



The Edith Borthwick School

CURRICULUM POLICY

Lead Governor	Stephanie Taylor and Ruth Sturdy
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Next review date	Spring 2025

“Enabling everyone to reach and go beyond their potential”

Curriculum Rationale

The Edith Borthwick School is an all- through school for learners with severe and complex learning difficulties, including autism.

Over the past few years our cohort of learners has become more diverse and complex. We recognised that our curriculum needed to undergo change to ensure that it truly met the needs of all learners and enabled every individual to develop life skills and be prepared for adulthood.

The current curriculum being followed is a combination of both the previous design and the changes that have already been made. We are continuing to develop the curriculum further to ensure that it caters for all ages and abilities of learner.

Current developments

The redesign journey started with creating a revised vision and intent that reflected our cohort needs and abilities and the school's ethos and values. The pathway names have changed to reflect ability and learning styles and the intentions and direction for each pathway has been clearly articulated to support staff to have a clear understanding of the pathways, ensuring that learner's needs are well catered for.

An audit of the curriculum identified that our curriculum for learners who have complex, profound and multiple learning needs and post 16 learners needed to be the priority for development. The focus over the past two years has been to redevelop these two pathways to ensure that they support learners and effectively meet their needs.

Curriculum mission

All learners regardless of their starting point will have access to an ambitious, personalised curriculum which supports development of key skills, knowledge and understanding enabling them to be successful in their lives and prepared for next steps.

INTENT

Our curriculum has been developed with a focus on preparing learners for adulthood and the next stage in their lives. Our role is to support learners on their journey to become more independent, resilient, successful members of the community by providing opportunities to experience, develop and consolidate appropriate skills and knowledge that can be applied in all aspects of their life.

We aim to provide the best possible education for all learners and ensure that they have access to a flexible and personalised curriculum that meets individual needs but also builds on strengths and interests.

Through carefully planned, inspiring and engaging learning opportunities we support our learners to build on prior knowledge and enable every learner to experience success and achievement. We aim to empower our learners with knowledge and skills that are useful, relevant, and meaningful and support individuals to be successful in life by providing opportunities to apply and consolidate learning in real life contexts.

We aim to embed therapeutic provision throughout the curriculum to ensure that every learner has their holistic needs met through the wider curriculum. We aim to offer new and exciting experiences through enrichment activities to support the curriculum and enhance the learning that takes place in school by providing opportunities to consolidate learning and develop new skills.

We want all learners to experience successful transitions and always maintain our school motto-

“enabling everyone to reach and go beyond their potential”.

Our curriculum aims to support our learners to:

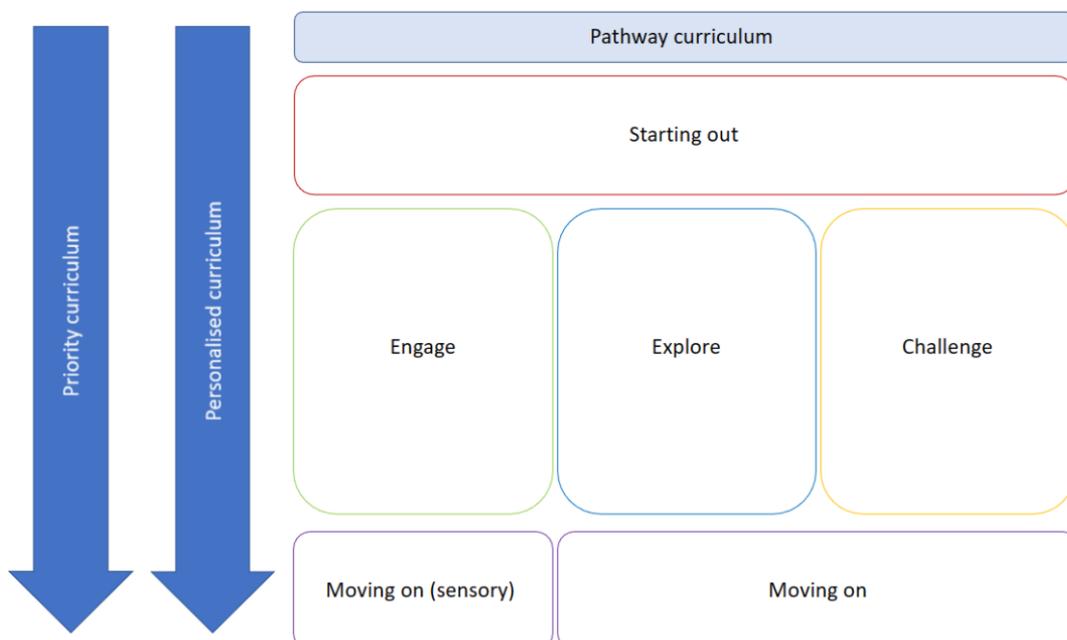
Be confident communicators	Be successful learners	Have increased independence	Be active in the community
•who develop a functional mode of communication and can express their emotions, needs and choices to those around them.	•who enjoy learning, reach their potential and are ready for the next steps in their lives.	•to be able to lead safe, healthy, happy and fulfilling lives and experience respectful relationships.	•to become a valued member of their community and access new experiences.

