach the students about environmental stewardship and the role we have to play in conservation of our eco system. As students' progress through the curriculum they deepen their understanding of these fundamental concepts and learn to apply their understanding with increasing sophistication. These fundamental concepts are consistent with GCSE Biology, Physics and Chemistry all of which are taught at Home tree School.

### **Technological** (including Design and Technology, Projects, ICT and Food Technology)

We offer our students the opportunity to access a wide range of practical technological experiences such as ICT, Art and Design, Projects and Food Technology.

Food technology enables our learners to live more independently instilling both confidence and assuredness in holistic and culinary disciplines.

ICT is fundamentally important, we offer GCSE ICT and functional skills ICT both of which support and help prepare our students to an ever evolving technological environment. Within this subject students will experience and negotiate a variety of disciplines from Microsoft office, presentation skills, animation and image manipulation. However the concurrent theme of e-safety is our primary concern – we instil within our students the necessary knowledge and skills required to negotiate the complex and intricate world of online communication and social networks. Our students are endowed with the personal qualities and skills that enable them to experience a safe and enhanced process of learning.

Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject which prepares our students to live and work in the designed and made world. Design and Technology is about providing opportunities for students to develop their capability, combining their designing and practical making skills with knowledge and understanding in order to create quality products.

Technological education at Home Tree School develops the students ability to communicate, utilise tools effectively and the ability to reflect and improve open initial responses and outcomes.

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## **Human and Social (including Geography, History, Citizenship, Psychology and Religious studies)**

Home Tree School's Human and Social curriculum is an ideal foundation for exploring and understanding the human experience. Investigating a variety of knowledge enhancing disciplines the students are given the opportunity to become well informed, critical and prejudice free modern citizens.

Research into the human experience adds to our knowledge about our world. Through exploration of the humanities we learn how to think creatively and critically, to reason, and to ask questions. Within the humanities and social studies curriculum they learn about the values of different cultures, about what goes into making a society, about how history is made. Their efforts preserve the great accomplishments of the past, help us understand the world we live in, and it gives them the tools to imagine the future.

### ***Physical*** (Physical Education and Sports which is supported by extra-curricular programme in this area)

A high-quality physical education curriculum inspires our students to enjoy and participate in sport and other physically-demanding activities. It provides opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. Opportunities to engage in sport and other activities build confidence and help to embed values such as fairness and respect. Students are also expected to evaluate their own performances; evaluating how to improve and how to develop their fitness. Cross curricula links to healthy lifestyles such as Food technology are embedded too.

### ***Aesthetic and creative*** (including Art, Mindfulness, Performing Arts, Dance, Drama, Photography and Music)

Art and Design is a subject which can help our students to understand and give meaning to the world in which we live in. Through our curriculum we provide our students with an experience that promotes enquiry, creative thinking and technical expertise in a variety of competences. Students are encouraged to experiment, invent and develop their own artistic signature. They will assimilate key knowledge of how art and design both reflects and shapes our history, and contributes to the culture, creativity and wealth of our society.

Music at Home Tree School not only develops music literacy but enables students to use music as an expressive language. This in turn nurtures and develops the students creative thought processes whilst providing an outlet to their imagination and musical talents. The role of music here at Home tree school provides a particularly strong contribution as our students thrive in this creative environment.

## **Sex and Relationship Education**

The school provides Sex and Relationships education as part of the whole curriculum. These sessions are conducted during assembly, PSHE and through key worker sessions. Students are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The syllabus for the school's Sex and Relationships Education is available to parents/guardian/carers. It forms a key part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) course and is directly influenced by the government's guidance in Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000). In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all students but parents/guardian/carers may withdraw their students from any other part of the sex education provided without giving reasons.

## **Political Education**

Political education is introduced in a number of courses and educational experiences including assemblies, SMSC sessions and citizenship.

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We also offer GCSE and A Level politics which serves students who wish to study the ways in which governance institutions, political ideologies, and competing interests, influence the content, form, and functioning of society.

The promotion of partisan and political views in the teaching of any subject in the school is forbidden by law.

### Religious Education

Religious education is taught across the entire curriculum with each student timetabled for R.E at least once per week.

