



Ellern Mede School
LEADERS IN SUPPORTIVE EDUCATION

Title: Curriculum Policy
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Staff Lead: Adel Shirbini
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CURRICULUM POLICY



Curriculum Definition and Purpose

“A school’s curriculum consists of everything that promotes learners’ intellectual, personal, social and physical development. As well as lessons and extracurricular activities, it includes approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, the quality of relationships within school, and the values embodied in the way the school operates”.

Ellern Mede School caters for pupils between the ages of 11 and 18 who are:

- Long-stay, Short-stay or re-occurring admissions
- Students who have a medical diagnosis, related to physical or mental health.

As the school develops its services, we will offer alternative and flexible options, including full or part-time dual roll education for day students, who follow, as closely as is appropriate and practical, the same curriculum as their mainstream peers and individual teaching at the bedside when necessary.

School Ethos

Ellern Mede School works to achieve its aims by providing a stimulating, caring, therapeutic, attractive, calm and secure environment.

At Ellern Mede School,

- We want young people to contribute to school and enjoy learning.
- We want young people to achieve their best and to value learning for life.
- We want young people to become independent adults who are active citizens, willing to play their part in shaping the world around them for the better.
- We want young people to develop a positive self-image.
- We want young people to show good motivation.
- We want young people to develop confidence when interacting with their peers, offering and using peer support.
- We want young people to accept praise, tolerate mistakes and experience pride in and derive satisfaction from their own achievements.
- We want young people to understand our core values of commitment to learning, respect for themselves and others, fairness and to demonstrate a good team spirit.

Ellern Mede School will deliver on these aims by:

- Providing an education service which is relevant, complementary to and consistent with the Therapeutic Milieu Programme and the High Dependency Unit of the Ellern Mede Centre for Eating Disorders.
- Providing an education service, in partnership with young people’s home school, and which is consistent with the experiences of young people in a mainstream school.

The Timetable and Curriculum Procedures

The “General Guidelines” (QCA/DFEE March 2001) states, “It is for schools to determine, and justify, the amount of time allocated to different parts of their curriculum. When doing so, they should take account of”.

- Their own school aims
- The needs of the pupils attending the school
- The requirement to provide a broad and balanced curriculum – which includes the subjects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education
- The guidelines for teaching literacy and mathematics
- The needs of the local community

The school provides a reduced number of National Curriculum subjects taught by subject experts to GCSE and A Level; English, mathematics, science, art. In addition we offer MFL, Film Studies, History, Geography, RS, Citizenship and reading for pleasure.

As a school, we also take account of,

- The creative spirit and ethos of the school
- A wide and effective range of teaching strategies, in conjunction with a range of therapies
- The efficient and imaginative management of the curriculum by all staff
- The need to have policies that encompass additional curricular provision, e.g. Modern Foreign Language for individual students
- The importance of encouraging parents to participate and share in their child’s development and ways in which parents can support their child at home.

The curriculum reflects the policies and priorities agreed by the staff, advisory board, parents, and other professionals at the school.

- All therapies are considered an integral part of pupils’ education. Staff and therapists work together to provide a holistic approach to encourage independence, opportunities for greater access to the curriculum, and pupils’ general well being
- Each pupil has a personalised learning plan that includes targets related to personal development and to developing specific areas of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study
- Extra-curricular activities are organised by Subject Leaders when relevant, e.g. theatre trips for English; Music, Drama. In the second half of each term an edition of our magazine Medea Bites is published. Students work is displayed in the School building and in the Centre and there are regular performances of music and dance by students for staff at the Centre.

Meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum

The Education Act (2011) requires that all maintained schools provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum that,

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of learners at the school and within society
- Prepares learners at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The curriculum should aim to develop and promote

- Principles for distinguishing between right and wrong
- Appreciation of pupils' own and others beliefs
- Pupils' integrity and autonomy
- Equal opportunities
- Respect for the environments in which pupils live
- Pupils' self-esteem, respect for others and emotional well-being

The curriculum should,

- Encourage and stimulate the best possible progress and attainment, particularly in English, Mathematics, science and ICT
- Develop pupils' ICT capability through the use of ICT tools to support their learning in all subjects.
- Develop creative and physical skills, as appropriate to their treatment needs
- Build on pupils' strengths, interests and experiences
- Ensure entitlement for all learners to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that offers continuity and coherence and secures high standards
- Develop pupils' capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively
- Induct learners into the essential knowledge, skills and discourse of subject
- Encourage learners to take responsibility for their own health and safety, and appreciate the benefits and risks of the choices they make
- Prepare young people for the world of employment and further and higher education
- Make learners more aware of, and engaged with, their local, national and international communities
- Develop pupils' sense of identity
- Contribute to community cohesion
- Acknowledge, promote and pass on the core knowledge and skills valued by society to the next generation.

