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Education & Curriculum Policy

Introduction

Prospect House Independent School specifically aims to provide education for Looked After young people who have not accessed mainstream education for a prolonged period, who have been excluded from a mainstream environment and as a result have become disaffected with educational processes. Most young people are referred to our provision because of an irreversible breakdown in the relationship between pupil and mainstream schooling and the learner preference for a highly supportive, safe and small learning environment. All young people referred to our provision are classed as having Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD).

Prospect House offers a curriculum entitlement that is inclusive, stimulating, relevant and differentiated to the particular needs of individual learners. Our curriculum is designed to raise the value young people place on educational achievement. This will primarily be achieved by personalising the curriculum they will study, building on learners' own strengths, interests and experiences. Our curriculum promotes a student centred approach, supporting a breadth of study built on personal relevance and flexible learning pathways throughout. Prospect House endeavours to remove barriers to learning and support learner wellbeing. A major element of this will be teaching the young people "how to learn". Our curriculum focuses on developing the young person's skills and abilities. Young people are taught to develop skills to support them to become independent, confident and responsible individuals.

We consider our curriculum to be a 'Waking Day' curriculum in order to recognise that our young people do not necessarily learn within the same parameters of mainstream schooling. Prospect House maintains a consistent, supportive approach to learning throughout the day to enable young people with EBD to access the whole school curriculum when it suits them best. This ensures that young people do not miss educational opportunities due to times of disengagement, challenging behaviour or the need to take 'time out'. This also ensures that the activities outside the traditional school day complement the school curriculum and helps young people to achieve their own individual targets.

Our curriculum and time tables are carefully planned and developed to minimise disengagement and maximise equality of opportunity, achievement, and positive behaviour and enjoyment through formal and informal learning and experience. The student timetable, schemes of work and curriculum planning is produced and reviewed termly in respect to termly changes to our learner cohort including the promotion of meeting the individual learning and development needs of each new and existing student.

In Key Stage 3 and 4 each young person receives a personalised programme of study, although all receive the core entitlement of Maths, English, Science, PSHE and sports and fitness. Teaching comprises of formal E-Learning classes, AQA awards, vocational courses where possible and development of Independent Living skills throughout the curriculum.

The Individual Needs of Pupils

Pupils attending the school will have a wide range of needs and these should be addressed through their Individual Education plans. However, the prime needs of all pupils are social, emotional and behavioural development needs. We recognise that BESD needs lay on a continuum from normal, albeit unacceptable, behaviours through to behaviours indicative of severe mental illness (DfE definition). All of our pupils are at or towards the severe end of this continuum.

Generally pupils with BESD needs are characterised by (*Daniels et al (1999)*):

- Being unlikely to be making academic progress commensurate with their ability
- Presenting exceptional and/or extreme behaviours persistently over time
- Associated learning difficulties
- Display sometimes extreme but essentially “normal” behaviours

In addition, the majority of our pupils have had significant gaps in their education and are often resistant to re-engage with learning. Consequently, the curriculum model outlined below focuses on their prime needs, which are generally in the areas of:

- Confidence and motivation;
- Literacy and numeracy;
- Learning skills;
- Relationships with peers and adults;
- Collaborative and team working; and
- Readiness for post-16 learning and employment opportunities.

The Organisation of Learning

It is the policy of our School that all pupils will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that addresses the difficulties that have caused them to be referred to us, promotes, assesses and recognises their learning, offers them opportunities and experiences that will enable them to meet the challenges of adult life, promotes the values of caring for others and that operates in a fair and consistent manner.

The curriculum will be developed and implemented in line with 2 main considerations as guidance: these are [independent school standards](#) and [Every Child Matters](#).

While Every Child Matters may now be archived, it still offers some valuable information.

The curriculum will give all pupils ‘experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education’ as required by The Education

(Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. These experiences will be delivered through a cross-curricular approach providing extended learning opportunities through all sessions provided.

Linguistic

In this area we concentrate on developing the young peoples' communication skills and command of language through speaking, listening, reading and writing. Young people take part in English lessons during key stage 3 and 4 that are suitable for their level and ability.