Religious education is an important subject as it makes a unique contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students and supports wider community cohesion. The course provides students with a broader understanding of the diverse world we live in – experiencing a multi faith dialogue so that they can make spiritual, moral and theological choices without prejudice.

The Religious Education curriculum strongly advocates the core British values of mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It is offered as a GCSE subject at KS4.

### SMSC

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Curriculum coverage</b>
<b>Spiritual</b>	The spiritual development of our young people is shown by their: -ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that in form their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people’s faiths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The teaching of RE from 12-16 with a GCSE RE qualification offered.</li> <li>- We offer the opportunity for post 16 to sit an A Level in RE should they wish.</li> <li>- Assemblies offer us the time to explore different faiths, current events pertaining to belief, as well as, have speakers from different faith groups.</li> <li>- Important dates in main religious calendars are celebrated in assemblies</li> <li>- Subjects such as PSHE, Citizenship, as well as the Humanities allow for an exploration of the spiritual.</li> </ul>
<b>Moral</b>	The moral development of our young people is demonstrated by their; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, readily applying this understanding in their own lives, and in doing so, respect the civil and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This is achieved through RE, assemblies on diversity, the teaching of personal development and wellbeing</li> <li>- PSHE, smoking, drugs and alcohol.</li> <li>- Visits from our police liaisons officer.</li> </ul>

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	<p>criminal laws of England.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding of the consequences of their behaviours and actions</li> <li>- Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Citizenship; media and justice and democracy</li> <li>- We also offer key working sessions and restorative meetings which allow the young person the opportunity to both discuss and learn from any negative behaviours.</li> </ul>
<b>Social</b>	<p>The social development of our young people is demonstrated by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communicating with others in a range of different social settings.</li> <li>- Working with others so as to resolve conflicts and other challenges that face students in this unique setting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The young people get to explore and communicate their issues through the student voice, key working sessions and other bespoke meetings.</li> <li>- Doing work experience allows the students to practice their communication in different social settings.</li> <li>- School trips allow the students to communicate with members of the public.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural</b>	<p>The cultural development of pupils is shown by their;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding and appreciation of the range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others.</li> <li>- Understanding and appreciating the range of different cultures around them in the wider community which prepares them for modern British life.</li> <li>- Knowledge of how our democratic system continues to shape our values and experiences in a developing and changing Britain.</li> <li>- Enthusiasm in engaging in artistic, sporting and cultural experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- History provides a look at how we have changed as a nation over time.</li> <li>- By going on trips the young people get to see and experience different aspects of British life.</li> <li>- By doing work experience the young people get to mix with others who may have different socio-economic backgrounds and faiths etc.</li> <li>- Through inviting guest speakers into our school, the young people get to meet people from different and diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>- Student voice and visits to town halls and the houses of parliament allow our young people</li> </ul>

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		<p>to develop knowledge of our democratic system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Democracy is covered within Citizenship as well as through assemblies.</li> </ul>
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## British Values

Aspect	Coverage in the curriculum
<b>Democracy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Democracy is covered in the curriculum within GCSE Citizenship and A level Politics.</li> <li>- We have also offered trips to the Houses of parliament.</li> <li>- The mayor has also visited the school.</li> <li>- Our student voice also holds regular elections to vote in a new chair and assistant.</li> </ul>
<b>The rule of Law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We explore through assemblies and tutor time aspects of the rule of law.</li> </ul>
<b>Individual Liberty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual liberty is taught through assemblies.</li> </ul>
<b>Mutual respect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mutual respect is an embedded attitude within our school culture.</li> </ul>
<b>Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We recognise and respect the different beliefs that the young people have within our school.</li> <li>- This aspect of British values is covered extensively within our RE curriculum.</li> <li>- We invite speakers in of other faith groups.</li> </ul>

### Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

Home Tree School is committed to providing a comprehensive programme of PSHE education for all students, which is appropriate to their age and needs. Responsibility for developing and implementing this programme rests with the Headteacher. The PSHE and Citizenship education for all students are inter woven into all aspects of the school day. The form this takes ranges from the way we treat each other to planning food technology lessons based on individual's cultural heritage. We have a cross-curricular approach to PSHE education and its associated objectives may be addressed in such areas as Drama, Science, Assemblies or other curriculum areas. We ensure that our sessions are specifically tailored to the needs of the group. We 'help students achieve more' by ensuring that all students are given the opportunity to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

We provide positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum, out of school activities and through interactions with teachers and other adults for our students. Our range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities is available to students through the curricular and extra-curricular programme, and their participation in these opportunities. We plan our, personal, social and health education and citizenship through assemblies and curricular areas to help our students acquire values and skills to enable them to develop independence and choose their path in life.

