

CURRICULUM POLICY

Step by Step School

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INTRODUCTION

Step by Step School provides a broad and balanced curriculum relevant for pupils aged from 4 to 19 who have a diagnosis on the autism spectrum. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan which cover a wide range of needs and abilities.

Autism creates a unique set of barriers to learning which affects each individual's progress in different ways. Therefore, we believe that every pupil should be recognised and respected as a unique and special individual. We place each pupil's needs and goals at the centre of our work. It is this ethos that underpins our individualised pupil-centred curriculum. This has been developed to create optimal opportunities to nurture communication, learning and independence in a safe and inclusive environment. Our curriculum aims to create individual purposeful pathways to adulthood to help pupils achieve their full potential and equip them with the skills needed for work, leisure and/or home life.

In light of the new education review focusing on the curriculum as the 'heart of education', our school offers a truly inclusive autism specific curriculum demonstrating breadth and depth in learning and pupil development. This is developed within an ethos of empathy, understanding, and structure.

This document represents the ongoing commitment of the school community to raising the aspirations, achievement and positive outcomes of the children and young people at our school.

AIMS

At Step by Step our aim is to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which is relevant and accessible to all of our pupils, ensuring equality of opportunity and the acquisition of developmental and functional skills.

Our curriculum provision is therefore pupil-centred and highly personalised. We aim to ensure that the learning experience at Step by Step is positive, exciting and meaningful for each individual learner.

Our curriculum has the flexibility to address the individual and very specific needs of each pupil in order to support them to make the best possible progress.

The curriculum provides real life experiences and places great emphasis on preparing pupils for the next stage of their life.

Our curriculum aims to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support pupils' physical development and promote responsibility for their own health by encouraging them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Provide a range of learning experiences designed to motivate and engage each learner
- Ensure equal access to learning, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for life beyond Step by Step
- Promote the learning and development of our youngest children and ensure they are ready for Key Stage 1

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy reflects the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#), which all maintained schools in England must teach.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

As an independent school we ensure that all Independent School Standards are met including those relating to the quality and impact of teaching.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes all core subjects
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, The school implements relevant and effective assessment procedures
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

- From year 9 onwards pupils and their families are provided with guidance and support when considering transition and future pathways. Pupils are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance.

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the intent of the school and how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment are relevant and effective
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets and outcomes in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place to meet the individual needs of every pupil

All teaching staff at Step by Step will be familiar with this policy and ensure that the school curriculum is implemented accordingly.

INTENT

The curriculum at Step by Step is designed specifically to teach children and young people with autism and has been developed from our mission:

To maximise the potential of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) through evidence based, individually tailored, outstanding teaching to enable them to thrive and live happy, confident lives.

We aim to achieve this through our shared values which guide our day to day actions:

L	E	A	R	N	S
<i>Laughter</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Aspire</i>	<i>Respect</i>	<i>Nurture</i>	<i>Safe</i>
Motivating learning that builds confidence	Evidence-based practice for effective learning and progress	To achieve their full potential, through realistic, ambitious targets tailored to the individual	For every person to be treated with dignity	Every success is recognised, praised and celebrated	An environment where the pupils and staff feel safe and supported
'Building Skills, Maximising Potential'					

We intend:

- To develop, in each pupil, the skills he or she needs to achieve as high a standard of independence as possible.

- To offer pupils exciting and motivating ways to learn and achieve through personalised programmes and plans that build on the strengths and address the needs of each pupil.
- To reduce barriers to learning through enabling pupils to express choice, exercise control over themselves and their environment and achieve their full potential.
- To provide a unique curriculum; differentiated to meet the individual needs of each pupil through an appropriate broad and balanced program of education.
- To ensure the development of appropriate communication and life skills, to allow pupils the fullest possible active participation in their day-to-day experiences, and to enhance their social and emotional growth.
- To monitor and record progress regularly and consistently ensuring that pupils are appropriately challenged in order to maximise personal development, enhance quality of life and allow their individuality to develop.
- To develop social skills in order to encourage the development of positive, caring relationships between pupils, their peers and the staff.
- To create a secure environment within which pupils will develop a sense of confidence and self-esteem, with a view to enhancing their learning.
- To build working partnerships with parents/carers, in order to promote confidence and develop mutual support and consistency between home and school.
- To co-operate positively with other professionals and specialist services in order for all of the children's needs to be addressed.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our fundamental teaching approach is Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Verbal Behaviour (VB) which is incorporated into all areas of teaching.

