

Curriculum Policy



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| Approved by: | Governing Body |
| Reviewed By: | Head teacher |
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1. Introduction

The core purpose of Cornfields school and our curriculum is '*to improve the life chances of children*'. There is a known correlation between poor outcomes in life and the factors that have made pupils vulnerable to underachievement in schools. Factors include looked after status children, pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND). Our school seeks to adopt a dynamic approach to addressing the needs of vulnerable children, irrespective of the difficulties presented, to maximise their future life chances. By setting high expectations for our pupils and providing an environment in which they thrive our aim is to eradicate poor outcomes for all pupils.

2. Safeguarding

Cornfields school adopts a rigorous and committed approach to safeguarding, promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and adults who come into contact with our pupils to share this commitment.

3. Aims

At Cornfields school we aim to foster an environment where pupils feel safe and develop a secure sense of belonging. Most of our pupils have experienced turbulence in their schooling and many have severe, complex, or profound needs that have a significant impact on their cognitive social, emotional and communication development. Many of our pupils have complex mental health issues. We aim to support pupils in a family school environment and support pupils to achieve the best they can to maximise their life chances and to ensure that they can be as independent as possible, participating in society and being as healthy as possible in adult life.

Raising personal ambition through graduated achievements is key to our SEND pupils seeing a difference for themselves, both in the present and future. We take a radical approach to the curriculum applying holistic approaches, supporting pupils to acquire knowledge and skills that they will need to take advantage of the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

In developing independence, we must ensure that skills learned can be transferred to many different situations in the here and now, and most importantly in the future. This ability to apply information and knowledge for us is a key indicator in measuring progress and achievement. We formally and informally assess learning progress from a variety of sources

including observation, practical outcomes and written work. We are able to determine whether key concepts have been understood and transferred to long term memory. Such knowledge can be applied fluently at later times.

Cornfields has a blended, interesting and relevant curriculum which is created around each individual pupil, taking account of their starting point to ensure that their academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are addressed in a way that captures them and motivates them to learn. We use assessment to good effect, with opportunities for revisiting and self-assessment, so that the content taught to develop information and skills become secure. Building trust, self-confidence, resilience, and belonging are key to our approach. Our end point is clear - we promote preparation for, and appreciation of, life in modern Britain. Equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. We believe all children should be provided with an education where they can thrive, no matter what their background or the challenges presented.

The curriculum we deliver captures many elements of the National Curriculum as well as ensuring pupils Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) targets are met. We are compliant with the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the schedule of the Education (ISS) Regulations 2014 and an evaluation of judgements as detailed in the independent school inspection handbook, updated in September 2019. Our curriculum adopts key aspects of the 3I approach of Intent, Implementation and Impact.

4. Curriculum Delivery

Our environment and delivery of our curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning, weaving these into the continuous learning cycle.

- Playing and exploring – pupils will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning – pupils will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements. Being an active participant in their own learning, not a passive bystander is essential we believe to ensure that a pupil sees the purpose of learning and the link it makes to lifelong learning for them.
- Creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support pupils to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. We ask pupils to consider how this links to something they will learn in a different subject, how it links to pre-existing learning topics and how they are acquiring new ideas and going to transfer this to further studies and daily functioning.

Additionally, we follow a particularly relevant approach, identified as LEARN **which** promotes our aim of ensuring pupils remember more:

The acronym LEARN is often used as a memory technique where each letter stands for a strategy that can help pupils recall information more effectively. The strategies are: Link, Elaborate, Actively engage - anchor, Repeat, Notes. These strategies can be used to enhance comprehension and retention of information.

L - Link:

Connect new information to existing knowledge and experiences to make it more memorable.

E – Elaborate:

Explain the information in your own words or try to apply it to different situations.

A - Actively Engage – Anchor:

Participate in the learning process by asking questions, taking notes, and discussing the material. Make connections between material using different media like images, object to trigger memory.

R - Repeat:

Rehearse the information multiple times using different methods like writing it down, reading it aloud, or quizzing yourself. Learning is through chunking or bitesize learning to increase links in the brain.

