POLICY – Curriculum

Education Universal

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Approval Date	Feb 2026
Policy Approver	Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director
Next Review Date	Feb 2029
Version No.	001
Policy Level	Education
Staff groups affected	All Education

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval**,** or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.

Tonia Lewis
Divisional Education Lead

Karen Carrington
Interim Executive Head teacher

Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

Term	Definition
'Establishment' or 'Site'	A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.
Learner	Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.
Service Head	The senior person with overall responsibility for the school/college.
Tutor/Teacher	Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for learners at the school/college.
Parent/Carer	Parent or person with parental responsibility.
Regulatory Authority	The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services (e.g., Ofsted, Estyn, Education Scotland).
Social Worker	The worker allocated to the individual learner; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	The local authority/agency responsible for placing the learner or commissioning the service.
Local Authority	The local authority for the establishment's location.
Staff	All staff working at the location, including employed staff, students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.

1. School Profile

At Cambian Dunbroch School, our mission is to inspire children and young people to achieve their goals and become worthwhile citizens, by supporting them in a holistic way to overcome barriers and develop their confidence. The very specific nature of the students accessing Dunbroch School dictates that they require a very nurturing, individualised educational experience, whilst also ensuring a quality of curriculum content that matches their abilities. This will enable them to engage and benefit a wide range of positive educational and personal development experiences.
In our school, all members of staff work together in a way conducive to learning, by creating a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment that encourages respect for others, and acknowledging the particular difficulties this represents for our students.
We aim for every member of the school community to feel valued and respected, and each person to be treated fairly and well. We will promote a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

2. Scope

This policy applies across all our sites. It includes:

- All Learners, including those under and over 18
- All Teachers, tutors and education staff
- The wider staff team
- The multi-agency team supporting curriculum delivery
- Headteachers/Principals
- All associated leaders responsible for curriculum oversight

The policy applies equally to schools and colleges, referred to collectively as sites.

3. Legal and Regulatory Context

Dunbroch School is governed by the statutory duties, safeguarding requirements and inspection arrangements of the nation in which it operates. The universal standards in this policy are implemented in line with the correct national frameworks set out in Appendices A–C, which summarise the legal, regulatory and inspection requirements for England, Wales and Scotland.

4. Policy Statement

Across our organisation, the curriculum is the shared thread that connects every site, every classroom, every conversation and every aspiration. It is more than a sequence of subjects or qualifications. It is the way we tell Learners: *you matter, you can achieve, and your future belongs to you.*

We work with Learners whose educational experiences have often been characterised by interruption, exclusion, transitions, health needs, anxiety or trauma. Many come to us holding both potential and pain. We approach this with respect and humility. A curriculum that is ambitious, well-sequenced and trauma-responsive is a powerful act of restoration: it rebuilds trust where trust has been fractured, rekindles curiosity where

learning became unsafe, and creates the conditions where Learners can experience consistency, dignity and belonging.

This universal policy provides the framework within which each of our sites shapes its own curriculum narrative. It ensures that while each site adapts to local context, national frameworks and Learner profiles, the overarching principles remain coherent across all three nations. Inspectors, partners and families should be able to recognise shared threads in ambition, design, pedagogy and practice, even as each local curriculum has its own personality and nuance.

The tone, values and commitments in this policy represent who we are as an educational provider and reflect our belief that education must meet learners where they are, lift them to where they can be, and walk with them at a pace that honours their experiences and strengths.

5. Our Curriculum Vision

Our vision is rooted in three convictions:

1. Every Learner is capable of growth, excellence and joy.

We do not define learners by their previous experiences or barriers. We define them by their possibility. Our curriculum amplifies strengths, nurtures curiosity, and opens the door to new interests and identities.

2. Learning must be emotionally and physically safe before it can be academically ambitious.

Trauma-responsive practice is not an add-on. It is the foundation. Without safety, there is no risk-taking in learning. Without relationships, there is no resilience. We use the Emotional based School avoidance

3. Education is not just preparation for adulthood — it is part of adulthood.

For Learners over and under 18, we aim to equip them with the knowledge, character, habits and skills that support independence, employability, wellbeing and community participation.

Our curriculum vision extends beyond outcomes. It shapes the culture and character of our sites. It sets the standard for how we talk, plan, teach, reflect and improve.

6. Curriculum Principles

Our curriculum is grounded in a set of universal principles that guide strategic design, daily decision-making and long-term review.

