



Arbour House School

Curriculum Policy

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Arbour House School Curriculum

Our Curriculum Intent

At Arbour House School our curriculum is designed to be inclusive and ambitious. We recognise children's prior learning, provide first hand learning experiences, allow our pupils to develop interpersonal skills and independence, build resilience and become creative, critical thinkers.

As part of our commitment to our school's guiding principles – aspire, bespoke and creative – we strive to offer a curriculum that is highly personalised and designed to best meet individual pupils' needs. Personalised is defined as focusing on what is important and relevant for individuals. Pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities require a different approach to the curriculum. Specialist teaching and resources are used to reduce barriers to learning and enhance access to curriculum and learning.

Most of our children have had periods out of education, many for an extended period of time, and they may have struggled to be successful in prior placements, so an education that is engaging, meaningful and accessible to them is our priority. We want all our pupils to achieve their best possible outcomes for life as a successful British citizen and be prepared for life beyond school, transitions and adulthood.

Our curriculum ensures pupils receive experiences and opportunities to develop their knowledge and acquire new skills and attributes in ways that ensure learning is relevant. The curriculum promotes pupils' holistic development through inclusion of functional and subject specific skills and knowledge in a range of practical contexts. Opportunities for sequences of repetition and practice in a range of contexts are essential as pupils often have difficulties in maintaining, generalising and applying learning in different contexts.

The curriculum at Arbour House School is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It includes a focus on developing and sustaining good physical and emotional wellbeing, so pupils are as healthy as possible to participate in school and beyond. Participation in first hand and sensory curriculum activities helps pupils make meaningful sense of the world. It also enhances their confidence, self-esteem and enables them to recognise, celebrate and feel pride in their achievements.

Every child is recognised as a unique individual and our curriculum forms the basis for the learning and experiences our pupils enjoy. Staff have high expectations, set challenging targets and provide excellent individualised support for each pupil. We aspire for our pupils to reach their individual potential through learning in a happy, secure and caring environment.

Our Curriculum Implementation:

Fundamental to the implementation of our curriculum at Arbour House is the commitment to adapt teaching to the unique qualities and needs of each child.

Within the overarching framework of our curriculum, we ensure that we work towards the desired outcomes of pupils' individual **Education, Health and Care Plans**.

Some pupils may need their provision supplemented by a varied sensory diet for example, with sessions for sensory integration incorporated into their timetable, or additional occupational therapy or speech and language therapy. Others may need to work on social and communication skills and on building and maintaining relationships. Some pupils may be able to work in 45 minute lessons, others in 10 minute chunks...

We recognise that one size does not fit all and aim to facilitate learning in a way that takes individual strengths and needs into account and offers opportunities for success for all.

Based on the needs of the individual pupil, Arbour House School implements:

- curricula individualised to meet each pupil's needs
- approaches and interventions supported by research evidence
- approaches and interventions for each pupil based on evidence of their progress and learning outcomes
- learning strategies and a teaching environment that are enjoyable
- opportunities for pupils to be involved in the decision making about their learning
- the teaching and learning of functional skills, knowledge and understanding
- planned opportunities to generalise skills, and apply understanding and knowledge to natural situations and settings (such as the home and the community)
- planned opportunities for local community involvement and participation, such as inclusion in local events, supported vocational placements and work experience
- preparation for adulthood and a life that is as independent and fulfilling as possible

We aim to retain most of the statutory elements of the National Curriculum, adapted to meet the special educational needs of our pupils.

This ensures our pupils have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum tailored to their individual needs.

Key Stages 1-4:

Pupils follow a modified core curriculum to support the acquisition of basic skills for life:



The key elements of our Key Stages 1–4 curriculum are:

- English (for some pupils we use Read, Write Inc to support reading and phonics)
- Maths (Numicon and/or Maths No Problem)
- Science as part of core provision.
- Information and Communication Technology and Online Safety embedded across all subjects.
- A differentiated PSHE programme, based on Primary and Secondary JIGSAW, a mindful approach to PSHE

- Relationships and Sex Education (adapted in a stage appropriate not necessarily age-appropriate way when necessary to ensure pupils' SEN is taken into account.)
- Weekly PE and/or gym sessions to support physical health and well-being and focus on the acquisition and/or development of fine and gross motor skills
- Art and Design for all
- Humanities following a rolling programme of half termly topics
- Timetabled 'Special Interest Time', ensuring we value and support what makes our pupils 'special' and what interests and matters most to them

At Arbour House we understand that one size does not fit all, and we ensure that Programmes of Study and resources used to support learning are individualised and the right ones for specific children.