Young people are supported to access Functional Skills lessons in order to boost their skills in every day literacy skills. If deemed appropriate young people are given every opportunity to access and achieve GCSE level English. Our aim is for all young people to have a firm grasp of Literacy skills, enabling them to live confident and independent lives.

Opportunities to develop linguistics skills are offered across the curriculum and across subject boundaries. Promoting these skills for Looked After young people with EBD has particular importance in developing independence.

In all sessions young people are taught to listen carefully and to communicate clearly and confidently in both speech and writing in order to convey their thoughts, feelings and opinions in an appropriate manner.

Mathematical

In this area we encourage young people to develop their mental agility in making oral and written calculations and to apply their computational skills with speed and accuracy.

They are taught to understand mathematical concepts and language and to recognise and understand shapes, spatial awareness, patterns in numbers and also to measure accurately.

Young people will learn to solve problems, handle data, think logically and analytically, express themselves clearly through practical activities, exploration and discussion.

They will also learn to be aware of the applications of mathematics in the world in which we live. Young people are supported to access Functional Skills lessons in order to boost their skills in every day numeracy skills. Young people are given every opportunity to access and achieve GCSE level Mathematics.

Logic and problem solving skills are promoted throughout our curriculum and across subject boundaries. Budgeting, handling money and understanding the cost of living are central to our curriculum and aim to arm our young people with the skills to live independently in the future.

Scientific

In this area we provide activities to help develop knowledge and understanding of nature, the

environment, materials and forces.

During Key Stage 3 and 4 young people access Science lessons as part of the core curriculum at a level that is appropriate according to their assessed level.

All young people in Key Stage 4 are given the opportunity to access GCSE Science lessons.

Within the AQA Aware framework, in which all young people take part, Science and Technology and The Environment are two key modules where young people are able to develop scientific skills practically and in a way that is relatable to their everyday lives.

Across the curriculum we encourage the young people to observe, hypothesise and experiment in order to analyse and solve problems.

Technological

On a weekly basis we use ICT and Food Technology as means of developing technological skills and understanding.

Young people have daily access to technological equipment in these areas such as laptops and a well equipped kitchen so that they can store and retrieve information, produce objects and to learn to evaluate, adapt and amend their work. Using ICT is fundamental to the curriculum as core lessons are conducted virtually.

Young people are encouraged to use ICT throughout the bulk of the curriculum in order to conduct research, learn to use key computer software and in order promote a variety of learning opportunities and incorporate a global dimension within the curriculum.

Young people are encouraged to plan for and make food on a weekly basis and are given a firm understanding of what constitutes a balanced diet. Prospect House promotes technological experience throughout the curriculum in order to enhance and develop independence skills.

Human and Social

This area is concerned with people, their behaviour and their environment.

The curriculum encourages young people to consider the lives of other people and the effects of our behaviour and actions on others.

Through PSHE young people are supported to develop a sense of self and sensitivity to others, acquiring a set of moral values and an awareness of multicultural issues, drug and alcohol abuse and social prejudice.

Young people are supported and encouraged to engage with their local community, to develop understanding of the wider world and the societal processes that affect their rights.

Young people are supported to complete work experience and engage with a range of opportunities to enable them to progress and lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Physical

Young people are encouraged to participate in sport and leisure activities on a weekly basis.

In this area we provide opportunities for young people to develop their confidence, physical control and coordination of mind and body.

They are encouraged to work co-operatively with others and also as good sports persons e.g. with a partner or in a team and in out of school sporting activities. We also teach them the importance of health and fitness, the benefits of leading a healthy life style and the positive effects that exercise has on the body.

Young people are encouraged to make use of the sporting and leisure opportunities in their local area, both by using local leisure clubs and by appreciating the local countryside as a rich environment for walking, mountain biking, horse riding running and Geocaching.

Aesthetic and Creative

Through our personalised curriculum all young people are encouraged to be creative when helping to create their education timetables and to choose educational activities that will maximise enjoyment.