Ambitious for every Learner
We do not reduce expectations; we design learning that is accessible, supported, and aspirational. Ambition includes academic, social, emotional and independence goals.

Trauma-responsive and attachment-aware
Learning is delivered through relationships that honour each Learner's story. Predictability, attunement and emotional safety are foundational.

Coherently sequenced
Learning builds cumulatively and intentionally. We prioritise depth of understanding, retention and mastery, rather than coverage alone.

Personalised but not restrictive
Learner needs shape pathways, but personalisation never becomes a narrowing of opportunity.

Holistic and integrated
We recognise that communication, wellbeing, emotional literacy, executive functioning and community understanding are as vital as subject knowledge.

Authentic and connected to life
Learners experience learning that feels real: projects, community engagement, practical tasks, opportunities for voice and choice.

Reflective and evidence-informed
Staff use professional judgement, research, lived experience and data to adapt curriculum delivery.

7. Curriculum Structure

Across the organisation, our curriculum model integrates four strands:

1. Core Learning

This is the backbone of educational progress. It includes:

- Communication
- Literacy (functional and academic)
- Numeracy
- Digital competence
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Health, wellbeing and relationships

2. Specialist Learning

Each site will have specialist elements shaped by Learner needs:

- Sensory integration

- Therapeutic input
- Specialist communication approaches
- Specialist subjects aligned to site expertise
- Learning strategies linked to neurodiversity or emotional needs

3. Vocational and Employability Learning

Preparing Learners for meaningful futures:

- Careers education
- Work-related learning
- Supported internships
- Enterprise projects
- Life skills, travel, money management
- Community participation

4. Enrichment and Cultural Capital

Broader experiences that build identity and confidence:

- Outdoor learning
- The arts
- Physical activity
- Creativity and problem-solving
- Social development
- Clubs, interest projects and leadership opportunities

8. Trauma-Responsive Curriculum Design

Trauma-responsive practice is central to curriculum planning. We recognise that neurological load, emotional triggers and sensory profiles influence engagement.

Our trauma-responsive curriculum:

- Builds predictability through routines and transparent expectations
- Creates opportunities for co-regulation, quiet spaces and recovery
- Uses relational communication to repair ruptures and support re-engagement
- Avoids punitive approaches that undermine safety
- Embeds strength-based feedback and choice
- Recognises sensory needs and environmental stressors
- Allows for flexible pacing

9. Teaching and Learning

High-quality teaching is a professional craft that requires intentionality, reflection, planning and emotional intelligence.

Across sites, teaching reflects:

Clarity of instruction - Learning objectives, steps, purposes and success criteria are communicated explicitly.

Adaptive practice - Teachers use ongoing assessment to adjust instruction, scaffolding and pacing.

Modelling and demonstration - Staff show cognitive processes, break down tasks, and encourage learners to think aloud.

Responsive relationships - Teachers remain attuned to Learner signals, adjusting demands with dignity.

Opportunities for retrieval, practice and mastery - We use revisiting, spaced repetition and structured practice to deepen learning.

Feedback that builds identity as a learner - Feedback strengthens confidence, self-belief and agency.

Collaboration with wider staff and specialists - Multi-agency insight enriches planning and ensures holistic support.

10. Assessment

Assessment is a shared language across our organisation. It informs planning, celebrates progress and shapes personalised pathways.

Assessment is:

- **Holistic** — academic, communication, social, emotional, independence
- **Proportionate** — avoiding unnecessary administrative burden
- **Authentic** — showing learning through varied methods
- **Developmental** — supporting learners to understand progress
- **Multi-disciplinary** — drawing on insight from specialists

11. Personalisation

Personalisation strengthens engagement, progress and self-esteem and reflects:

- Strengths, interests and motivations
- Learning profiles and sensory needs
- Emotional regulation strategies
- Aspirations and career goals
- Preparation for adulthood
- Specialist reports and professional insight
- Family voice and learner voice

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Senior leaders hold strategic responsibility for the vision, coherence and continuous improvement of the curriculum across all sites. Their leadership provides the

organisational anchor that ensures every site works within a shared framework while retaining the ability to adapt to the needs of its local community.

They:

- set the overarching curriculum vision for the organisation
- develop and champion trauma-responsive, inclusive principles across all sites
- ensure leaders at every level are supported, coached and equipped to deliver high-quality education
- oversee quality assurance processes and ensure they promote learning, not compliance for its own sake
- create professional development structures that strengthen curriculum expertise and consistency
- support Headteachers/Principals to adapt curriculum models meaningfully to local Learner profiles
- ensure resources, staffing and specialist support align with curriculum ambition
- nurture a culture of reflective practice, innovation and shared learning across the organisation

Headteacher

The SLT holds the strategic lead for curriculum design and implementation.

