

Curriculum Policy & Guidance

1. INTRODUCTION

We believe that all students have a right to access a curriculum that is of good quality, meaningful and appropriate to their individual needs whilst not compromising their entitlement. We also believe that learning at Marland should motivate, engage and excite our students. The aim of this policy is to show how the clear lines of progression and development within curriculum planning result in coherence and continuity throughout the school.

With the complex learning and behaviour needs of the students being admitted to Marland the school acknowledges that the needs of the individual are central and that the provision offered should be sufficiently flexible to enable students to be placed at an appropriately challenging point on the continuum at any time during their school career.

This School works in partnership with parents, students and stakeholders and their views are sought and taken into account to achieve the appropriate balance between curricula entitlement and bespoke curricula need. This includes enabling access to other experiences such as alternative curriculum, therapeutic input and intensive tuition to enhance or consolidate basic skills. By maintaining the overview of curriculum development in conjunction with the needs of the individual, the school strives to facilitate maximum progress for all students.

2. AIMS

- To ensure that all students have access to a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum based on the National Curriculum and/or Foundation Curriculum.
- To ensure quality curriculum content and continuity throughout the school through systematic curriculum planning and monitoring procedures.
- To ensure that all students have access to an appropriately differentiated curriculum.
- To ensure that students cover the Programmes of Study and develop learning strategies needed to transfer between Marland and future provision.
- To provide students with access to externally accredited courses at Key Stage 4.
- To clearly identify positive aspirational progression pathways for students at 14, including access to Further Education, vocational courses and work related learning.
- To ensure that there is an equality of access to all courses.
- To promote students' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development in order to assist students in becoming thoughtful and responsible citizens.
- To develop independence and life skills through experiences and programmes such as work experience, community liaison projects, access to a broad range of external providers and through the extended 24/7 curriculum provided by our residential provision.
- To prepare students for the opportunities responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- To monitor and assess student progress to ensure high standards of achievement and attainment. Similarly, to encourage, motivate and engage students to self-assess themselves (Assessment for Learning).

3. CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The curriculum structure at Marland consists of a framework built around whole school policies and associated schemes of work.

Curriculum – Policy & Guidance

Within the schemes of work, accurate assessment informs planning and target setting for Individual Student Programmes, clear assessment of progress and attainment, GCSE criteria [where appropriate], completion of student summative records and assessment of personal development.

All students have an Individual Education Plan which is predominantly aligned to personal development skills – all targets are intrinsically linked to the Person Centred [Annual] Review process. Intervention strategies are implemented depending on students' needs and are monitored and reviewed on at least a termly basis.

Objectives for these programmes are derived from formal and on-going school data and assessment procedures, discussions with students and parents, classroom observation and evaluation of performance in previous programmes.

4. CURRICULUM PLANNING & DELIVERY

Curriculum planning and delivery is as follows:

Long term planning – is reasonably permanent and deals with the major areas and strands of the National Curriculum to be covered in small steps across the Key Stages. It illustrates the decisions made about breadth and balance, including subject time allocation / prioritisation.

Medium term planning [Schemes of Work] – is seen as semi-permanent and deals with the activities within units of work set out termly or more commonly for half termly periods. Medium term plans address issues of curriculum coherence and depth. Such plans:

- Stipulate general learning objectives;
- Indicate the relationship of objectives to National Curriculum programmes;
- Describe learning activities and associated differentiation opportunities;
- Show resource requirements and implications;
- State general assessment objectives;
- Identify literacy, numeracy, information technology, and possibilities for cross – curricular Links;
- Identify any risk assessment activities needing to be undertaken.

Short term plans – are concerned with individual lessons or sessions on a daily basis and address issues of curriculum differentiation and access for individual students. Such planning addresses:

- Stipulation of specific individualised learning objectives based on realistic and aspirational targets;
- How learning is to be resourced, organised, differentiated and assessed;
- Outcomes and/or evaluation to inform future planning.

5. CURRICULUM ORGANISATION

The core curriculum areas have a designated subject leader to oversee organisation. Long, medium and short term planning systems follow the common framework adopted for curriculum planning and delivery throughout the school (both sites). There are common principles throughout but as a cross phase school (KS2/Y6 - KS4) there are naturally some variations between the organisational needs of the phases of the school.

