

Curriculum Rationale September 2019

Intent

We uphold the ideal of inclusion in its broadest sense and seek to involve all stakeholders in achieving this. As a team we aim to stimulate re-engagement, participation, interest, enjoyment and achievement by providing bespoke educational intervention programmes, pupil centred planning and solution focused support – ultimately leading to successful educational reintegration. We endeavour to provide a safe, nurturing environment which facilitates a personalised holistic approach to learning enabling pupils to reach their potential. We promote the basic British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs to enable pupils to become well rounded members of society who can make a positive contribution to their communities.

Our intent is to address the challenges that pupils are facing with their education by breaking down their barriers to learning and supporting all pupils to enable them to positively re-engage with learning and promote personal development. The curriculum ethos is to prepare pupils appropriately for their specific exit pathway, providing them with the requisite skills and knowledge to successfully reintegrate into a mainstream setting or specialist provision and motivate them to be independent and successful learners.

When designing the curriculum we needed to take into account a number of factors. Our pupils have complex and disparate needs, often having undiagnosed SEN or challenging behaviours. Mainstream settings have not met the needs of our pupils and therefore a curriculum needs to reflect this, however many of our pupils return to these setting so it is imperative that we provide a curriculum that does not result in them falling behind their peers academically.

Our curriculum continues to ensure that our children's learning is both meaningful, and benefits from a specific focus on the core requirements of the English and mathematics curriculums.

In September 2019 we introduced an Induction Group. The aim and intent of this group is to identify barriers to learning and build positive relationships with pupils to re-engage them with education and help them to become “ready to learn”. After an initial settling in period (where pupils are accurately base lined), pupils are then placed in groups according to their needs not ages. Exit pathways are determined early into the placement to enable pupils to be placed in the appropriate curriculum group.

The induction group was devised to address issues with pupils transitioning into the PRU from mainstream. Pupils arrive disengaged, often with low self-esteem and confidence. We aim to nurture these pupils to enable them to reach their full potential by having a small group that fosters positive relationships and has a focus on emotional wellbeing.

Our pupils are provisionally on 20 week placements (but can come for shorter targeted interventions) and therefore the curriculum offer needs to concentrate on plugging gaps in knowledge and understanding. We ensure that areas of maths and English are re-visited throughout the school year to promote recall of knowledge and understanding and ensure that all pupils have covered basic skills.

Many pupils are kinaesthetic and visual learners, working significantly below age related expectations. We therefore tailor our curriculum offer to meet the needs of these pupils by

providing bespoke lessons that target gaps in knowledge and are engaging and stimulating for the learners.

Sequences of lessons work on building up pupil's knowledge and understanding of an area/ topic. Staff introduce a new concept then continue to build on this through a range of activities with the focus on independence and real life application at the end of a unit.

Implementation

Our aim is to secure knowledge and understanding by making links between subjects and making learning relevant to the learners. In upper school, pupils are involved in planning the topics they learn about, liaising with teachers to discuss their personal interests in an aim to make learning more enjoyable but also ensuring that **National Curriculum** objectives are met.

Topic work allows pupils to make links across subjects and practice the knowledge and skills developed in core subjects. Staff endeavour to provide pupils with a variety of outdoor learning opportunities and groups aim to organise off site educational visits at least 3 times per half term. During Autumn term visits are booked for Tynemouth Priory, Hancock Museum, Hamsterley Forest, Gibside, Northumberlandia, Vivian French Author Offer and Kielder.

It is difficult to build on success from previous years as pupils are only with us for a 20 week placement, often beginning their placements mid-way through the year and therefore we have devised a curriculum that repeats skills and knowledge throughout an academic year. Schemes of work therefore allow pupils to apply a range of skills across topics.

There is an emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, to equip pupils with the necessary skills for their next steps. Pupils recognised as not making expected progress are identified quickly through the use of teacher trackers and targeted interventions are put in place to support these learners.

Across the school we use **Read Write Inc** to support and embed phonics knowledge.

The **Oxford Reading Tree** scheme is used throughout lower school as a tool to support reading development and a love of reading. To compliment this, the PRU has invested in the **Literature Works** initiative that focuses on writing through reading.

