

**‘Building Resilience for Future Success’**

**Curriculum Policy**

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| **In Consultation with** |
| **Name** | **Position** |
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|  |  |
| Sian Thomas | Head |
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|  | Teaching Staff |
|  | Governors |

**SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Ancora House School is a short stay hospital education provision; we provide education and support to young people who are admitted to Ancora House. Ancora House is the North West Tier 4 Psychiatric in-patient service for young people between the ages of 13 and 18 years old.

Access to the school provision is directly as a result of admission to hospital.

The team of teachers, teaching assistants, transition staff and administration staff work closely with home schools and colleges so that young people remain engaged with their learning despite their admission to hospital.

Ancora House School also provides education for children and young people at Key Stage 3 and 4 in the Cheshire West and Chester locality; this element of the school operates from our community provision Castle House, Castle Park, Frodsham; it has close working partnerships with our locality schools.

Referral to the community provision is via the local authority who commission places for children unable to access their home school because of medical needs OR by direct referral from schools or services.

**Curriculum Intent Statement – ‘Building resilience for Future Success’**

**OUR CORE VALUES**

At Ancora House School we believe in providing a tailored curriculum that meets the diverse needs of our learner group. Our Vision communicates our intent; our curriculum is designed to ensure that all learners, no matter what their starting point, can access their personal curriculum and make progress, within an environment and culture of high warmth and high expectation.

 At the heart of our curriculum is the premise that in order to succeed in their futures, learners need to build on cultural capital and develop the resilience and the skills that will scaffold their next steps.

All staff utilise Quality First teaching with the aim of firstly securing ‘readiness to learn’ and then to establish and build on prior knowledge through a mastery teaching and learning approach. Metacognition and the 16 Habits of Mind underpin our curriculum, our curriculum is a skills and knowledge based curriculum.

Learners arrive at Ancora House School with a range of presenting problems including; psychosis, eating disorders, emerging schizophrenia, mood disorder, self-harming behaviours and suicidality.

Many learners have experienced significant time out of school and have learning gaps throughout their school history. As a result of this complex range of problems; barriers to learning include; poor concentration; cognitive impairment; anxiety, sleep disorders; low motivation; impact of medication and fearfulness – all of these issues are layered upon their primary mental health need.

Many of our learners experience the effects of trauma and attachment; building trusting relationships through the engagement process is crucial.

Every learner’s curriculum is therefore, tailored to their individual needs; this may include one to one interventions, small group academic work and critically, group engagement activities.

**BUILDING ON CULTURAL CAPITAL**

Our learners are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences; it is critical to establish how the gaps in experience and knowledge may impact on their ability to progress. Our approach to teaching and learning exposes learners to a variety of subject areas, experiences and arts; promoting the character-building qualities that lead to creating well-rounded, global citizens; we aim to build on cultural capital that in turn will optimise the potential for our young to achieve recognised and meaningful qualifications that will broaden opportunities in later life.

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR CURRICULUM**

The primary goal for learners referred to our school is to identify barriers, provide intervention and ultimately to re-engage them with learning, their communities and the wider world. Because we are an in-patient and community Medical Needs provision it is even more important that we offer a broad, balanced and rich curriculum within the context of each learner’s mental or physical health needs:

* All learners experience equity within a curriculum that embraces diversity
* All learners have access to the opportunity to make progress in line with their peers
* Content of curriculum has logical progression, is systematic and explicit for each learner
* Our curriculum addresses social disadvantage powerfully

**THE RECOVERY CURRICULUM – Building Resilience for Future Success**

Ancora House School recognises that our learner groups have often faced significant challenge. Our curriculum embodies a trauma informed approach that supports our learners to gain understanding of their experience and difficulties; to understand the impact of their development and learning and to then acquire the skills of recognition and self-managing. As a school we work closely with Child and Adolescent Mental Health teams and other agencies to secure a joined up approach in coproduction with families.

We believe one of the most valuable gifts we can offer learners in our setting is the experience of disciplinary literacy; disciplinary literacy develops skills of critical thinking, independent thinking and learning within and between specific subject areas. It provides the fundamental skillset for learning.

Permeating through our assemblies; tutorials; whole class work and interventions, the skills of reading, writing, thinking and discussing individually and collaboratively promote small but significant incremental progress.

**IMPACT - WHAT WE WANT OUR LEARNERS TO KNOW AND DO BY THE TIME THEY LEAVE**

* Learners leave with transferable academic, social, emotional and life skills
* All learners acquire the skills that support their readiness to learn
* All learners make significant progress from their starting points
* Learners leave with raised aspiration and renewed confidence for the future
* All learners transition safely and sustainably to their home schools, colleges or alternative provision
* Support learners to read to an appropriate level – a focus on literacy/vocabulary
* Disciplinary Literacy: building competence, confidence and the skills required for the acquisition of deeper knowledge through critical thinking and reflection

**TRANSITION**

Our learners often struggle with change, we recognise that transition points can feel very risky for our young people and their families. The Transition Team work with young people and families to re-engage learners who have feel unable to access a learning environment; close collaboration with the families and professionals around them produces a thoughtful plan that is paced and sequenced with the young person at the centre.