Home Tree School seeks to:

- develop an ethos and environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle for students;

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- use the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum to help students to achieve safe and healthy lifestyles;
- provide high quality Physical Education, with specialised teachers, and sport to promote physical activity;
- promote an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon a lifelong health and well-being.

We aim for our students to understand and appreciate the range of different cultures and faiths in modern democratic Britain. We use our schemes of work and other plans which enable students to develop an understanding of public services and institutions and to take their place in modern democratic British society. We provide a range of quality opportunities for students to take on responsibility in school and make a positive contribution to the school, local and wider communities.

### **Subjects Offered at Home Tree School**

Students follow a broad curriculum at all 'Key Stages', enabling them to acquire skills in *Linguistics, Mathematical, Scientific, Technological, Human and Social, Physical and Aesthetic and Creative*.

#### **Key Stage 3 (12-14 years, Yrs 7-9 incl.)**

All students will follow the national curriculum.

#### **Key Stage 4 (14-16 years, Yrs 10 & 11)**

Students at Key Stage 4 follow a diverse range of subjects. These include, where appropriate GCSE, functional skills, BTEC, ELC, single unit awards We are very conscious that some of our young people with special needs are often not extended to achieve their potential. In our school, we are determined that every opportunity will be available for students to make progress.

Home Tree School will also offer a variety of portfolio and internally assessed courses which can be used to accredit any projects or to offer those students who may find it difficult to achieve at GCSE Exams and work to that standard. The list below is a basic overview of what the school will offer its Key Stage 4 students but is not comprehensive as links with local colleges will ensure options increase overtime and could include:

- Functional Skills- Level 1 & 2 . Entry 1, 2 and 3 in Maths, English and ICT
- AQA Unit awards
- Entry Level Certificates
- BTEC Level 1 and 2

#### **Key Stage 5**

Students are offered a wide range of A' levels including;

- Psychology
- Art and Design
- English
- Religious Studies

This will be adapted depending on the requirements of the individual. We also offer BTEC level 3 courses and have utilised local colleges for vocational courses. For the students who enter the hospital we work closely with their college to maintain their learning and enable them to re-enter their main college.

### **Standards of attainment**

We carry out data analysis half termly and use the data provided to find out how well students in our school are achieving. We analyse the statistics to help answer the following questions:

- Do students perform better in some subjects than others?
- Are there significant differences between cohort performances?
- How well are the more able students doing, and do enough students achieve the higher levels?
- Can we identify any groups of students who may be underperforming?

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## Special educational needs

We aim to provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum to ensure that every child receives their full educational entitlement. We recognise that for this to happen, some pupils will need additional support from time to time. All our students are offered intervention, specialised teaching approaches, additional support with mental health and anxiety issues. Our pastoral care is strong with each child having a keyworker and tutor to support their needs. A fluid target system allows them to work at their own pace in both curriculum and behaviour to achieve their personal best. We have a clinical team and OT onsite who support with the emotional needs and the reintegration into education. We also liaise with a number of outside agencies to offer specialist support when required. Every effort and opportunity is taken to provide the most appropriate and challenging education for every pupil, whatever their disability and need, which is monitored and assessed with sensitivity.

### **Students with Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): The curriculum and the work of the Teaching and Learning personnel**

Our curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all students in the School. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual students, then we do so only after parents/guardian/carers have been consulted.

If a student has a special need, our school complies with all legislative and best practice requirements to meet these individual needs. If a student displays signs of having special needs, the teacher makes an assessment in consultation with the Headteacher of this need and in most instances is able to provide resources and educational opportunities that meets the student's needs within the teaching group. If a student's need is more severe, consideration is given to involving appropriate external agencies and special support teachers. We always provide additional resources and support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school provides an Individual Learning and Support Plan (ILSP) for each of the students who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the school will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each student at regular intervals. Where a Student has a statement, the SENCO liaises with the student's teachers to ensure that the education he or she receives fulfils its requirements and participates fully in the annual review.