They ensure the curriculum:

- reflects organisational values and ambition
- remains trauma-responsive, inclusive and appropriately challenging
- is sequenced coherently and adapted to the Learner profile
- is delivered consistently through high-quality teaching
- is reviewed regularly through robust quality assurance

They create the conditions in which staff can plan, teach, reflect and develop professionally. Their leadership shapes the culture that allows the curriculum to thrive.

Education Team (Teachers, Instructors and Curriculum Leads)
The education team brings the curriculum to life.

They:

- plan learning that is ambitious, engaging and well-sequenced
- deliver teaching that is adaptive, relational and grounded in professional judgement
- use assessment to shape next steps and monitor progress
- collaborate with colleagues and specialists to enrich Learner experience
- contribute to curriculum development, review and innovation

Their daily practice is where intent becomes reality. They help Learners rediscover belief in themselves as learners.

Wider Staff Team

The wider staff team plays a vital role in making the curriculum accessible, meaningful and safe.

They:

- build the relational foundations upon which learning rests
- support regulation, transitions and emotional safety
- reinforce learning themes across the day through consistent language and routines
- observe, notice and communicate Learner needs that inform planning
- contribute professional insight to personalised support

Their presence and attunement are crucial: they help create the conditions where learning can genuinely happen.

Multi-Agency Partners

Our multi-agency partners strengthen the curriculum by bringing specialist skills, insight and perspectives.

They:

- contribute expertise that shapes personalised learning
- support assessment, planning and review
- offer professional advice on communication, sensory needs, emotional wellbeing and therapeutic approaches
- collaborate with staff teams to ensure the curriculum is holistic and responsive

They help ensure each Learner's curriculum is grounded in a deep understanding of who they are and what they need to flourish.

Learners

Learners are not passive recipients of curriculum; they are active contributors to it.

They:

- share their views, interests and aspirations
- participate in shaping their personalised pathways
- reflect on their progress and set goals
- contribute feedback that helps improve curriculum quality

Their voice is essential. A curriculum becomes meaningful when it reflects who Learners are and the futures they seek.

13. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Curriculum quality is reviewed through:

- Learning walks, observations and work scrutiny
- Moderation and professional dialogue

- Assessment data and qualitative insight
- Learner, family and staff voice
- Destination data
- Annual strategic curriculum reviews
- Supervision, coaching and professional learning

14. Staff Learning and Development

High-quality curriculum delivery depends on confident, supported, well-developed staff.

Our organisation invests in:

- Trauma-responsive practice
- Specialist pedagogies
- Curriculum planning and sequencing
- Assessment and moderated judgements
- Multi-agency collaboration
- Leadership development
- Safeguarding, inclusion and equality

15. Safeguarding and Wellbeing in the Curriculum

Safeguarding is not a standalone process in our organisation — it is woven through every aspect of curriculum design, teaching and Learner experience. Our curriculum consciously develops the knowledge, confidence and competence Learners need to stay safe, make informed choices, and understand their rights. This is particularly important given that many of our Learners have lived experiences that may make them more vulnerable to harm, exploitation or unsafe relationships.

We recognise that safeguarding in the curriculum is not simply about delivering content. It is also about the conditions in which learning happens. A trauma-responsive and relational curriculum helps Learners feel seen, heard and secure — all of which are protective factors in their development.

Across all sites, our curriculum supports safeguarding by:

1. Embedding protective learning

The curriculum gives Learners age-appropriate opportunities to learn about:

- understanding risk and managing unsafe situations
- consent, respect and healthy relationships
- boundaries, privacy and bodily autonomy
- recognising unsafe online behaviours
- digital literacy and critical thinking
- emotional literacy, coping strategies and self-regulation
- recognising trusted adults and how to seek help
- understanding exploitation, grooming and coercion in accessible ways

2. Building self-advocacy and voice

We teach Learners to:

- express their needs
- describe their feelings safely
- recognise when something does not feel right
- ask for help confidently
- participate in decisions about their learning and support

Voice is a safeguarding mechanism; therefore, it is intentionally strengthened across the curriculum.