The Transition Team deliver group and individual sessions to promote and scaffold the knowledge and skills needed for learners to make their next steps and sustain their transitions. When they leave us, our Transition Team remain in touch with learners at set points during the following academic year to ensure placements are sustained.

**Learners have access to the following subject areas:**

Therapeutic Art, Art GCSE; Mathematics; Sciences; English Literature; English Language; STEM group; PHSCE; IIAG; Outdoor Curriculum; Physical Education; Cross-curricular Projects. External speakers and workshops allow us to ‘bring the outside in’ offering valuable opportunities to extend the experience of learners who are typically socially isolated and often marginalised.

**SMSC, BRITISH VALUES AND PHSCE**

The wellbeing curriculum incorporates all aspects of our school life; through assemblies, tutorials, external speakers and incorporated within the wider curriculum we aim to ensure that the content on offer is most useful to our learners.

Our understanding of knowledge and cultural capital is that our young people acquire the relevant skills and knowledge in order to progress to the next stage of their learning journey; and that ultimately they can take their place as valued citizens in their home communities and beyond.

Through our rich curriculum, we develop appreciation of human creativity and achievement in learners; we introduce learners to the best that has been said; we take every opportunity to expose them to stimulating and innovative art, concepts and ideas and encourage questioning, healthy debate and hypothesis.

Equality is actively promoted and learners are encouraged to question and challenge both their own views and the views of others. Diversity is celebrated and we are a Transgender Inclusive School; our school community embraces difference and this is supported and promoted through our LGBTQ+ Champion.

Our learners often have lived experience of prejudice and stigma and this has to a lesser or greater extent shaped their understanding of the world so far; strengthening resilience is therefore a key priority; our learners feel validated and heard.

**DISADVANTAGED AND MINORITY GROUPS**

By the very nature of the referral to our service, the vast majority of our learners fall into the categories of ‘disadvantaged’ and ‘minority’ groups.

Mental Health problems; social disadvantage and physical health conditions have adversely affected our learners; many have experienced stigma, social isolation and bullying and so are often significantly behind with their learning as a result.

DRAFT

Some learners admitted to our in-patient service are diagnosed with chronic mental health, for example schizophrenia or schizo-affective disorder; for these young people; statistics tell us that they are less likely to continue education; find employment or build positive personal relationships.

For this group in particular, support around transition is critical.

**POST-16 OFFER**

Our Post-16 curriculum targets young people who are NEET or who are at risk of dropping out of school or college. Learning is supported with robust intervention from the Post-16 Transition Worker and our IAG coordinator.

The curriculum offers:

* English or Mathematics GCSE study for re-sits
* IAG support to re-engage, motivate and raise aspiration
* Support for independent learners to access online education
* Transition support to secure safe and sustainable destinations
* Social Skills – Art groups; outdoor curriculum, STEM and PHSCE/wellbeing

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY**

* Our dedicated SEND Teaching Assistant supports our SENDCo in ensuring:
* Barriers to accessing learning are identified
* Interventions are added to Personal Curriculum Plans
* Assessments are undertaken to inform EHCP requests
* Care Education Treatment Reviews ( CETRs) are attended and information shared to inform the package of care on discharge
* Feedback to clinical teams contributes to the care planning approach
* The staff team receive regular training and access to formulation sessions
* Parents/carers are supported when submitting parental requests for EHCPs

**Appendices**

1. **Statutory guidance**

**Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school**

Statutory guidance for local authorities and departmental advice for others ensuring children with health needs receive education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

1. **OFSTED Inspection criteria for implementation of the curriculum**

‘Learning can be defined as an alteration to long term memory.’

For your subject areas including post-16/IAG and transition:

* Teachers enable learners to understand KEY CONCEPTS presenting information clearly and encouraging appropriate discussion, questioning and debate.
* Teachers check learners’ understanding effectively, identify and correct misunderstanding
* Teachers ensure that learners embed key concepts in their long term memory and can apply them fluently
* The subject curriculum is designed and delivered in a way that allows learners to transfer key knowledge and skills on what has been taught before and learners can work towards clearly defined end points
* Teachers use assessment to check learners’ understanding in order to inform teaching, and to help learners to embed knowledge fluently and develop understanding
1. **Continuous Professional Development**

**Team Meetings – rolling agenda**

In your subject areas/ departments, consider :

* How we use baseline information
* How you design the individual and group sessions and why
* How the context for our learners (cultural capital) drives the design of our curriculum and pedagogy
* Plugging gaps and readiness to learn form the backdrop of our approach
* Engagement is key – interactive, vibrant and relevant topics to excite learners
* The development of transferrable key skills to support transition on discharge / next steps