

COVID-19 Reconnection Curriculum Statement

As a Special School, COVID-19 has required us to reflect on our high-quality curriculum offer with consideration to communication and interaction, as children's main presenting need. The curriculum design is underpinned by current research and ensures that children are socially and emotionally prepared for the next stage of their education, holistically and academically. We continue to work in collaboration with other professionals and therapists to ensure that speech and language, as well as occupational therapy, is integrated into our daily delivery of a high-quality curriculum so that provision fully meets children's needs and connects them to learning.

Our reconnection curriculum intent promotes the demonstration of compassion, integrity and a pursuit of excellence in order for our children to reach their potential. There is a relevant themed learning approach, based on children's interests and fascinations, to engage them on their learning journey. Memorable learning experiences hook children into purposeful activities, culminating in outcomes where children are confident to have a voice, reflect, express and articulate their views. Our reconnection curriculum intent builds upon:

- Explicit teaching of essential skills linked to each activity to develop knowledge and provide a depth of understanding
- Modelling new skills and allowing time for consolidation
- Applying independent skills and thinking
- Providing creative opportunities for doing and making
- Delivering reading, writing and talk across the curriculum
- Reading and writing for a real purpose

Through our Universal Skills Builder Partnership, the essential skills of 'positivity' and 'speaking' will continue to be embedded within our curriculum fostering resilience and an ambition for our children and staff to deepen their curiosity about, understanding of, and respect for, the world around them, whilst being supportive of their health and wellbeing, for many will have had, and continue to have, various experiences during the pandemic.

During a wider return to school, our curriculum will need to reconnect our children to school, adults and peers as they need to establish routines, rebuild their confidence, stamina, social and interaction skills. Fluency in the basic skills of English, mathematics, and oracy, with reading at the heart to unlock the curriculum, will enable them access to the full curriculum and is therefore integral to our approach.

The curriculum is carefully designed through teachers' adaptations of Cornerstones imaginative learning projects, aligned to children's various stages of development and cognition, taking children from what they already know to newly acquired knowledge and skills. The intent is to reconnect children with the skills and attributes through a curriculum in

which they can feel adventurous, excited and curious, engaging and exploring with first-hand, memorable, multisensory learning experiences with their staff teams and alongside their peers once more. This should ensure coverage, progression and retention of transferrable knowledge and skills. We aim to provide an accessible, engaging and safe environment where learners thrive and build the social and 'cultural capital' they need to make aspirational choices about their own future, overcoming any barriers.

In order to achieve this, our curriculum intent is underpinned by the following principles:

- Relevant and current
- Empowers children
- Promotes character and heart
- Impacts on long-term memory
- Provides wide-ranging opportunities

Our ambition is to ensure that our children thrive, achieve and succeed and that our Academy community is the best it can be. Our ethos and values of *kindness, respect, resilience, empathy, understanding, inclusivity and openness* encourage a curriculum that meets the needs of our neurodiverse community. The implementation of these core elements and principles will provide all children with the support, knowledge and skills they are entitled to learn.

We aim to make every lesson count. We are highly ambitious for all our children, respecting their differences and aptitudes. All staff know the key knowledge and skills that children should achieve at the end of each term including the provision and long-term outcomes of their Education, Health and Care Plans and learning is carefully planned to meet these goals.

We ensure the intent of the curriculum considers the learning characteristics of pupils with autism through our pedagogy and daily 'Good Autism Practice'. Our children are provided with a full and relevant curriculum which is appropriately personalised for their individual needs. The curriculum is not narrowed in Key Stage 3 and 4. All children, throughout the Academy, receive a broad and balanced curriculum which is aimed at improving their knowledge and skills in a progressive manner.

With a wider return, we will ensure that all our children have the essential support, basic skills, knowledge and love of learning to reconnect with school and be ready to thrive in the next stage of their education.