This area is concerned with enhancing freedom, choice and independence in order to develop a keen sense of the self. Young people are supported to lead their own challenges and take them in a direction that feels right to them. Young people are supported to make their surroundings their own, through decoration and personalisation.

Young people are encouraged to participate in artistic and creative projects across the curriculum on a weekly basis.

PSHE

Ofsted reports in PSHE and materials for schools [available HERE](#)

Each session promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Prospect House is a member of the [PSHE Association](#) as we believe that all young people, especially those that are Looked After, should receive a robust and good quality PSHE provision. We deliver a planned programme of learning through which young people acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives. PSHE develops the qualities and attributes young people need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society. Our scheme of work is developed through a person centred approach with the help of ABC Care and Education LTD's fulltime

Counsellor.

Each session is supported and planned by the Education Coordinator and the Counsellor in response to the PSHE Association suggested programme of study and the individual needs of the young people at Prospect House.

Due to our individualised curriculum we can respond quickly to the issues that are affecting young people in our care almost immediately, whether that's CSE, personal hygiene, conflict resolution or the harmful effects of smoking. This reflects our ethos in the sense that we very much listen to the needs, views and opinions of our young people. PSHE develops speaking and listening skills and enables young people to develop respect the views of others, to debate and to be sensitive and considerate.

The person centred approach and group work enables the development of effective relationships between young people, their peers and staff members alike. Our PSHE scheme of work enables young people to grow and develop as individuals, to build their personal identities, confidence and self-esteem, make career choices, develop self-understanding, empathy and the ability to work with others. The aim of this is to support young people to enjoy healthy and productive relationships in all aspects of their lives and ultimately to develop skills that they will be able to use as they go on to independence.

Schools also have wider responsibilities under the [Equalities Act 2010](#) and should ensure that their school strives to do the best for all pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children. This means that PSHE education must be sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may need to evolve over time as the pupil population changes. At all times the overarching principle is to ensure the present and future wellbeing of pupils and to meet their learning needs.

Schemes of Work

Schemes of work are planned and developed by Curriculum/Subject Leaders and subject teams with regard to:

- Requirements of the National Curriculum
- [Ofqual](#)
- The National Strategies' guidance
- Whole school policies and practices
- Students' needs including:
 - additional educational needs
 - Special Educational Needs
 - learning styles and
 - reflecting diversity issues

Differentiation

Differentiation of learning activities in subjects within the curriculum helps to meet the learning needs of all young people. For some young people it may be necessary to choose work from earlier key stages so they are able to progress and demonstrate attainment. Central to the work of every class and every subject is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessment and evaluation that takes into account the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of pupils. The majority of young people will learn and progress within these arrangements.

Enrichment Opportunities

External links enrich and enhance learning, and allow young people to make a positive contribution to our local community. Enrichment opportunities are an integral part of our curriculum and also include opportunities for informal learning in a range of settings such as clubs and communities.

Mentoring

1:1 support is offered at all times which supports young people with their varying needs and to enable young people to fully participate in learning. Each young person has a key worker as it is important that they feel confident to share any anxieties with someone that they trust. Each young person is offered weekly meetings with the Education Coordinator in order to discuss their needs for curriculum support, to record and discuss progress and achievements and to enable them to be actively involved in target setting.

Progression between Key Stages

Partnerships with parents, social workers and local authorities are actively sought. We seek to gain as much information as possible from past education provisions in order to promote information sharing and draw knowledge and expertise in relation to the young person in order to support successful transition periods.

The Key Stage 3-4 transfer is overseen by the Education Coordinator in order to ensure that students are supported in making informed and relevant curriculum choices. Young people will be supported to access the core curriculum, work experience and vocational courses if deemed appropriate.

Home-School Partnership

Wherever possible we make contact with parents as their contribution and views are valued. Young

people often seek encouragement and enjoy receiving praise from parents so all reports and educational achievements are shared on a regular basis.

Statutory Obligations

Equal Opportunities

Please see our [Equal opportunities Policy](#) for further information

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief.