Our curriculum is comprised of academic learning as well priority learning areas. The academic learning includes core subjects such as English and Maths as well as enrichment subjects. Within English there is a focus on reading skills and both core subjects are taught according to each pupil's individual needs and abilities using research based interventions. The other priority learning areas are as follows:



Our curriculum is implemented in the following ways:

Individualised programs: Pupils' individualised programmes build on the targets set at the annual reviews of their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) which are reviewed regularly. Pupils in primary and secondary have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and pupils in sixth form have a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). These set out each pupils specific targets.

The 1:1 teaching works towards many of the targets set on the individualised programs and these are informed by the Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP) and Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS). These plans incorporate targets set by the Occupational Therapist (OT), Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) as well as any other professionals according to pupils needs. There is regular collaboration with parents to ensure that targets will support pupils at home as well as work towards future aspirations.

At the first multi-disciplinary meeting of the year a 'super goal' is set for each pupil which highlights an important focus for the individualised program for the year.

Integrated Therapy: Therapies such as Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy form an integral part of the curriculum with targets and strategies being implemented across the school day.

Communication is one of the core areas of difficulty for those on the autism spectrum. At Step by Step school there is a particular focus on developing communication skills. Teachers, tutors and therapists are skilled in their use of tools to aid communication, such as pictures, symbols, Proloquo2Go and SIGNALONG signing. The therapists provide regular training to staff on communication to ensure that strategies are implemented throughout the school day. Communication is paramount to unlocking potential.

We have developed a multi-sensory approach to learning, which incorporates 'calming', 'organising' and 'alerting' activities to facilitate pupils to regulate their sensory and emotional states and prepare them to access learning. Each staff member has training in the management of sensory processing difficulties to ensure the delivery of the curriculum is individualised to the pupil's sensory needs.

Please see Therapy policy for more information.

Group Learning: The group based curriculum is planned, delivered, evaluated and assessed around a three-year cycle of termly topics focused on implementing breadth and balance of coverage for all pupils. This Curriculum is planned and taught differentially for early, intermediate and advanced learners, as appropriate to the different learning needs of the pupils and delivered through long, medium and short-term planning.

The termly topics provide rich, engaging and enjoyable learning contexts in which pupils are supported to learn and develop a better understanding of society. This is broken down into lessons which incorporates learning across all subjects. Some of the foundation subjects are also taught through focus weeks such as history week, music week and Internet safety/computing week.

The curriculum draws on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and National Curriculum as well as other assessments and programs written specifically for pupils with learning difficulties and autism. The curriculum is informed by knowledge of the strengths and difficulties associated with autism in general. It is not the aim to fit our pupils into a national curriculum, rather it is used to provide a broad and balanced context for learning.

Our group based learning is based on a spiral curriculum model. This means that pupils return to the same skills throughout their education, with each encounter building on what they learnt previously and applying their skills to a wider range of contexts.

In addition to the specific subject based or topic based learning outcomes pupils are also set a social skills target to work on. These targets are informed by the Social Skills Checklist, devised by the Autism Education Trust.

The group learning context provides an opportunity for pupils to generalise and transfer skills learnt during their 1:1 teaching sessions.

Whole School events and experiences: Enrichment is an important part of our curriculum delivered at an individual level, in class groups, through subject aspects, cross-curricular opportunities and as part of the whole school-provision map. Educational visits, community visits, outdoor initiatives such as forest adventures, residential activities, Scouts and leisure activities are planned and designed to enable pupils to generalise skills learnt in school to a wider context. They provide first-hand learning experiences which support, complement and enrich the curriculum, while providing motivational experiences and valuable opportunities to learn new knowledge and skills and consolidate existing ones. In addition, these activities offer a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and extend their social experiences. Natural environment teaching (NET) is a key approach to ensure teaching is meaningful, motivating and encourages generalisation.

Resources to support curriculum delivery: We have access to a wide range of resources and equipment onsite including the gym, climbing wall, bike track, play areas, greenhouse, tuckshop and daily living skills room. Teaching of our curriculum is creative and flexible, using our whole school environment to extend pupils' learning. Offsite resources include access to outdoor activity centres and secondary school PE facilities.

