



Acorn
Education Trust

Aspire Curriculum Statement

Statement of intent

At Aspire, we understand the importance of a well-rounded, fulfilling curriculum to prepare our pupils for the next stage of education, and for their future as citizens of the UK.

This document is based on the 6 core principles in the Acorn Curriculum Statement and is designed to give an outline of the key principles behind the curriculum delivered in Aspire and how they may be implemented.

Our intent is to provide a bespoke curriculum to the students in our care offering opportunities to develop their learning skills in order to access subjects which are of interest to them and which are motivating and relevant to their future in their time. Equally, a strong emphasis is placed on social and emotional learning and development as well as furthering communication and interaction skills which underpin the success in academic or vocational learning and training.

Vision for SEND in Acorn Education Trust

We believe that every child in every school should aspire to achieve their potential. We embrace the philosophy of learning for all and strive to prepare the students in our schools for their future in their time.

Vision statement for Aspire

Every student attending Aspire will progress in their communication and interaction as well as social and emotional skills to ensure that they can either re-integrate fully to their mainstream school or move on to the next stage in their education. Students will feel safe, valued and supported in order that they aspire to be the best they can be.

1. Learning in Communication/Interaction (C&I) and Social/Emotional/Mental Health (SEMH) development

1.1. Intent

Education in C&I and SEMH is at the root of learning at Aspire. We assess emotional skills on entry and identify key areas to work on through this and via opinion from home schools and parents. The student also has the opportunity to express their views on their own development. Much work is personalised so that young people are educated in such learning at their stage rather than their age. At all points, it is the intent to prepare students and equip them with the C&I and SEMH skills to return to a mainstream education at their home school or to the next stage of their education at a different setting.

1.2. Assessment

The SNIP behaviour audit is used to identify strengths and weaknesses before a student starts a placement at Aspire. Students will also be assessed using the group profile on the Thrive Approach to identify gaps in their emotional development and then to track progress. This is re-assessed after one long term and progress recorded and used to inform future planning and measure impact.

In addition, ongoing assessment and AFL is used daily. Students are given a “grade” for each session which is sent home and to home schools on a weekly basis. Additional documentation is made where a session has been “poor” in order to identify any antecedents to refine ongoing work with a student. Furthermore, “class dojo” points are awarded for positive effort and shared with parents.

1.3. Planning and delivery

Routines and structure

- For students arriving by car, the learning begins on the journey. Staff are always present and use this time to engage the young people in discussions related to their interests and experiences and encourage reflective thinking and self-expression.
- Each morning starts with a transition activity depending on the start time of individual students. This is invaluable learning time where students are working on communication and interaction, self-regulation and social skills.
- The day then follows a set pattern in line with the rest of Kingdown School and is broken down into 5 lessons. Students have two formal breaks. Again, these are utilised as learning opportunities and as time to further social communication skills and emotional development. Adults continue to engage with the young people at these times whilst also allowing some opportunity for free choice.

Planning

- There are planned activities throughout the term to furnish young people at Aspire with opportunities to develop their skills in social and emotional skills and to encourage and promote positive mental health. The lead teacher is responsible for planning such programmes as they are best placed to know the young people who attend the provision.
- These activities may link to individual outcomes in a student's ECHP or MSP.
- These activities may link to a group Thrive profile.
- Individualised Thrive profiles may also be utilised to plan personalised learning.
- Students may work towards a recognised qualification in personal and social development

Delivery

- Staff working in Aspire are consistent in order that they know the students well and so that positive working relationships are able to thrive.
- Lessons and programmes are delivered either by the teacher or the support staff or as a team.
- Students may work in small groups or on a 1:1 basis.

Review

- Students are assessed on a continual basis and reviewed regularly against the outcomes in their EHCPs or MSPs for C&I and SEMH.
- The assess, plan, do, review cycle starts again and is adjusted according to need.

1.4. Preparing for the future

Students are encouraged to discuss their difficulties and help to come up with strategies which work for them. All young people are offered a variety of approaches as there is no "one size fits all" option. Staff help students to develop a personal "toolkit" to assist them to manage their own behaviour independently. Visual approaches may be utilised to aid discussion.

When ready, students are supported to reintegrate to either their home secondary school or the other secondary school in Acorn Education Trust. This is usually accomplished through a high level of support on initial transition via the secondary school's own enhanced provision or through support in mainstream. Again, this is bespoke to the individual.

Students moving to a different setting are supported with the transition process on a personalised level. We encourage new settings to offer a transition programme.