Primary - At KS2 the curriculum model is based on core national curriculum subjects (English, Mathematics and Science), taught as separate subjects. Other National Curriculum foundation subjects are also taught as separate subjects. The organisation of the 'Transition' classes allows for subject delivery separately or thematically within integrated topics, predominantly through a single base / teacher / TA model to promote stability and maximise student engagement with their learning. Such flexibility enables curriculum breadth and balance to be maintained. English and Mathematics are delivered in lessons which have been adapted to reflect the needs of students with a range of complex special educational needs. Further details can be found in the Maths and English subject policies. Individual education plans are managed and monitored by class teachers.

Secondary – the secondary curriculum is organised on subject based model with students moving to subject specialist rooms and teachers. The core subjects of English, Maths and I.T. are delivered in subject lessons. Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education is also delivered via discrete lessons but also through 'Offsite Learning' sessions and in Key Stage 4 through the 'Personalised Learning' programme. This can lead to GCSE

Curriculum – Policy & Guidance

accreditation. Technology and Art are timetabled subjects for all students. In year 9 the depth of the curriculum is ensured through timetabled Humanities and Science lessons. In years 10 and 11 ‘Personalised Learning’ lessons are timetabled which allow students to focus on their own individual learning plans. Externally accredited courses are followed in English, Maths, Art, ICT and Technology. Throughout the secondary phase class teachers oversee the delivery of Individual Education Plans. Tutors oversee the delivery of ‘Student Learning Plans’ which are the mechanism for the identification and design of each student’s individual timetable.

In Year 11 Careers South West support students with developing their Student Action Plans which feed into the multi-agency transitional review meetings. These highlight areas of strength and need for each individual. The aim being to ensure that the relevant support and opportunities are accessed in order to achieve competencies and develop the confidence to participate fully in life as independent young adults. Links with Further Education Colleges, Careers Southwest and local commerce and industry enhance the work related learning and enterprise aspects of the curriculum.

The school actively seeks to engage students in inclusion activities; however this can impact on other curriculum access. Any integration or inclusion programme is explained fully to parents and students with regard to the curricula impact and parental permission is sought before a programme is embarked upon. The impact of this is mitigated wherever possible through provision of additional timetabled ‘Catch-up’ opportunities, these are timetabled as ‘PL’. Disapplication from the National curriculum will only be sought in very exceptional circumstances.

6. CURRICULUM CONTENT

We aim to access all areas of the National Curriculum at the appropriate National Curriculum 2014 Stage. However, in a special school the whole curriculum is much wider than the National Curriculum and it is in this area that we believe we are adopting a ‘value added’ approach. Much of the ‘value added’ aspect of the curriculum is associated with small step and detailed programmes, giving each individual student access to support in areas in which they need development. Additionally a great deal of time is given to Personal, Social and Health Education, not only in the classroom and through curriculum activities but also throughout the course of the school day and planned whole school activities.

Primary – At Key Stage 2 there is more emphasis on content in the National Curriculum 2014; although material is drawn from both Key Stage 1 and 2 Programmes of study. Age related ‘Stages’ have been broken down into mini steps of individual knowledge and/or skills that need to be learnt and embedded to accurately reflect student achievement towards achieving these norm age related stages. PSHE /SMSC themes are delivered in conjunction with citizenship.

Secondary – Appropriate aspects of the National Curriculum 2014 [within the context of ‘Foundation Learning’] are taught at Key Stage 3. Again content may be drawn from earlier Key Stages as appropriate to individual student need. Key Skills are introduced to underpin core literacy, communication, numeracy, I.T. and vocational skills.

At Year 9 through to Key Stage 4 there are opportunities for external accreditation in all subject areas, ranging from pre-GCSE through to GCSE equivalents and actual GCSEs. These include: ELC, BTEC, Functional Skills, ITQ and a range of Vocational Qualifications.

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is considerably enhanced by the following:

- Careers education
- Work experience and community liaison placements
- College link courses
- Enterprise and business links
- Multi Agency Links

Revisions of the KS4 curriculum are currently under review in line with recent Government initiatives and the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014.