### **Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) - please also refer to our *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy***

Should a Student be in receipt of an EHCP, we will provide an education that meets their needs as specified by their EHCP.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

We are committed to providing students with the necessary support and teaching who require English as an additional language. To this end, there is a policy in place and established practices implemented by the school.

## High achieving students

We aim to create opportunities for all pupils to achieve their full potential – "Care and Excellence for All". Our curriculum is based on individual need basis and we will ensure that high expectations are put in place for more able student. This may mean additional tutors, trips and activities that stretch individuals and cater to their need. Our in class teaching will have individual planning for each student that is designed to promote support for all abilities and individualise targets and work.

## Enrichment

All students have the opportunity to develop existing interests and nurture new ones through a variety of enrichment activities, which operate during the school day. These reflect the talents and interests of the staff and students, while some will also involve the input and expertise of external specialists

We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the students perform are safe. When we plan to take students out of school, we follow Department for Education (DfE) and Health and Safety (HSE) advice. We issue a 'one off'

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consent form for parents/guardian/carers to sign when a student enrolls at school and an additional consent form for residential and adventure activities. We provide details of proposed outings for parents/guardian/carers' information

### **Learning outside the classroom - Educational visits/off-site activities**

Integral to our curriculum is a wide range of educational experiences that extend beyond the classroom door. The Home Tree School curriculum offers a series of educational journeys that deepen the Students' understanding of the world around them. Trips extend Students' knowledge and ability to re-engage with the world around them.

### **Homework**

The school sets homework as appropriate. Often the most valuable homework a student can do are activities outside of the school curriculum. Examples may be Drama Club, Cadets, sports clubs, Volunteering etc.

### **Examinations and qualification**

At Home tree school we offer a bespoke environment that caters to individual needs during exams. Our key aim is to reduce the anxiety the process can create and give the student the best opportunity to continue with exams in extenuating circumstances.

### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

Evaluation is measured against a range of indicators, which include whole school and individual student indicators.

**Whole school indicators include:** examination results, destination of school leavers and inspections

**Individual student indicators:** STEP assessment, SDQ, QCA assessment. The curriculum, academic excellence and public examination. Whilst accepting the need to prepare our Students for further education, we strive to ensure that the pursuit of our goals, aims and objectives are consistent for the benefit of the young people in our care.

### **Transition Support**

We carefully manage the transition of our students throughout the school and also in preparing students for further education and moving on to their next placement. We focus on raising aspirations and supporting students to achieve the best possible outcomes in education, employment, independent living and participation in society. This could involve, for example:

- including preparation for adulthood in planning meetings with parents/ carers and students as early as Year 9.
- making sure that careers advice and information provide high expectations a wide range of options for pupils with SEND.
- helping pupils and parents to understand and explore how the support they receive in school will change as they move into different settings, and what support they are likely to need to achieve their ambitions.

### **Preparation for the future**

Home Tree School provides an appropriate curriculum for preparing students for further higher education, career choices and adult life. We aim to provide students with insights into the world of work, the range of career opportunities available to them, entry routes and what further training and education they can and/or need to access. We arrange work experience and attend career conventions in the area. Visits are made, if necessary, to further and higher education facilities in order to support the transition. At Home Tree we help to prepare them to manage their mental health as they move into adult life.

### **Careers guidance - please also refer to our vocational policy**

Students at Home Tree School are supported in their preparation for formal examinations at various stages of their education. They receive specific support in Study Skills that includes guidance on revision technique, making notes, examination technique and management of stress. Students are encouraged to learn about their own academic strengths and weaknesses and the type of learning method that best suits them as an individual. Whilst we do not specifically instigate careers advice until Year 9, we provide opportunities for students to understand the world of work and the promotion of their economic wellbeing. There are talks from professionals in various fields as well as visits to places of employment and manufacture. Through visiting speakers students receive motivational and inspirational guidance that will help them in their current and future endeavours. Students receive interview Home Tree School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential

training at the appropriate stage. These are a few of the ways in which students are prepared for the future beyond Home Tree School.