N - Notes:

Create notes, outlines, or mind maps to organize and summarize the information.

In summary, the LEARN mnemonic provides a framework for effective learning and recall by emphasising active engagement, linking new information to existing knowledge, elaborating on concepts, repeating information, and taking notes.

The effectiveness of LEARN relies on careful selection of activities and methods to maximise engagement. In partnership with the pupils, teaching staff at Cornfields use their in-depth understanding of the children in their care to choose appropriate activities, differentiated to their SEND needs. Activities are linked across different subject curriculum, utilising different methods and styles of learning to maximise opportunities for learning, retention and progression.

5. Pathways for Learning

Class groups and curriculum content are not categorised simply by year group. Classes are categorised by learning styles, and sensory needs. Our class grouping is refined by considering the advice of the Teaching staff, SENCo and using data from baseline assessments and early monitoring of social interactions.

Our classes are categorised by colour pathways, which allow for enormous flexibility to challenge and support our pupils effectively. Although pupils may be based in one class, to

provide consistency with a class tutor, they are able to move between classes throughout the school day to ensure their learning is appropriately challenging and personalised.

| | Yellow pathway | Green pathway | Blue pathway |
|----------------|--|--|---|
| Y7-Y9 | AQA unit awards in a variety of subjects including English and maths | AQA unit awards in a variety of subjects including Maths and English. | AQA unit awards in a variety of subjects |
| | Skills for life PSHE | Skills for life PSHE St Johns ambulance course Science – EL1-2 | Skills for life PSHE St Johns ambulance course Science - Entry level 2-3 |
| | Accreditation in Arts award discover. | Accreditation in Arts award Bronze. | Accreditation in Arts award Bronze |
| | English - Letters and sounds phonics. | English - Step up to silver/gold | English - Functional skills 1-2 |
| | Maths - Abacus curriculum. | Maths - Entry level | Maths - Functional skills 1-2 |
| Y10-Y11 | AQA unit awards in a variety of subjects | Science - Entry level 1/2 | Science - Entry level 2 /3/ GCSE |
| | Skills for life AQA - PSHE education programme of study. | Skills for life AQA - PSHE education programme of study. D of E Bronze | Skills for life AQA - PSHE education programme of study. D of E Silver PE GCSE |
| | Accreditation in Arts award Bronze. | Accreditation in Arts award Silver. | Accreditation in Arts award in Silver or Gold. |
| | English - AQA units | English - Functional skills level 1 | English - GCSE |
| | Maths - Entry level 1 | Maths - Functional skills level 1 | Maths - GCSE |

| | Yellow pathway | Green pathway | Blue pathway |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Y12-Y13 | AQA unit awards in a variety of subjects to meet individual needs | Vocational work experience and life skills | Individual GCSE's based on student's interests. |
| | AQA - PSHE education programme of study. Individual program of study using AQA units for Life skills. | AQA - PSHE education programme of study. Individual program of study using AQA units for Life skills. | Vocational work experience and life skills |
| | Accreditation in Arts award Bronze or silver. | Accreditation in Arts award silver | Mentoring |
| | English for life skills | English - Functional skills 1&2 | GCSE English if required |
| | Practical problem-solving maths | Maths - Functional skills 1&2 | GCSE maths if required |
| Next steps | Specialist provision in an environment catering for SEND. | Foundation learning or provision at college developing skills for independent living. | College provision at college (functional skills, GCSE, BTEC, Apprenticeship) |

6. Intent - A Balanced Curriculum, Preparing Pupils for Life

Our curriculum is personalised and not reliant on linear learning goals. It provides frameworks and development sequences that are used by teachers to support individual education pathways and identify opportunities for next steps. We aim to develop our pupil's knowledge of the three pillars of learning (functional skills – English, maths and ICT, Skills for life and problem solving).