Literature Works provides staff with details schemes of work and resources to develop the planning, delivery and assessment of English. The emphasis is on developing pupil's love for reading and promotion of reading for pleasure. To further support literacy and in particular, reading, we have timetabled daily reading sessions for pupils to enjoy quiet reading time either by listening to stories/ texts being read to them or by reading texts that interest them individually or in small groups. Pupils also have access to our library where a range of text types are available for them.

To implement our intention of delivering a bespoke curriculum that encourages **personal development, PSHE** and individual support sessions are timetabled daily. To enhance this offer, we have liaised with a range of external professionals to improve the delivery of key aspects of this curriculum. Professionals visit school to delivery targeted sessions to address a range of current affairs and relevant issues, which may impact on pupils' ability to access education. Sessions offered in Autumn Term involve;

Upper school –

- **Operation Encompass Next Steps** (focusing on Emotions and Empathy, Relationships and Friendship) – planned and delivered by Northumbria Police

- **County Lines** – External professional delivering targeted sessions to pupils.
- **Fire Safety** – planned and delivered by the Fire and Rescue Service.
- **Drugs education** – weekly sessions facilitated and delivered by Alnwick Gardens.
- **Knife Crime** – Facilitated by Street Doctors.
- **Pupil Youth Safety Conference** – addressing issues including; Online safety, Substance misuse, Knife crime and county lines, Healthy relationships and PREVENT.

Lower School

- **Operation Encompass Next Steps** (focusing on Emotions and Empathy, Relationships and Friendship) – planned and delivered by Northumbria Police
- **Fire Safety** (Visit at Local Station) – planned and delivered by the Fire and Rescue Service.

In addition to PSHE, staff promote pupil views and pupil voice by facilitating 1:1 **coaching sessions**. These allow pupils to reflect on their experiences and learning and discuss strategies to support them with their individual challenges. The success of coaching sessions is achieved through staff having the ability to build strong, positive relationships where pupils feel safe, secure and listened to.

There are a range of “offers” to enable pupils to build on areas of **Emotional Literacy**. We strive to provide pupils with activities and programmes that are tailored to their individual interests; therefore the implementation of the curriculum offer varies from pupil to pupil. Additional activities/ interventions include; horse riding, The Alan Shearer centre, Gardening (Alnwick Gardens), Lego league, Lego therapy, Creative nurture, Drawing therapy, Apple coding, swimming, Jack and the Beanstalk Panto and Active Northumberland activities.

The introduction of the **Thrive** approach to our curriculum provides us with opportunities to develop pupil's emotional wellbeing, behaviour and attitudes and personal development. Pupils are baseline with a Thrive profile allowing specialist trained staff to deliver the appropriate activities to address individual needs. Our purpose equipped Thrive room provides learners with an appropriate space to address their individual challenges and staff are available at specific times of the day for pupils to “drop –in” if they need additional support.

Impact

Our main aim is to re-engage learners with education and narrow the gap in attainment in line with their peers. We therefore provide extensive out of class learning opportunities and real life applications of skills and knowledge.

There has been a shift in focus from simply looking at data. We now triangulate academic data together with attendance, RRS (now Emotional Literacy) and behaviour.

Teachers provide effective and immediate verbal feedback throughout lessons to check, consolidate and progress learning. This is achieved through the high staff to pupil ratios within classes and promotes positive and relevant discussion between staff and pupil regarding their work. Our ethos is that this immediate feedback is the most effective tool in supporting progress and impact. To support teachers, there has been training on Blooms taxonomy and plenary cards to elicit important information. Learning points are also utilised to enhance our feedback (see marking policy).

Our marking policy clearly emphasises the importance of self-assessment and reflection to show impact of learning. Pupils are able to communicate with their teacher about not only the academic but their self-esteem and confidence.

Starters of the day provide opportunities for pupils to remember previous learning and also allow teachers to check retention of information.

Photo evidence is gathered as a means of measuring engagement and progress as many tasks are not in written form.

We rate progress in a range of ways including; improved RRS scores (Emotional Literacy from October 2019), time spent in lessons, reduction in behavioural incidents, academic summative and formative assessments. Teachers track progress using their professional judgement against academic objectives that relate to their stages of development as oppose to NC age related expectations. Data is collected half termly for Maths, Reading and Writing to assist with assessment.

The impact of our curriculum offer is evident through pupil's reengagement and enjoyment for learning. Pupils are prepared for the next stage in their educational journey and effectively transition into their subsequent educational provision.