## School Environment

Home Tree School provides an academically challenging environment which is vibrant, happy, creative and stimulating. Our teachers have high expectations but equally foster a nurturing environment in order to promote students' academic growth and to provide the support they need in order to make excellent progress in their studies. We believe that a purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards. A positive caring environment and culture will promote positive self-esteem and confidence. Organised resources, displays of student's work, stimulating materials and bright, colourful, language enriched displays all help to provide the Optimal Learning Environment.

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all students in the class. We treat the students with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with students the class code of conduct. We expect all students to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise students for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards the school and learning in general.

## Organisation and planning

We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school and details what is to be taught to each year group. These are reviewed annually and may be subject to change. We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree long-term plans whose schemes of work give an annual overview of the content of the curriculum for each key stage. From these plans the teachers identify curriculum aims appropriate for the year group they teach. They indicate what topics are to be taught in each term and to which groups of students. This long-term plan is reviewed on an annual basis. In our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that are used when teaching each topic. Our short-term plans are written by our teachers on individual lesson plans with a focus on each student's needs and targets. They are used to set out the learning objectives for each session and to identify the resources and activities required for the lesson. When teaching we focus on motivating the students and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the students' level of attainment. Teachers make on-going assessments of each student's progress each lesson and they use this information when planning their proceeding lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their students. Our prime focus is to develop further, the knowledge and skills of the students. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each student's level of ability. When planning work for students with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the students' Education Health and Care plans (EHCP) this then informs their Individual Learning and Support Plan (ILSP) Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for students with disabilities. We value each student as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our students, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion. We have high expectations of our students, and we believe that their work here at Home Tree School is of the highest possible standard they can achieve.

## The curriculum and members of teaching staff

Teachers ensure that an appropriate level and standard of homework is regularly set and marked so that learning outcomes may be consolidated and the needs of individual Students identified and met. We appreciate that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows students to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. 'Students learn and flourish when they are healthy, protected from harm and authentically engaged and stimulated.'

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable students to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster students' self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;

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- develop students' self-respect and encourage students to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- cater for the needs of individual students;
- personalise learning;
- enable students to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help students grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens;
- Enable achievement and provide challenge appropriate to the ability, interests and needs of each Student;

### **Auditing our Curriculum, Teaching and Learning:**

We ask ourselves the following questions when auditing our current performance:

How well are we doing?

- How do we compare with similar schools?
- What more should we aim to achieve?
- What must we do to make it happen?
- Self-evaluation and development is a crucial part of the schools managerial role and teachers, care staff and managers will input into the development as well as students own feedback.

In Home Tree School the most important role of teaching is to promote learning in order to raise students' achievement. For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It also includes support and intervention strategies. In assessing the quality of the teaching in our school we take account of the evidence of students' learning, achievements and progress over time.

When evaluating the quality of teaching in our school, we consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress and personal development for every student by:

- extending the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of all students in a range of lessons and activities over time;
- enabling students to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics;
- enthusing, engaging and motivating students to learn;
- using assessment and feedback to support learning and to help students know how to improve their work;
- differentiating teaching, by setting suitably challenging activities and providing support for students of different abilities, including the most able and disabled students and those who have special educational needs, so that they can all learn well and make progress;
- enabling students to apply intellectual, physical or creative efforts and develop the skills to learn for themselves and setting high expectations;
- setting appropriate homework;
- using well-judged and effective teaching methods, deploying appropriate resources, managing class time and drawing on good subject knowledge and expertise to encourage students to make good progress;
- managing instances of poor or disruptive behaviour.

Behaviour that undermines the happy environment that is such a hallmark of Home Tree School life, such as bullying, insensitivity, discrimination, bad language or acts of intolerance, will not be accepted

When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

- the impact of the curriculum on students' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the opportunities, choices, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- the contribution of the curriculum to the school's particular ethos and aims and the impact on students' academic and personal development and well-being;
- how well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon students' prior experience and plans for progression and
- the extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate careers guidance for our senior students and the views of our students, parents/guardian/carers and staff.