In order to achieve these aims our curriculum needs to:

be flexible, responsive and personalised to meet individual needs	be stimulating, exciting, engaging and fun	focus on developing knowledge and skills that are useful, relevant and meaningful
provide opportunities to apply and consolidate skills in real life contexts	be developmental, sequenced and planned to build on knowledge and skills	focus on developing key skills in communication, independence and regulation

IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve our aims and ensure that our curriculum maximises the potential of every learner we have created a curriculum model that has three layers: priority, personalised and pathway.



Priority curriculum – Communication and self-regulation: the priority skills and strategies that are integrated through the wider curriculum, universal and needs led support offer and therapy programs:

Personalised curriculum- addresses individual learning priorities linked to the EHCP and annual review.

Pathway curriculum- made up of core and foundation subjects that reflect developmental and learning needs.

Priority curriculum

For all learners, regardless of their learning route, the priority curriculum, is embedded and integrated throughout the curriculum and day. Staff work closely with both therapists and parents to ensure that the learner's holistic needs are met.

To ensure that all individual needs are met as a school we have created a need led support offer: universal, targeted and specialised. Each tier has its own set of supporting strategies and interventions which are embedded throughout the day to support individual needs.

As a school our priority is to support our learners to develop their communication and self-regulation skills as we feel that this will enable our learners to lead happy and successful lives and feel ready to learn. The priority skills will enable our learners to build relationships with others, express themselves, make sense of what is happening and manage and regulate their emotions and behaviour safely.

Communication

Our learners communicate in many ways and as a school we use a total communication approach and focus on developing and building on relationships. Communication is embedded throughout the day and every moment is used as an opportunity to develop communication skills.

All learners need to access an effective mode of communication that can be understood and supported by a range of other people with whom they may interact with. This may be supported through aided language displays, PODD, communication books, Makaton signing or objects of reference.

Communication underpins and is built into activities across all subject areas, supporting learners to develop functional use of expressive and receptive language. They are further supported through the delivery of discrete timetable lessons. Activities, strategies, and interventions will vary to ensure that they appropriately meet individual needs.

Learners who are developing early communication skills will experience activities through TAC PAC, Musical interaction, Intensive Interaction, structured interaction, and message stories to enhance communication and interaction skills.

Learners who are extending their understanding and use of language will be supported through a variety of activities including group opportunities for learning, interaction games, barrier games and brick therapy.

Self-regulation

Self-regulation is supported through implementation of Zones of Regulation, sensory diets, movement breaks and by ensuring that physical and health needs are met.

The Zones of Regulation is embedded into the daily routine, periodically giving learners opportunities to communicate how they are feeling, alongside a responsive approach that supports learners to express and manage their emotions in real life situations. Some learners will also access focused work delivered through planned lessons. Our staff model the use of emotional vocabulary and provide support for our learners to understand their own emotions and access a range of regulating strategies.

Our staff support our learners to regulate by seamlessly integrating OT therapy programs and sensory diets throughout the day and ensuring that learners are comfortable, by ensuring that their health and physical needs are being met at all times.

For all of our learners, implementation of therapy plans and ensuring that individual physical and health needs, including positional changes and movement opportunities, are being met is fundamental in supporting our learners to be ready to learn. This is an entitlement for all learners and is built into the daily routine.

Personalised curriculum

The personalised curriculum is made up of the learners' individual outcomes and targets that are recorded in the EHCP and annual review. In order to translate these outcomes into effective classroom practice, the smaller 'I can' statements are used to inform both the timetable and planned learning activities.

Teachers are expected to ensure that over the course of their regular weekly timetable, each child has sufficient opportunity to work on and make progress towards their targets. In some cases, this may mean daily practice, but in others it may mean once or twice a week. Targets may be worked on as part of an independent or 1:1 activity where only that specific skill is being practised, or they might be addressed within whole class sessions with broader learning objectives.