Teachers plan according to individual learning preferences, informed through close attention to pupils' individual EHCPs and Provision Plans. We encourage the acquisition of knowledge and skills of how to be a learner to promote the pupil's thirst for learning. Provision plans within students EHCP's are regularly updated and used daily to ensure we are working to termly set individualised targets, reviewed by teachers and amended if needed.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum and is prioritised. We recognise that having a functional reading age (age 8 years+) is pivotal in enabling our pupils to access a broader and richer curriculum. We address social disadvantage by ensuring our pupils have every opportunity to achieve this functional reading age, thus improving life chances. On entry,

many of our pupils have rapidly fallen behind their peers. We act quickly to close the gap and work towards accelerated progress.

Our intent is for all pupils to read at an age-appropriate level through rigorous and sequential assessments so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and retained. These assessments identify barriers to learning and gaps. From this starting point we implement a bespoke programme, using high quality multi-sensory/dyslexia friendly resources. Weaknesses are addressed quickly so that potential can be unlocked. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a problem-solving mindset and in doing so, build resilience and independence. Progress is improved by regular 1:1 reading interventions employing a structured scheme of spellings, phonics and age-appropriate levelled books, encouraging reading skills and understanding to remedy the loss of interest in reading historically present in many of our pupils.

We utilise a specialist reading intervention 'The Reading Doctor' that specialises in helping children overcome reading challenges, using proven methods tailored to each child's needs. By focusing on the root causes of reading difficulties, The Reading Doctor offers personalised programmes that make learning to read easier and more effective. Our approach combines cognitive science with practical strategies, ensuring that every learner can unlock their reading potential.

We adopt a broadly themed approach to our curriculum, using a different focus text each term to inspire and support learning in all areas. The topics provide richness of experience and bring the curriculum together in a cohesive structure and sequence.

Our themed approach allows teachers to:

- Make good use of cross curriculum links and provide a holistic approach
- Provide sequence and progression
- Provide opportunities for regular repetition, embedding learning and learning skills
- Plan and review collaboratively
- Ensure breadth and balance in the curriculum and build in flexibility to deliver lessons through therapeutic work
- Provide opportunities for pupils to work on their Provision Plans in differing contexts and bring greater coherence to their learning
- Provide opportunities for special themed and enrichment events, trips and celebrations that are complementary to the curriculum and pupils' learning

Pupils are supported with progress into further education in the next stage of their lives and are supported with careers advice, work experience and transitions.

7. Implementation - Schemes and Resources

Teachers have access to a range of schemes of work which enable lessons to be planned and adapted around the needs of the pupils. Specialist approaches and interventions are specifically timetabled and are also embedded within the curriculum.

Schemes of work and specialist resources include, but are not limited to:

The Reading Doctor – 1:1 sessions and materials for class use
The Power of Reading
TES resources
EYFS framework
AQA specifications and schemes of work
NSPCC share aware lesson plans and teacher guidance
NSPCC lesson planning
St Johns Ambulance lesson planning
Lego Therapy

8. Impact - Support and Assessment

For all our learners, Progress Engagement Guides (PEGs) work closely with class teachers to support and check pupil learning to close the gaps as they become evident. This informal and quick observational intervention informs teaching content and is vital in ensuring correct understanding is achieved. Our PEGs assist in the regular assessment of each pupil weekly and use this data to target specific learning for development in small group or 1:1 sessions.

Assessment is an integral part of our daily teaching to inform future focuses and to evaluate our effectiveness. Recording of achievement is carried out daily and staff constantly monitor, assess, celebrate and respond to learning.

Curriculum impact is monitored through subject review and monitoring by the school Curriculum Lead and the Senior Leadership Team. Impact of the curriculum is measured through pupil learning and progression in relation to individual targets (from EHCPs and Provision Plans) and through baseline and regular standardised assessment using PASS functional skills.

Developing valuable life skills to develop independence can be very difficult for children and young people who have attachment and or educational learning difficulties. Specific time is dedicated for pupils to develop these skills in a safe and nurturing environment, always with

the aim of promoting learning as a healthy option, vital to their wellbeing and a prerequisite for being able to make informed decisions in adulthood.

We measure the impact of the children's efforts and record using Arbor digital systems. Evidence is provided by reporting throughout the year, provision plan revision, AQA portfolios, life skill achievements, vocational and academic results and growing understanding of the importance of learning as a tool for progressing on their lifetime journey.

9. Linked policies

Marking policy