Where appropriate, students are encouraged to reflect on British values and how these are relevant to their lives.

2. Subject overview

2.1. Intent

The intent of subject specific learning in Aspire includes:

- Re-engaging students who may have become disengaged in all learning at their home school.
- Furthering of basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Developing independent learning skills.
- Preparing students for re-integration to main school or for their next education setting.
- Preparing students for the world of work and developing life skills.

2.2. Assessment

Students are assessed in their literacy and numeracy skills within the first few weeks of a placement in order that we can track progress in basic skills. Assessments used include YARC, vernon and Basic Number Screening Test. This enables work in key skills to be personalised to the individual where required. In Key Stage 4, students work towards a GCSE or functional skills in maths and English. In Key Stage 3, students work towards an Entry Level 1, 2 or 3 in English and the edexcel awards in mathematics.

2.3. English

English is taught every day in order to ensure that students leave school with the necessary literacy skills to access the next step whether in education, employment or training. Some students attending Aspire are weaker in literacy and require more intensive support from staff in this area. A sequential approach will be employed to ensure that skills and knowledge in literacy is embedded and retained.

English may be taught through group sessions or a more individualised approach depending on the needs of the student. Teachers may use a paired reading approach which enables an adult to work 1:1 with the pupil and develop individual reading skills. In addition, comprehension may be taught through the use of specific texts with questions targeted towards developing early and more advanced comprehension skills.

GCSE English may be taught through access to specialist teaching from the main school site as well as accessing learning through Aspire.

There are books and magazines freely available in Aspire which students may choose to access.

Students are given opportunities to explore writing and develop these skills from their differing starting points. The curriculum is tailored to the individual in order that writing work is matched to a student's area of interest where possible to ensure a strong level of engagement. Spelling programmes are used to support this skill.

Progress is monitored using the YARC Reading Test, the Vernon spelling test and through looking at pupil work. It is the intent that students will study for a GCSE in English where appropriate.

2.4. Mathematics

Students have opportunities to enhance their basic maths skills on a daily basis. Again, planning and delivery is bespoke to the individual child. Work is chunked in order to maintain focus. Games are used to motivate students and to cater for a wide range of needs.

Some students attending Aspire are weaker in number and require more intensive support from staff in this area. It is the intent that all students reach a functional level of mathematics to support their use of this skill in future life and to prepare them for the next stage of their education.

GCSE mathematics may be taught through accessing specialist maths teaching from the main school and opportunities to practise basic skills and overlearn key concepts.

Progress is monitored using the Basic Number Screening Test and through looking at pupil work. It is the intent that students will study for a GCSE in mathematics where appropriate.

2.5. Physical Education (PE)

There is an outside area exclusively for the use of learners in Aspire with space to move around and a table tennis table. Students can go outside to use up excess energy at various points throughout the day as directed by staff.

There is a weekly PE session taught by a member of PE staff too.

Students are encouraged to be healthy and look after themselves. Breakfast and lunchtimes are ideal times for discussion around these areas. Much focus in Aspire is also on positive mental health.

2.6. Life Skills

Preparing students for the world of work and for future life is critical to the work of Aspire. Students undertake accredited certification in life skills or similar courses of interest to them. It is intended that such courses provide a stepping stone to further study post-16.

At Key Stage 4, students may also wish to engage in other GCSE courses such as art. Where possible, this will be facilitated by specialist staff on main school site leading the learning. Staff in Aspire will support such courses and implement further study programmes as directed. Students will be offered individual careers guidance at least once a term.

At Key Stage 3, students will be taught ways to support themselves through skills such as understanding personal identity, rights and responsibilities and healthy living alongside some practical skills such as shopping, cooking, money management and travel, . They will also have access to a strong careers education and start to explore employability.

3. Promoting fundamental British values

3.1. Citizens of the UK should:

- Respect and obey the law.
- Respect the rights of others, including their right to their own opinions.
- Treat others with fairness.
- Look after themselves and their family.
- Look after the area in which they live and the environment.

3.2. We believe that our code of conduct underpins the fundamental British values to:

- Always try our best at everything we do.
- Listen to each other.
- Treat each other with respect and value our differences.
- Make time to talk through our problems.
- Care for our environment and everything in it.

Each child is given a “grade” for every session during the day. Any variable or poor lessons will be attributable to the child not adhering to the expectations in Aspire. Percentages of good or better sessions are calculated on a termly basis in order to monitor overall behaviour in Aspire.

3.3. We promote fundamental British values throughout our curriculum.