Other curriculum offered includes

- **Functional Skills qualifications in English and Maths**
- **Independent Living Skills**
- **Travel Training**
- **Creative Curriculum**

Whenever possible and if appropriate for that particular child, we aim to offer pupils the opportunity to work in a practical, hands on and creative way, either individually, in peer groups or as a whole school. Most of our pupils are kinaesthetic learners and learn best by doing so this approach affords many of our pupils the greatest chance of success, as well as ensuring that they are having fun!

In **Creative Curriculum** pupils learn more about themselves and the world around them. They explore areas of the curriculum and alternative ways of learning not necessarily covered in other subjects. Our CC planning embeds pupils' **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural** development as well as enhancing and supporting their understanding of Fundamental British Values.

All pupils access the **local community** at least weekly, for library sessions, to use the gym or local leisure facilities, or to shop for Independent Living Skills activities, and when appropriate, learning takes place outside the classroom. We aim to make our learning 'real' and functional so that it remains relevant to children's lives. For older pupils this also includes opportunities to attain nationally accredited qualifications and experience vocational and/or work-based learning.

We offer all pupils a weekly '**Group Games**' session that is designed specifically to develop their social and communication skills, their ability to share and work with others, and also embeds our work on Fundamental **British Values and SMSC**.

Curriculum designed to promote pupils working together improves their self-esteem and self-confidence, and they learn of the roles and responsibilities of being a valued member of our school community in preparation for taking their place in the wider community outside of the school environment.

All pupils have their own **Thrive Action Plan** with individualised activities to support the development of their social and emotional resilience, and all pupils have access to an **ELSA** if deemed necessary or appropriate.

There are **Special Interest** sessions weekly too, and pupils/classes can choose and negotiate themselves what the focus of this time will be. This ensures that they have the chance to pursue their own interests and that their voice is heard as well as providing opportunities for pupils to get to know each other better and develop empathy, interest in, and tolerance of others.

Key Stage 5/Post-16:

We recognise that many of our Key Stage 5 pupils may have gaps in their learning and may not yet have acquired the skills and knowledge that they need for post-16 study. Some may need to follow a core curriculum similar to that offered to Key Stage 1-4 pupils, as appropriate. For others a core curriculum offer based on adapted National Curriculum may simply not be appropriate or a 'best-fit' to meet their needs or the desired outcomes of their Education, Health and Care Plan. As such, pupils in the Sixth Form as in all Arbour House pupils, will be offered an individualised curriculum highly tailored to meet their individual SEN, that takes into account their own aspirations and plans for adulthood.

We do, where appropriate, aim to ensure that for Key Stage 5 pupils their core curriculum provision is enhanced with wider opportunities for learning beyond the school environment, to ensure they develop greater independence, prepare for post 6th Form transitions, and are equipped with the confidence and skills to take their place as contributing and valued members of their community.

We support pupils in the Sixth Form with as many opportunities as possible to engage in Travel Training, Work-related learning and Independent Living Skills activities.

For suitable pupils we also offer a range of academic and vocational learning opportunities via links with Weymouth College, Employ My Ability, Dorset Abilities, Rylands Farm, Dorset Wildlife Trust, RSPB and other local community and business partnerships.



All Programmes of Study are planned and delivered at a learning level appropriate to each pupil's individual needs and abilities.

We aim to ensure that individualised programmes take into account pupils' aspirations and particular interests, so Key Stage 5 timetables can include special interest time, volunteering, work experience, social enterprise and personal study for example.

Our Curriculum Impact

The **desired outcomes** of our curriculum are:

- A happy, positive, and fulfilling school experience,
- Pupils who develop a love of learning and an enhanced sense of well-being.
- Successful learners who make progress and achieve;
- Pupils who can make successful and positive transitions;
- Confident individuals who are able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives with appropriate autonomy and independence;
- Participative citizens, equipped with the confidence and skills to take their place as contributing and valued members of their community.

Policy Review Record

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COMPILED BY	Julie Perks	
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	DATE	BY (NAME)
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July 2025		