3. Creating safe, predictable learning environments

A trauma-responsive curriculum supports safeguarding by ensuring:

- emotional and relational safety
- predictable routines
- trust-building interactions
- attuned responses to distress
- safe spaces for regulation
- non-shaming approaches to behaviour

Consistency is protective. Our curriculum is built to offer that consistency every day.

4. Recognising vulnerabilities linked to past experiences

We remain alert to the ways in which:

- trauma histories
- social isolation
- learning differences
- communication needs
- neurodiversity
- sensory profiles
- transitions, moves or placement changes can increase vulnerability

The curriculum responds by building resilience, competence and personal agency.

5. Integrating safeguarding themes across subjects and experiences

Protective education is planned, sequenced and revisited. It is not confined to personal development sessions — it appears in:

- PSHE / wellbeing learning
- digital learning
- vocational learning (including safety in workplaces)
- community-based learning

- enrichment programmes
- outdoor education
- discussions about media, choices and relationships

6. Working in partnership

Safeguarding within the curriculum is strengthened by collaboration with:

- parents and carers
- therapeutic teams
- multi-agency partners
- health and social care
- specialist services

Where appropriate, planning reflects insights from those supporting the Learner outside the classroom.

- local safeguarding contacts

DSL (in school)		DSL (outside school – Homes)	
Karen Carrington	Headteacher	Coral Mayne	Regional Manager
Rosie Miller	Pastoral Lead		
Simon Page	Assistant Head		
Contact: email: firstname.last name@cambiangroup.com			

- reporting routes for concerns, all concerns go through the online mechanisms, available to all staff working in the homes/ school.
- Staff will follow the relevant policies, with regard to report concerns
- All student paperwork is viewed by schools SLT and keyworker, is to update, regularly

16. Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

Our curriculum:

- Represents diverse identities and life experiences
- Actively removes barriers to access
- Promotes belonging and participation
- Challenges discrimination and stereotypes
- Celebrates identity, culture and voice

17. Curriculum Information and Publishing Duties

Each site will publish clear and accessible curriculum information including:

- Overview of pathways
- Curriculum model
- Preparation for adulthood
- Careers information

- How the curriculum meets the needs of the site's Learners

Published in the school prospectus available from the school website

18. Related Policies

- Teaching & Observation Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy
- Careers Policy
- SEND / SEMH Policy *(sites insert nation-specific terminology locally)*
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Learning and Development Policy
- Health and Mental Well-Being Policy
- Governance, Leadership and Management Policy

Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance.

Appendices

Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

Appendix A

The legal and regulatory frameworks and guidance underpinning Curriculum in England.

1. The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

- **Means:** Statutory standards independent schools must meet (quality of education; welfare/health/safety; premises; information; complaints; leadership).
- **Requires:** Robust curriculum, safeguarding, behaviour, SEND, premises and leadership arrangements.
- **Our stance:** Curriculum, safeguarding, complaints, leadership, SEND and QA map to Parts 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8.
- **Implementation example:** Local compliance matrix aligned to ISSR standards.
- **Link:** https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283

2. Independent School Standards Guidance (DfE) 2019

- **Means:** Non-statutory but authoritative inspection guidance for interpreting the ISSR.
- **Requires:** Clear curriculum intent, SMSC, safeguarding, complaints procedures and leadership capacity.
- **Our stance:** Universal curriculum model and safeguarding framework reflect this guidance.
  Implementation example: Internal evidence handbook aligned to each Standard.
- **Link:** https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67605baec80a844a7aa4b7cb/Independent_School_Standards_Guidance.pdf

3. Ofsted Non-Association Independent School Inspection Framework (2026)

- **Means:** Inspection toolkit and operating guides for independent schools.
- **Requires:** Secure curriculum intent/implementation/impact; strong safeguarding; effective leadership.
- **Our stance:** Our QA cycle aligns with the Ofsted inspection model.
- **Link:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-school-inspection-toolkit-operating-guide-and-information

4. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

- **Means:** Core statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and FE.
- **Requires:** Safe recruitment, DSL structure, training, referral processes, online safety.
- **Our stance:** Safeguarding curriculum themes and staff responsibilities align to KCSIE.

- **Link:**https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education

5. SEND Code of Practice (0–25)

- **Means:** Statutory guidance for SEND identification, support and multi-agency planning.
- **Requires:** Graduated approach, EHC processes, co-production and high-quality teaching.
- **Our stance:** Personalisation framework aligns to the graduated approach (assess–plan–do–review).
- **Link:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25