Pathway curriculum

Our curriculum is built around five pathways. Each pathway has been carefully planned, has a distinct rational and individual intents to ensure that learners develop appropriate knowledge and skills, matched to their developmental level, using approaches and interventions specific to the pathway. The approaches to be used can be seen within each individual pathway document (***See Individual pathway documents for details***)

The pathway names are **Starting out**, **Engage**, **Explore**, **Challenge** and **Moving on** (*see Appendix*). Elements of pathways may merge to ensure that all learners' needs are being met. The majority of learners will remain on the same pathway throughout their time at Edith Borthwick, however it is possible for learners to move between them as their needs change.

As a school we believe that it is important to get to know our learners and their strengths and abilities. This knowledge and understanding will support pathway allocation. To support this, we have chosen to extend the use of the EYFS curriculum up to the end of year 2. At the end of year 2, children will either follow the Engage, Explore or Challenge pathway, which will be determined by the progress made within the starting out curriculum. Post 16 learners will follow the moving on curriculum.

All pathways are underpinned by:

- High quality teaching that aims to develop knowledge and skills
- Embedment of the universal offer and specialist and targeted support as appropriate
- Highly motivating experiences and opportunities
- Time given for real life learning
- Classroom environments that are responsive to the needs of all learners
- Maximised use of resources, including adults
- Planned opportunities to engage in community experiences
- Sequenced learning to build on prior knowledge

The Six areas of learning:

To enable a flexible approach to be achieved, the curriculum subject areas remain the same regardless of the pathway. The curriculum has been divided into six main areas of learning:



Teaching and learning

A topic-based approach is used across all pathways, apart from Moving on. Topics are used to support teachers to deliver a motivating, broad, balanced, and flexible learner-centred curriculum which also takes into account individual interests. A new topic is covered every term and topics follow a 5- year rolling program.

Teachers produce a termly medium-term plan specific to their class, showing the coverage for the term, which directly informs weekly planning.

Teachers plan lessons and activities that plan for learner progress within not only their personalised curriculum but also the pathway curriculum. Teachers design creative lessons and a weekly timetable to suit the needs of the learners in their class. It is up to teachers to decide which activities and teaching strategies will best support their learners to meet their targets and make progress. Each pathway outlines the main teaching methodologies and strategies that might be effective for learners following

that pathway. We encourage teachers to use this document as a reference point when considering how to best meet the needs of their learners.

Teachers use the process 'assess, plan, do and review' to ensure that weekly planning is responsive to learner progress and engagement. For learners engaged in non-subject based learning, teachers use the engagement model to inform planning, activity, and resource choices.

Learning sequences are planned to engage learners, ensure that prior knowledge is built on and provide opportunities to apply, consolidate and embed knowledge and skills. Learners are supported to successfully generalise learning in different settings and situations. Learning sequences are informed by our own subject/skill documents that identify the developmental stages of knowledge and skills.

Opportunities to practice skills in real life contexts, both within the school and local community, are planned for. As learners progress with their learning journey, they have increased opportunities to access the wider community.

A wide variety of enrichment activities take place across the week to enhance and support the curriculum and its delivery, such activities include swimming, horse riding, Diddi Dance and music. Enrichment activities continually change to reflect the intended curriculum outcomes and needs of the learners.

Compulsory learning areas such as Religious Education and British values are delivered where appropriate through planned pathway activities, whole school events and/or weekly assemblies.

RSE

RSE is based on the DfE's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance. As a school we have developed a separate RSE curriculum, based on the SEND PSHE association framework that is implemented throughout each pathway at an appropriate level.

Phonics and reading

Phonics, is delivered daily using the Read Write Inc programme, to learners who are ready to learn letter sounds (**See phonics document for more information**). Learners who are not ready to follow the phonics program engage in activities to develop pre-reading skills.

Careers information advice and guidance

At the Edith Borthwick School, we ensure that our career's education curriculum meets the statutory requirements outlined in the Gatsby Benchmarks and provides learners with a rich, creative careers education which equips them for the future (**See Careers curriculum information**).

Learning environment, teaching support and resources

The school day

The school day starts at 9.10 and ends at 2.45, it consists of either six 30 minute or 45 minute lessons, dependent on the age and ability of learners.

Composition of classes

Most classes are ability based (pathways) as this is the best way to ensure that learning is tailored to the needs of learners within the class and ensure that learners have an appropriate peer group. The exceptions are the starting out classes where ability is still being assessed. The exact nature of the classes can change from one year to the others due to the varying number of learners in each pathway.

