



**Oakwood Community School**  
**Curriculum Policy**

**February 2024**

# Oakwood Curriculum Policy


## Curriculum Intent



Our curriculum has been built to ensure a combination of academic (Head), vocational (Hands), and therapeutic (Heart) learning experiences to give students the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to become successful, productive, and well-rounded in adulthood. Oakwood Community School is always looking to provide an outstanding curriculum that meets the needs of our students. We believe in developing students' capacity to learn inside and outside of the classroom. It is this school offer that ensures that the pupils of Oakwood receive a rich and diverse experience in their time with us and leave us prepared for post 16 education and training, and adulthood.

Oakwood School's curriculum has three key intentions:

- 1) **Head:** to support learners in gaining fulfilling employment once they leave school. This is supported in the younger years by helping them to achieve relevant qualifications where appropriate.
- 2) **Heart:** to support learners in becoming valuable members of society. This is scaffolded through a focus on individual wellbeing and self-regulation as well as exploration of key social issues. To enhance learners' enjoyment of learning, helping them to enjoy education for its own sake.
- 3) **Hands:** to support learners in gaining vocational skills to gain employment once they leave school.

The Curriculum features six themes in a spiral. Each theme is revisited at the same time each year, enhancing learner engagement with its key ideas, and scaffolding deeper learning. Each theme is relevant to the disciplines of each subject as well as to the learners' social and emotional development. The curriculum is person-centered, personalised, and personal to the learner.

Intention	Implementation
<p><b>Head:</b> employment and qualifications</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Literacy skills are developed through explicit, contextualised teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar at relevant points throughout the curriculum, this underpins all our subjects through a thematic approach.</li><li>• The curriculum is text-driven and thematic, supporting learners in developing background and wider knowledge through English, Humanities and Design Technology.</li><li>• The curriculum enables learners to study content that maps across to GCSE skills and competencies, so that students can achieve these qualifications if appropriate.</li></ul>

<p><b>Heart:</b> individual wellbeing and social integration</p> 	<p>Wave 1 approach to wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of self-regulation strategies are taught through Personal Development sessions.</li> <li>• Trauma informed practice is integral to the approach taken across the school. The approach emphasises physical, psychological, and emotional safety for everyone and aims to empower individuals to re-establish control of their lives.</li> <li>• The 'healthy lives' theme supports learner understanding of protective factors for mental health, as well as inspiring them by signposting positive role models in popular culture.</li> </ul> <p>Wave 2 approach to wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to therapeutic play and play therapy to help children prevent or resolve psychosocial difficulties and achieve optimal growth.</li> <li>• Drawing and Talking sessions allow individuals to discover and communicate emotions through a non-directed technique.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hands</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students participate in practical opportunities to learn through Forest School, P.E., and Design Technology.</li> <li>• The opportunity to develop practical skills at GCSE level through Food Technology and Resistant Materials.</li> <li>• Level 1 and Level 2 options through Hair and Beauty</li> <li>• Enabling students to work in our technology driven society through Computer Science and IT qualifications.</li> </ul>

**Pupils are supported to:**

- Embrace the learning opportunities we create for them.
- Choose a pathway that builds upon their strengths, interests, and ambitions.
- Achieve a wide range of academic and vocational qualifications.
- Develop their skills and talents.

At KS3 students have a broad and balanced program which follows the National Curriculum and allows them to craft and build particular strengths, special interests and talents in meaningful ways in preparation for KS4.

At KS4 each student is able to personalise their pathway and we offer a variety of accredited courses including GCSE and Vocational options. The majority of the academic curriculum is

delivered at school but some of our students spend half a day or a full day following vocational courses at nearby Alternative Providers or using specialist resources.

Oakwood Community School is mindful of the need to be flexible at times within the curriculum to meet the needs of every single student. Sometimes individual needs require exceptional arrangements, in order to re-engage a student in learning and attending school.

We believe our curriculum creates confident individuals with a sense of self-worth, secure values and beliefs which leaves them open to the excitement and inspiration offered by the world around them.

### **Curriculum Implementation: Assessment**

At Oakwood we use a range of assessment systems in order to show progress in both academic achievement but also in other areas of the curriculum and a pupil's development in Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, Independence, emotional literacy and behaviour.

For pupils at Oakwood Community School, assessment aims to:

Provide a baseline against which to measure attainment and progress in all areas, including Social, Emotional Development.

Identify the learning needs of an individual pupil or group of pupils. Inform planning, target setting and interventions.

Assist with the development of quality teaching strategies which motivate pupils. Comply with statutory requirements.

Inform parents and carers of their child's experiences and achievements.

Support the identification of barriers to learning and the development of strategies to overcome these.

Pupils are formally assessed in English, Maths, Computing and Science three times per year, the final assessment of the year often, but not always, being one which gains an accreditation. Pupils will only be entered for a qualification if it is agreed by all parties that they are ready, and we are confident that accreditation will be gained.

### **Curriculum Impact**

#### **Target Grades**

Aspirational but achievable targets are set at the beginning of each school year and students' progress towards this is monitored. Lessons are planned by teachers taking into account the students' starting point, and the minimum expectation of them (Minimum Expected Grade or MEG). These are reviewed throughout the year to ensure they are still challenging to our students, and the students' MEG may be adjusted upwards.

We are aware of how a students' approach to their studies impacts upon their level of achievement. With that in mind we encourage students to aspire to be independent learners who actively participate in the learning process and take responsibility for their own learning.

### **Marking and Feedback**

Our Marking and Feedback Policy aims to help students to reach or exceed their full academic potential. There must be a uniform approach to feedback across the school. Feedback should ensure students are fully aware of What Went Well, and how their work could be even better with next step targets.

We have a number of initiatives to ensure that marking and feedback is understood by all students.

#### **These include:**

- Purple Pen of Progress
- Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time
- Consistent whole school marking for literacy
- Regular marking scrutinies are carried out by subject leaders and senior leadership team to ensure consistent application of these initiatives, and to evaluate their impact, making any necessary adjustments to ensure maximum impact upon students' progress.

#### **Progress:**

The three assessment windows per year inform teachers and leaders of pupils' attainment against standardised levels for those who are studying formal qualifications in GCSE and BTEC.

The assessment data will also show pupils' progress from their starting points and also indicate who are either below, meeting or exceeding their expected targets. Progress in practical subjects assessed based on skills and tracked using Exposed, Emerging, Developing and Achieved statements.

Parents are informed of their child's progress three times per year as well as the Annual Review which monitors progress of the EHCP targets.

#### **Curriculum Impact: Reading**

Pupils are encouraged to read widely. Reading and oracy form part of daily sessions whereby students are involved 1:1 reading sessions; and Fresh Start reading and phonics intervention.

The English curriculum is text-driven and thematic, supporting learners in developing background knowledge through reading and support improvement in comprehension skills.

Shared reading and discussion of current affairs through the VotesForSchools programme.  
This is a voting platform for pupils which covers SMSC, British Values and Prevent.