Disabilities: In accordance with the statutory requirements the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all students as far as is reasonably practicable.

Sex Education

The DfE have published statutory guidance [available HERE](#)

The school provides sex education for all students, in which students are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life.

In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all students, but parents/carers may withdraw their children from any other part of the sex education provision without giving reasons.

Careers Education and Work Related Learning

The school provides careers education to all students through PSHE and through the scheduled Mentor programme.

Work related learning is augmented by a cross curricular approach for all students and through a block work experience programme for Key Stage 4 students.

Students are actively encouraged to engage with other external agencies such as the Young Peoples' Service and the Job Centre to enhance the provision for careers education and work related learning as well as to offer impartial guidance and advice.

As well as utilising hundreds of AQA Awards to develop skills for future work, ABC Care and Education utilise resources through Fast Tomato.

Fast Tomato

Fast Tomato has been designed to help young people broaden their horizons and consider a broader spectrum of career and education options. Students take a short psychometric questionnaire which gauges interests, attitudes and motivations. They are then offered career and education suggestions, personalised to them.

Fast Tomato offers interest based career guidance and education for teenagers. Following some simple but powerful assessments, Fast Tomato offers a wealth of career, course and subject information, coupled with independent adviser support, to inspire students and to help them make informed decisions about their future.

Some features:

- Information on over 600 careers – many with case studies & videos
- Guidance on subjects required for specific careers
- Email access to our independent careers advisers

Political Education

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school is forbidden by law.

Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and are presented in a balanced manner, specifically through the Citizenship and Community aspect of the AQA Award but also as part of a cross curricular approach.

E-Safety

Being aware of how to be safe when interacting with the wide range of ICT resources available to the school is an entitlement of all members of our school community. Young people are taught as part of to recognise and avoid danger when using ICT resources. Through its [Anti-Bullying](#) policies the school works to prevent any member of its community becoming the victim of online exploitation and/or cyber-bullying.

Disapplication

In accordance with the law, the school has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying the National Curriculum programmes to:

- Allow a student with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area; and
- Allow a student making significantly less progress than other students of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum.

Decisions about any of the above will only be made after discussion with the student and parent/ carer.

Special Educational Needs

Young people with a statement of special educational needs are enabled to access a broad and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum.

Learning environments are safe and flexible to accommodate a range of learning opportunities. All young people have access to high quality resources and interactive teaching tools to meet with varied and preferred learning styles. Prospect House aims to promote positive, creative and consistent approaches to value and celebrate individual worth, progression and achievement. There is a systematic cycle of planning, action, review and evaluation within the school to enable all young people to learn and progress. 1:1 support is offered at all times which supports young people with their varying needs and to enable young people to fully participate in learning.

All young people with special educational needs should be able to reach their full potential in school and have all their needs met.

Prospect House aims to support all young people to make a successful transition into independence. We aim to maximise the achievement of all young people and design our curriculum to raise pupil's learning outcomes, expectations and experiences.

The majority of our young people require flexible arrangements to encourage them to engage in education and overcome potential barriers to learning. Lesson planning is flexible so as to recognise the needs of all pupils as individuals and to ensure progression, relevance and differentiation.

The culture, practice, management and deployment of resources are designed to ensure all young peoples' needs are met. All staff members are aware of the Statement of Special Educational Needs and are aware of strategies in place in that promote development, achievement and the monitoring of success.

Monitoring and Review

The whole curriculum is monitored and reviewed by the Education Coordinator, the Directors and the staff team of ABC Care and Education LTD as well as outside consultants. We proactively seek the views of parents, carers and students as part of this process. We regularly request feedback from young people, parents, carers and other professionals to help us determine how well the curriculum is working.

Concerns

Parents/carers who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the Education Coordinator. If the issue is not resolved parents/carers should contact the

Directors in writing.

This document was printed via ABC Care Inspire. Inspire is our innovative document management system designed to capture the views & ideas from all of ABC Care Staff. This is a constantly evolving document in order to best meet the needs of our young people.

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