The Ellern Mede School inclusion philosophy is based on three principles for developing an inclusive curriculum,

- Set suitable learning challenges
- Respond to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals/groups of pupils including,
 1. The gifted and talented
 2. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
 3. Learners who are learning English as an additional language
 4. The different needs of boys and girls
 5. Children who are in care
 6. Learners with social and emotional difficulties

There is a structured school timetable offering a balance of educational activities throughout the school day and across the school week. Creative activities are given particular importance in the curriculum, especially through the study of Art, Music, Drama, Film Studies and aspects of the English curriculum. The wide breadth of creative subjects provides a counterbalance to the destructive components of eating disorders, and appears to have a positive impact on student self-esteem and confidence. Furthermore, learning for pleasure encourages young people to learn without the pressure of succeeding in examinations.

The timetable also provides scope for student of work collaboratively together through group work activities. It can be modified to respond to individual student needs, but all students are expected to participate in some group activities, including some creative activities such as the Christmas performance, or school shows, and we wish to stress that our curriculum is not based solely on aiming for success in public examinations.

There is a balance of study which is originated at Ellern Mede School, and maintaining young peoples' continuity with home school learning. Key Teachers are in constant contact with home schools, and where and when appropriate, home school work is part of the personalised curriculum mix for the young people at Ellern Mede. Home school work is sent back to the originating teacher for assessment and review. For examination entries, Ellern Mede acts as an Examination Centre, however, candidates are entered for the examination by their home school. Transferred candidate forms are completed by Ellern Mede School.

Programmes of Study

As in mainstream schools, teachers aim for pupils to achieve the standard or National Curriculum level appropriate to their age and ability. However, these expectations are qualified by the teacher's initial and continuous assessment of pupils in his/her care. The over-riding expectation is that for all pupils' experience in the classroom, or on the ward, should be purposeful, strengthen current knowledge and, whenever possible, lead to educational progress.

The curriculum for all young people is negotiated with the pupil and their parents/carers where these are present. On the ward, time arrangements and curriculum content are flexible and determined largely by the pupils' physical and psychological well-being, whether visitors are present and the availability of specialist staff. Due to hospital routines young people may come to the classroom after the start of a lesson, or even mid-session, and they may be taken out of a lesson for treatment and return later. Some young people will be keen to attend a lesson in the classroom despite being unwell or in pain, whilst others will find the levels of concentration which accompany small group teaching more demanding than their mainstream school experience and consequently tire more easily.

The school will plan learning flexibility and design a curriculum to match the needs of learners, and the local context. This flexibility can be used to help young people who need additional support, especially with literacy and numeracy, and to provide others with more in-depth study and challenge

Teachers will be able to:

- Personalise the curriculum, designing their own subject curriculum to meet individual needs and engage all learners

- Provide focused support and greater challenge where needed, helping to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to make progress and achieve, particularly in the key areas of English and Mathematics
- Design coherent learning experiences that are relevant and meaningful to learners by making connections between subjects, events and activities
- Use the curriculum to support a set of skills rather than as an end in itself
- Use a variety of teaching and learning approaches to engage and motivate learners, and to maximise impact on learning. For example, approaches that are learning rather than content focused, and projects rather than discrete, one-off lessons
- Use ICT to help pupils manage their own learning, such as through a virtual learning environment

Long-term planning,

There is a Key Stage based -curriculum planning cycle for secondary phases, which is displayed, for in the timetable information, at the entrance to each classroom. From this framework, Subject Leaders write the schemes of work based on the National Curriculum, published QCA schemes or examination syllabi. As appropriate, schemes of work are referenced to the development of literacy, numeracy, ICT and PSHCRE skills.