Curriculum Phases: At each age phase, our curriculum is set out incrementally so that each target area can be broken down into small, achievable steps. Furthermore, it is accessible to all pupils, regardless of their level of ability or learning style. The balance between 1:1 sessions, group work and community outings are varied according to individual pupil needs.

As primary pupils progress through school, activities within the daily timetable place greater emphasis on community access and integration, independence, developing self-care, daily living skills and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Our Secondary curriculum is based on the premise that every pupil will be provided with the skills necessary to live, work, socialise and pursue hobbies and recreational activities in the community to the very best of their abilities.

The overriding aim of our Post 16 provision is to provide the necessary teaching and learning opportunities for every student to make a successful transition into adult life. This includes an increased focus on vocational skills and work experience.

Primary, Secondary and Sixth form phases cover specific programmes of study. Long term plans are evaluated regularly for appropriateness and impact.

The summary of the components of our curriculum across the phases is as shown in the Curriculum Diagram in Appendix A. It takes each individual pupil as the starting point, places them at the centre of all we do and builds outwards to create a personalised, pupil focussed curriculum.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is a key component of our curriculum at every level. This also includes SMSC, British values, and RSHE. Please see our separate RSHE, British Values and EYFS Policies for more information.

INCLUSION

All of the pupils at Step by Step have Special Educational Needs. Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with additional Special Educational Needs
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that all pupils can access every National Curriculum subject according to their individual needs and abilities, ensuring that there are no barriers to achievement. Further information can be found in our equality and diversity policy.

IMPACT

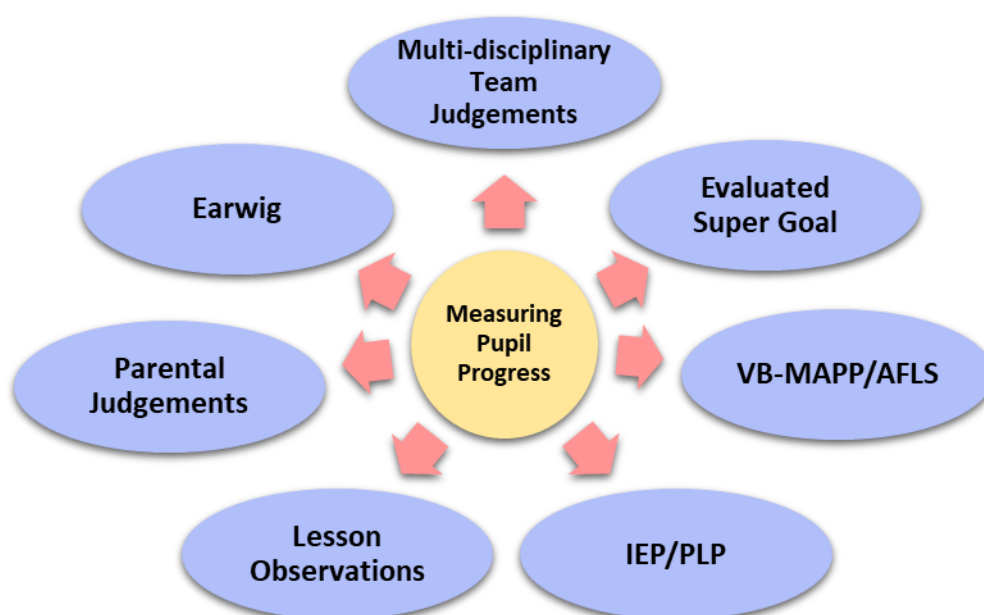
The curriculum is monitored and evaluated using a rigorous assessment process.

Staff continually evaluate pupil's work and record their progress to ensure that they are working towards/reaching the goals set for them and that we are meeting their needs effectively and appropriately.

Pupils are assessed on a daily, weekly and termly basis. Throughout the one-to-one and group sessions, teachers, tutors and therapists take regular data to ensure pupils are meeting their targets

Teachers, tutors, therapists and leaders use a range of methods to track progress and gather evidence of pupils' achievements. As no single piece of evidence is sufficient on its own, judgements are based upon an analysis of all available evidence

The School uses a range of evidence to capture the full picture of pupil progress. The range of measures and assessments used includes:



Earwig timelines (online recording platform) are created for each pupil to provide photos and videos to demonstrate pupil's progress and achievements. This also provides a platform to share progress across home and school environments.