Curriculum – Policy & Guidance

7. CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, ACCREDITATION AND MONITORING

Assessment procedures are in accordance with subject policy and included in schemes of work. They are used to plan for differentiation within curriculum delivery to ensure all pupils can access each lesson or module. Subsequently, they are used to inform individual teaching programmes.

Summative records of Individual student performance and benchmarked progress are made for:

- **English & Maths:**

KS4: using DfE Progression Guidance contextualised through Marland's tracking methodology utilising the outgoing National Curriculum 2000 level descriptors assimilated against GCSE equivalence. This information forms the basis for whole school target setting in this interim transitional period. This protocol will continue for the current Year Year 11 cohorts whilst more suitable alternatives are investigated [see 'Marking Policy', 'Assessment Update notes' and 'Student Attainment & Personalised Curriculum Records' file].

KS2-3: As a response to the introduction of the National Curriculum 2014, including the cessation of 'Levels', students are no longer baseline assessed through an external test, teacher assessment is used instead to arrive at an appropriate knowledge / skills based accurate starting point or 'Stage'. Ongoing assessment is then delivered via 'Classroom Monitor's *Rising Stars*' software program.

- **Other Foundation subjects:** These are assessed via 'Classroom Monitor's *Rising Stars*' software program.

Teachers' evaluation and assessments feed back into future or modified plans. Feedback from formal lesson observations and learning walks contribute to this cycle of evaluation.

Achievement and progress at all stages of the curriculum and for all ages is regularly monitored and reviewed. Externally accredited courses are offered in Years 9 to 11. Internal awards and personal accreditation are encouraged throughout the school to enhance self-esteem and personal performance. Developmental awards are available in a range of activities.

To continually improve the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum monitoring is carried out by the Leadership Team, Subject Leaders, Governors with subject responsibility and overviewed by the Governing Body as a whole. This is undertaken by scrutinising students' work, records, schemes of work and planning documentation, as well as through observation of lessons and other aspects of school life. External advice is actively encouraged and subject leaders can request the support of area consultants or advisers.

8. CURRICULUM ISSUES

a) Equal opportunities: care is taken within all schemes of work to ensure that all students have access to the content. Balanced viewpoints are planned into schemes to ensure that a fair and equal amount of information is given to key issues such as religion, race, culture, gender and disability.

b) Learning across the curriculum: the planning stages of every subject seek information regarding content overlap and where possible ensure that content is not duplicated or a joint approach is reached. Certain subjects or curriculum areas lend themselves to identification of cross-curricular links. Opportunities to advance or support Literacy, Numeracy and ICT skills are identified in subject planning.

c) Transition: two phases of transition occur at Marland. Primary/Secondary transfer occurs within the 'Transition Groups' where year 4 to year 6 / 7 students are taught together under a 'primary model' with the class teacher delivering the majority of subjects supported by subject specialists where appropriate. The English and Maths subject leaders offer support to these groups to ensure continuity and progression. The whole school approach to curriculum planning across the phases also promotes similar continuity and progression.

Curriculum – Policy & Guidance

Secondary/Post 16 transfer is more complex. A formal transitional and annual ‘Person Centred’ review meeting is held in Year 9. Possible progression routes open to each student are discussed and a ‘Student Learning Plan’ plan is formulated.

Several choices exist at present for those students reaching 16 years of age, the options identified are broadly:

- employment or training
- Further Education Colleges to continue education
- a 16-19 Specialist College or Unit to continue education
- a vocational training programme: apprenticeship or traineeship

A careers guidance programme and multi-agency review meetings with parents inform the students of the best options open to them.

d) The Code of Practice: all students have an Individual Education Plan that is reviewed twice a year. The IEP is an integral part of this school’s good curriculum practice.

e) Personalised Curriculum & Planning

The Student Personalised Curriculum Records [SPCR] reflect the introduction of ‘Progress 8’ in mainstream schools and Marland has adapted and expanded this methodology to suit its students, all of whom have a range of complex needs that would not match the restrictions of ‘Progress 8’ on its own [see the ‘Student Personalised Curriculum Records’ file]. Personalised timetables, where appropriate, for students in years 10 and 11 are driven by the student’s SPCR.

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