Teaching spaces

Learners are taught in their main classrooms, but will sometimes use specialist learning areas (DT, food tech, cafe). Specialist learning areas provide learners with the opportunity to develop their confidence and independence in applying skills in a variety of environments.

Learning environment

Classrooms and learning spaces are adapted to meet the needs of the learners and teachers creatively use the available space to create zoned, lower arousal, areas that support individual regulation needs. To further support regulation and reduce distractions learning spaces are kept clear and clutter free.

Classroom displays combine celebration of achievement alongside useful supports for learning including timetables, Zones of Regulation and targets.

To promote and support independence class resources are clearly labelled and consistent strategies are used to provide cues and information on what is happening next through the use of musical cues, countdowns, and photo supports.

Our universal offer details the minimum expectations for learning spaces and all staff are responsible to ensure that the universal offer is embedded within their classroom (*See universal offer for more details*)

Teaching and learning is supported by use of communication systems and strategies and OT strategies, advised by the schools own therapists.

Collaboration

Staff work together to share examples of good practice, lesson ideas and resources and PSHE, Maths, Reading and OT resources are stored centrally to provide easy access.

Teachers are well supported by teaching assistants who receive ongoing training. To ensure that learners are well supported all staff consistently implement agreed strategies to support an individual's communication, sensory and behavioural needs. To ensure consistency is maintained information is shared through one-page profiles and personal and social support strategy documents.

IMPACT

Every learners' achievement and progress is celebrated. The outcome of the curriculum is highly individual.

Progress for our learners can be demonstrated by:

- Making progress towards/achieving their intended targets set with parents/carers within the EHCP/annual review meeting.
- Making progress/achieving in their curriculum pathways by progressing through the milestones.
- High level of attendance at school.
- Enjoyment, engagement, and positive attitudes towards learning.
- Destination placements.
- Supported transitions within, in and out of our setting.
- Learner voice.
- Generalisation of skills.
- Maintenance of skills.
- Increased length of concentration and persistence in learning tasks.
- Reduced dependency on staff support.

Monitoring

Across our school, we use regular monitoring to gauge the impact of our curriculum intent and implementation. Monitoring of the curriculum takes a variety of forms across the school. Learning walks and formal lesson visits monitor the quality of teaching and learning taking place in the classroom and provide valuable insight into the level of engagement and application of skill by learners. Feedback is provided to support practice to move forwards.

SLG and teachers with additional responsibilities ensure continuity and progression for learning and support teachers to deliver subjects through staff training, careful resourcing and by being responsive to teacher needs.

Learner outcomes

Curriculum impact is measured through its impact on learning and progression towards individual targets. Ultimately impact is defined by leavers and their destinations. We liaise with post 19 providers and support transitions to provide the best outcomes possible beyond school.

Teachers assess formatively at the EHCP/annual review meeting. Termly progress meetings are used to monitor learner progress and identify where learners are not making expected progress and agree on additional support that is required to be put in place.

Recording: Evidence for learning

Observations carried out by staff are used to identify progress made towards personalised curriculum targets. Staff record and evidence key points of learning through our assessment tool, Evidence for learning. Learning reports are shared termly with parents, detailing progress that has been made.

Standardised assessments

Where appropriate learners follow and participate in external national and standardised assessments and accreditation: EYFS profiles, Entry level qualifications, OCR units. Learners engaged in non-subject based learning are assessed using the engagement model.

Moderation

Moderation meetings ensure that the assessment procedures in school are rigorous, robust and suitably checked to ensure common approach and understanding across the school.

Curriculum overview

All learners regardless of their starting point will have access to an ambitious, personalised curriculum which supports development of key skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to be successful in their lives and prepared for next steps.

Curriculum aims	Be confident communicators who develop a functional mode of communication.	Be successful learners who enjoy learning, reach their potential and are ready for the next steps in their lives.	Have increased independence to be able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives and experience respectful relationships.	Be active in the community to become a valued member of their community and have access to new experiences.
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Areas of need	Communication	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	Cognition	Sensory/and or Physical need
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At Edith Borthwick there is recognition of the barriers to learning that each of our children and young people encounter on a daily basis. Our curriculum is made up of three layers.

Priority curriculum	The priority skills and strategies that are integrated through the wider curriculum: communication and self-regulation.
Personalised curriculum	Individual outcomes and targets recorded in the EHCP and annual review document.