Multi-disciplinary progress meetings are held to analyse all sources of information and provide an overall judgement regarding pupil progress. Progress is discussed, evidence reviewed and next steps/targets set.

In order to ensure consistency these judgements are moderated by the Senior Leadership Team which includes triangulation of the available data.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The governing body monitor the coverage and quality of our curriculum through:

- Termly school visits, learning walks, reports and meetings

The School Partnership Advisor (SPA) monitors the quality of our curriculum through:

- Half termly visits and provides detailed written reports to the governing body

Senior Leaders, Class Leaders, Teachers and Therapists monitor the way pupils are progressing throughout the school through:

- Lesson observations, learning walks, progress meetings and work scrutinies (see Provision Overview and Assessment and Reporting Policy)

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher supported by the school's Senior Leadership Team to monitor this policy. It should be reviewed annually or when new legislation is published.

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

- Provision overview
- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- RSHE Policy
- EYFS Policy
- British Values Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Therapy Policy
- Offsite Visits Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Long, medium and short term plans
- IEP/PLP documents

Appendices: -

- Appendix A: Curriculum Diagram

School Stage	Primary							Secondary					Sixth Form (Post 16)		
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Key Stage	EYFS	K1		KS2			KS3			KS4		KS5			
Individualised Programs	Individual Education Plan Communication and Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech, Language and Communication Social skills Listening and Attention Cognition and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Numeracy Sensory and/ or Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily living skills Motor skills Social Emotional and Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour Play Skills 							Individual Education Plan Communication and Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech, Language and Communication Social skills Cognition and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional academics Sensory and/ or Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent living skills Health and Fitness Self-Care skills Social Emotional and Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community participation Hobbies and Leisure Self-awareness Behaviour 					Personalised Learning Plan Communication and Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech, Language and Communication Social skills Cognition and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional academics Vocational skills/Work experience Sensory and/ or Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent living skills Health and Wellbeing Self-Care Social Emotional and Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community participation and recreation Behaviour 		
	Pathway 1: On-site Work Experience - Tuck shop - Gardening	Pathway 2: College or Off-site Work opportunities													
Integrated Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational Therapy Speech and Language Therapy 							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational Therapy Speech and Language Therapy 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational Therapy Speech and Language Therapy 		
Group Learning	Topic based learning, including core and enrichment subjects: English, Math, Science, Humanities, SMSC, Art & Design, Computing, Design & Technology, PSHE, RE							Topic based learning including core and enrichment subjects: English, Maths, Science, PSHE, Humanities, Art & Design, Computing, Design & Technology Scouts					Topic based learning including ASDAN, core and enrichment subjects: Functional Academics, including: Literacy & Numeracy Mini Enterprise Vocational Skills/Work Experience		
Differentiation of Group Learning	Early Learner							Early Learner					Early Learner		
	Intermediate Learner							Intermediate Learner					Intermediate Learner		
	Advanced Learner							Advanced Learner					Advanced Learner		
Curriculum, Assessment and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EYFS or National Curriculum ASDAN: New Horizons, Y6 VB-MAPP AET (social skills) AFLS, Y6 							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASDAN – Transition Challenge AET (social skills) AFLS AQA UAS 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASDAN – Towards Independence AET (social skills) AFLS AQA UAS 		
	Earwig Academic - assessment and evidence tool used across the school														
	NC across all phases as appropriate for planning and assessment														
PE, Outings and Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PE Termly Group Outing Weekly Community Outing (e.g. horseriding, swimming, trampolining) 							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PE Offsite Outdoor Pursuits Weekly Community Outings (e.g. swimming, bowling, trampolining, shopping, café) Overnight residential stay 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PE Offsite Outdoor Pursuits Weekly Community Outings (e.g. swimming, bowling, trampolining, shopping, café) 		
Whole School Events and Experiences	PSHE / RSHE /SMSC & British Values														
	Blocks of sessions are taught on social skills														
	All pupils take part in termly focus weeks (topic examples: history, road safety, religious festivals, music, sports, online safety)														
Whole school events such as Children in Need and World Book Day															

Policy	Curriculum
Statutory requirement?	No
Approved	July 2020
Responsible Officer	FP
Responsible Governor/s	JM/CW
Date of previous version	January 2019
Frequency of Review	Annually