We design our curriculum to ensure that it is broad, well balanced and covers all the required areas of learning. We modify our curriculum and teaching to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students including our gifted and talented and disabled students or those with a special educational need. When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

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- the impact of the curriculum on students' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the opportunities, choices, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- the contribution of the curriculum to the school's particular ethos and aims and the impact on students' academic and personal development and well-being;
- how well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon students' prior experience and plans for progression;
- the extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate careers guidance for our senior students and
- the views of our students, parents/guardian/carers and staff.

### Effective Teaching - Expectations of Staff

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by:

- having high expectation of students.
- employing a variety of learning and teaching methods.
- ensuring that students are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful.
- delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression.
- providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire students.
- involving students in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging students to evaluate their personal achievements.
- developing students' skills to become independent learners.
- Encouraging, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment.
- Working in partnership with students, staff and parents/guardian/carers to achieve shared goals.
- Keeping parents/guardian/carers /carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their students through reports and parents evenings.

The Head teacher carries out work book scrutiny, whereby books are checked for consistency of marking and being up to date. Planning assessments are carried out by Headteacher who check planning is up to date and evaluated. All teachers are observed working with classes once or twice a year, and Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are observed each half term. The criteria is informed by teacher standards. The teacher and the observer follow the observation with a discussion. The observer notes the strengths and areas for development, and gives a copy of this information to the teacher. The Head teacher uses the information gained from this monitoring process to help identify common development points which can be addressed in the school's training programme for continuing professional development.

Direct observation **must** be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable us to evaluate the impact that teaching has had on students' learning. Such additional evidence should include:

- observing some lessons jointly with senior staff before discussing them also with the teacher who has been observed;
- discussing with students the work they have done and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods;
- discussing teaching and learning with staff;
- taking account of the views of students, parents/guardian/carers and carers, staff and placing authorities, where appropriate;
- taking account of the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and
- scrutinising the standard of students' work, noting:
- how well and frequently marking and assessment are used to help students to improve their learning
- the level of challenge provided.

### Effective learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. Our Schemes of work are designed to bring the curriculum to life and are interpreted creatively by teachers to inspire and challenge students. We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which Students feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in Home Tree School *is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential*

which they enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). We provide small class sizes which ensure that each student's individual strengths, talents and aptitudes are nurtured and developed. All teaching is structured to maximise learning opportunities and lessons are planned in accordance with the following principles:

- the teaching should build on previous learning ;
- the teacher should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;
- it should allow students to see the links within learning;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
- it should allow opportunities for the Students to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- it should allow opportunities for the Students to review what has been learnt;
- it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the Students, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- the teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

We encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Assessment and marking are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As outlined in the Assessment and Marking Policy, informal formative assessment takes place continuously in the classroom and comprises of:

- well understood learning objectives which are shared with the Students
- sharing or creating learning outcomes with the Students to make them partners in their learning;
- plenaries being used as assessment opportunities;
- effective teacher questioning;
- observations of learning;
- analysing and interpreting evidence of learning to inform future planning;
- sensitive and positive feedback to Students;
- individual target setting: SMART (specific, measurable, assessable, realistic and given in time);
- Students understanding how well they are doing and how they can improve.

### **Communication with Parents/Guardian/Carers**

We believe that parents/guardian/carers and guardians have a fundamental role to play in helping students to learn. We do all we can to inform parents/guardian/carers and guardians about what and how their students are learning by:

- holding meetings with parents/guardian/carers' to explain our school strategies;
- sending information to parents/guardian/carers at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the students will be studying during that term at school;
- sending regular reports to parents/guardian/carers in which we explain the progress made by each student and indicate how the student can improve further;
- explaining to parents/guardian/carers how they can support their students with homework. We suggest support for older students with their projects and investigative work;
- being available - we have an open door policy;
- strong lines of communication with parents/guardian/carers living overseas.

We believe that parents/guardian/carers have the responsibility to support their Students and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents/guardian/carers to:

- ensure that their student has the best attendance and punctuality record possible;
- do their best to keep their student healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a student's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school, staff and learning in general.

### **Concerns and complaints**

Parents/guardian/carers who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these with the Head teacher. The School has a Complaints Procedure in place, which is on the website or available from Reception at the school.

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This Policy will be reviewed annually.

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