Medium-term planning,

From the schemes of work, Subject Leaders compile modules of study for each half-term, taking into consideration,

- The delivery of as broad and balanced a curriculum as possible for ward-based students and any young people attending the classroom.
- Regular young peoples' personal and curriculum targets
- The curriculum being followed by a dual-roll young person's mainstream school
- The anticipated length of each young person's placement at the school
- The irregular attendance of some young people and the need for a 'catch-up' curriculum for pupils who have missed schooling
- A teaching group with young people in more than one Key Stage and/or year group
- Whole school initiatives or cross-curricular themes (e.g. multi-cultural celebrations)
- Time constraints for attaining accreditation (e.g. Year 11 students who may join the school with only two or three terms to complete a course that is usually taught over two years)
- The coverage of essential content in examination subjects and the requirements of tests or examination syllabi
- Opportunities to link into local initiatives (e.g. local Arts Centre projects).

The most effective curriculum planning will enable a module in one subject area to complement modules in other subject areas.

On a day-to-day basis, the school provides class-based group teaching, opportunities for KS4 self-supported study and one-to-one tuition. All young people, regardless of their length of stay, are encouraged to participate in classroom lessons. Lesson planning makes reference to context, cross-curricular links and resources, learning objectives, differentiation – bearing in mind the needs of regular attending students attending the classroom that day, activities, and learning outcomes. Each day, teachers will decide the most effective and efficient use of pupil and teacher time for all pupils being taught in the classroom. The decision will be affected by the,

- Arrival time of young people to the classroom, and their perceived needs
- Range of medical and support needs in the group
- Availability of differentiated resources and a teaching assistant, to support the group

When possible, secondary young people studying GCSE non-core subjects, such as MFLs, are taught individually or in small groups by a specialist secondary teacher. The school is a registered Examinations Centre, which enables (e.g. young people with school phobia or medical conditions) to sit up to 5 GCSEs that they may not otherwise have had the opportunity of taking. Many of these young people are then able to progress on to 6th Form or College courses.

Personalised and Inclusive Learning

Personalised learning encompasses curriculum entitlement and choice, effective teaching and learning, assessment for learning, and a positive school environment where young people feel secure and can flourish as individuals. Clear boundaries are combined with praise for all young people, and their achievements are displayed in the classroom and corridor.

Young people get admitted into the hospital without a clear understanding of their length of stay, as different young people react in different ways to treatment. As the school roll changes sometimes daily, so do the educational and emotional needs of its young people. Teachers will be aware that a young person's attainment may be impeded by the fact that they are learning in an unfamiliar environment and in circumstances where they may not be emotionally, psychologically or physically at their best. Teachers are sensitive to the changing needs of young people and may feel it desirable to modify their original learning intentions in order to promote the participation of e.g. a reluctant learner. All teachers try to ensure that each teaching session on the wards offers an appropriately stimulating activity, which offers a sense of achievement and may contribute to a child's recovery.

Using a flexible curriculum and a personalised approach to teaching and learning, the school is able to cater for a wide range of learning needs including gifted and talented young people, young people with English as an additional language, young people with profound, severe or moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, and visual and hearing impairment. If a young person has a Statement, and an Individual Education Plan, their school is telephoned, and a request is made for this Plan and their targets to be faxed or e-mailed. Advice would be sought regarding appropriate provision for any long-stay pupil who needed technological aids, or adapted equipment, to communicate or access the curriculum.

Where a young person's individual needs are such that they require one-to-one supervision or support in the classroom, the class teacher will liaise with the Headteacher for additional support. Where individual needs are known in advance, arrangements can be put in place prior to the admission of the young person to school.

We believe learners should be actively involved in their own education. Young people are encouraged to contribute to school life; their views of their school experience are sought annually, through a questionnaire. Giving young people a voice and motivating them to take decisions about their own education, through guidance and increased choices, will enable them to take more responsibility for their own education as well as teach them to think independently. All young people have regular one-to-one meetings with their Key Teachers to discuss their targets and achievements.

Key Teachers liaise regularly with young peoples' home-schools (Head of Year and/or subject teachers) to ensure curricular continuity, which enables young people to re-integrate having studied relevant units of work and made relatively similar progress to their peers.