Pathway Curriculum	Starting out	Engage	Explore	Challenge	Moving on
	A developmental curriculum which supports the establishment of building blocks for future learning. Through a combination of play and learning activities, first hand and practical experience, children learn about the world and their place in it.	A curriculum for learners who have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Learners following this pathway are developing very early cognition, communication and interaction skills. Learners work in a non-subject specific way and follow a highly individualised sensory curriculum.	A curriculum for learners with severe learning disabilities who are developing their skills and abilities across a range of contexts. The curriculum offers a skill-based approach. Learners access a holistic and cross-curricular learning approach.	A curriculum for learners with a severe or moderate learning disability who are broadly developing subject specific skills and knowledge. The curriculum offers a subject specific approach that encompasses elements of the National Curriculum. Subjects are taught through a skills-based approach.	A curriculum for post 16 learners that focuses on preparing our young people for adulthood and successful transition. The curriculum is based on and informed by the preparation for adulthood core standards.

Subjects	Communication	Creativity	Thinking and learning	Physical and wellbeing	Understanding the world	Independence and life skills
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Principles of all pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality teaching Embedment of universal offer Highly motivating experiences and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time for real life learning Responsive classroom environment Maximised use of resources, including adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for community experience Sequenced learning Topic based
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Impact	Increased concentration and persistence	Progress towards/achieving targets	Generalisation and maintenance of skills	Enjoyment, engagement, positive attitudes	Supported transitions	Reduced staff dependency
Measured through	Attendance at school					

Lesson visits, Learning walks, EHCP/annual review, EFL, Observation, Subject/Skill progression document, Standardised assessments/accreditation, Destination placements, Transitions.

Appendix 1

Starting out (Reception and Year 2)

A building blocks curriculum

Learners following this pathway follow the EYFS curriculum. The three prime areas of the core EYFS curriculum are communication and interaction, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development.

This is a developmental curriculum which plays a diagnostic role in establishing which of the three curricula pathways the children will begin in Year 3 and supports the establishment of building blocks for future learning. Through a combination of play and learning activities, first hand and practical experience, children learn about the world and their place in it.

Year 3- Year 11

Engage	Explore	Challenge
<p style="text-align: center;">A sensory and engaging curriculum</p> <p>A curriculum for learners who have complex, profound and multiple learning difficulties. Learners following this pathway are developing very early cognition, communication and interaction skills and will be working on the engagement model. Learners work in a non-subject specific way and follow a highly individualised sensory curriculum designed to develop early communication and cognition skills through therapeutic approaches and specific input based on our understanding of how best to engage them.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">An exploratory life skills-based curriculum</p> <p>A curriculum for learners with severe learning disabilities who are developing their skills and abilities across a range of contexts. The curriculum offers a skill-based approach, based on an adapted version of the National Curriculum, in which the focus is on “I can” and makes links between key areas of learning and life skill application. Learners access a holistic and cross-curricular learning approach using play, exploration, practical activities, and community involvement. Repetition is a key concept and learners' regularly access the community to generalise skills to real life contexts. The pathway helps learners develop skills, to live and work as part of a community and to practice the skills which will help them to be more independent. Children will hopefully begin to develop some specific subject skills.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">An adapted NC, emphasising life need.</p> <p>A curriculum for learners with a severe learning disability or moderate learning disability who are broadly developing subject specific skills and knowledge. The curriculum offers a subject specific approach that encompasses elements of the National Curriculum. Subjects are taught through a skills-based approach, appropriately blending academic and life skill experiences. The curriculum helps learners to transfer, apply and practice skills in real life contexts. The curriculum also helps learners to develop a skill set and knowledge base to support academic accreditation.</p>

Moving on (Year 12- Year 14)

A preparation for adulthood curriculum

A curriculum for post 16 learners that focuses on preparing our learners for adulthood and successful transition into employment, college, day provision and independent or supported living. The curriculum is based on and informed by the preparation for adulthood core standards: Good health, employment and education, independent living and friends, family and community. The curriculum places emphasis on functionality, young people working with increased independence and provides real world learning opportunities.

The moving on (sensory) curriculum will be followed by our learners who followed the engage pathway. It will most likely be delivered in their existing class base and learners continue to follow a highly individualised, sensory curriculum, building on the skills already developed. The moving on sensory pathway continues to be based on the engage pathway principles/content and activities. However, at post 16 there is an increased focus on preparing learners for and focusing on supporting successful transitions post Edith Borthwick and increased community inclusion opportunities to support learners to become confident in accessing a range of different environments.