Social Moral Spiritual Cultural Policy

Spiritual Development

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

1. Sustain their self-esteem in their learning experience.
2. Develop their capacity for critical and independent thought.
3. Foster their emotional life and express their feelings
4. Experience moments of stillness and reflection.
5. Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences.
6. Form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
7. Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.

Moral Development

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the unique value of each individual.
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others.
- Gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes.
- Take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others.
- Distinguish between right and wrong.
- Show respect for the environment.
- Make informed and independent judgments.

Social Development

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- Learn about service in the school and wider community.

Cultural Development

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognize the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influenced individuals and society.
- Develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment.
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national and global dimensions.

Purpose

At Ellern Mede School we recognize that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We understand that SMSC forms part of the foundations that support children's ongoing development and ability to learn.

We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behavior, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

All National Curriculum subjects provide opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Within our school the integrity and spirituality of pupils from all faith backgrounds will be respected and explored. The diversity of spiritual traditions will be recognized, and pupils will be given access to alternative views.

All adults will model and promote expected behavior, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals and showing respect for pupils and their families.

The school community will be a place where pupils can find acceptance for themselves as unique individuals, and where the opportunity to start again is fundamental to the ethos of the school and is encouraged through the teaching of resilience.

Pupils should learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others. Pupils should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behavior and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

Identity and Diversity – Britishness

Ellern Mede School recognises the engagement of young people in society and their understanding of what it is to be a citizen is central to creating a diverse but cohesive country. Pupils will explore what it means to be British as part of a wider discussion of their identities, and the values associated with them.

Ellern Mede School will actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

All curriculum areas should seek to use illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible. This will be reflected in teacher's planning and choice of resources.

Role of the Subject Teachers/Leaders

- To ensure teachers and support staff understand, agree with and follow the School's policy in their curriculum subject
- To review their subject's policy statement every 2 years
- To ensure that their subject's plans are reviewed at the end of each delivery cycle
- To develop and regularly review Schemes of Work for their curriculum subject, taking into account the wide range of pupils' needs and abilities
- To write a departmental plan
- To annually complete a self-evaluation subject report
- To provide and update subject resources for pupils and teachers, and advise on their effective use
- To support colleagues requiring help in developing their curriculum area
- To effectively monitor delivery of their subject to ensure consistency of approach, continuity and progression
- To advise on assessment, recording and reporting.
- To organise regular curriculum meetings
- To attend relevant inset courses and to encourage other staff to go on inset courses
- To liaise with other schools

All teachers have a responsibility to,

- Prepare differentiated lesson plans and materials
- Ensure teaching assistants understand the contents of a scheme of work/lesson plan and are given clear guidance about the objectives of an activity, how to approach it and the intended outcomes
- Make classroom resources accessible so that pupils can collect their own materials, where appropriate
- Have high expectations and respond flexibly to the needs of pupils
- Provide a stimulating/calm environment, as appropriate
- Be aware of equality issues

Homework

Homework will be set regularly for one or more of the following reasons;

- to finish or redraft work planned in class
- practise and reinforce the skills, knowledge and understanding gained from lessons
- encourage students to develop the confidence and skills required to work independently
- encourage students to be responsible for monitoring the amount of work they do

Educational visits and Work Experience

Educational visits and work experience placements may be included in the curriculum, where appropriate, to provide learning opportunities that are complementary to and extend beyond classroom-based activities. They enable young people to:

- Undergo experiences not available in the classroom
- Learn from first hand experiences
- Develop investigate skills
- Gain confidence in travelling outside the Centre
- Interact with the general public
- Develop independence

Educational materials and resources

The school recognises the need to develop and maintain the best possible education materials and resources to support the curriculum, including an attractive and well-kept school environment. The ICT facilities have recently been expanded and all young people have access to the internet, and their own space on the server. Classrooms are always well presented and young peoples' work is celebrated through wall displays. Art & Design can be developed using ICT.

Links with mainstream schools

In order to share our own curriculum expertise in a specialist educational setting and to benefit from the curriculum expertise and resources within mainstream school settings, the Ellern Mede Moorgate School is developing links with other local schools that may provide staff or CPD opportunities for our subject specialists.

School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Plan and School Self Evaluation, primarily completed through subject leads, provide a focus for curriculum development. Partnership with external agencies and educational consultancies provides much needed impetus for curriculum innovation and change.