

# THE LION WORKS SCHOOL POLICY



## Curriculum Policy

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## Context

The Lion Works School is an Independent special school. We are part of an ethical and progressive organisation that believes it can achieve real change for children, young people and their families.

The Lion Works School is situated within the BCP local authority. We offer an academic and vocational specialist learning provision across KS3, KS4 and Post 16 aiming to reduce barriers to enable successful learning experiences and outcomes. There are a variety of routes a student can take, which include GCSEs, BTECs and other accredited qualifications whilst building confidence, improving wellbeing, enabling self-regulation and increasing attendance. Our school is full of life and has a wealth of resources to spark interest and ignite that passion to achieve, equipping our students for everyday life and the opportunities that await them.

We adhere to the values of **ARC**:

**Ambition**

**Resilience**

**Community**

The Lion Works School operates within the SPELL framework. SPELL is The National Autistic Society's framework for understanding and responding to the needs of children and adults on the autism spectrum. It focuses on five principles that have been identified as vital elements of best practice in autism and emphasises ways to change the environment and our approaches to meet the specific needs of each person.

**SPELL** stands for Structure, Positive approaches and expectations, Empathy, Low arousal, Links:

<b>Structure</b>	Structure makes the world a more predictable, accessible and safer place. We can support people on the autism spectrum in creating structured environments using visual information.
<b>Positive (approaches and expectations)</b>	We must seek to establish and reinforce self-confidence and self-esteem by building on natural strengths, interest and abilities.
<b>Empathy</b>	We must try to see the world from the standpoint of the autistic child or adult, knowing what it is that motivates or interests them but importantly what may also frighten, preoccupy or otherwise distress them.
<b>Low arousal</b>	Approaches and the environment need to be calm and ordered in such a way so as to reduce anxiety and aid concentration.
<b>Links</b>	Autistic people, their parents or advocates should be seen as partners. Open links and communication will reduce the risk of misunderstanding, confusion or the adoption of fragmented, piecemeal approaches.

## **Curriculum Intent**

Our curriculum at The Lion Works School is held together with our core values of academic focus and skill acquisition, building resilience and instilling a sense of community. It is based alongside the principles of the Preparation for Adulthood outcomes and aims to be responsive and personalised to each individual student and their unique interests and needs.

We strive to maintain a strong, academic focus built on the acquisition of skills and wherever possible providing context-based learning which promotes and encourages active engagement. This, in turn leads to recognised GCSE and BTEC qualifications that are ambitious for all and maximise outcomes for all in line with their ability.

We focus on building resilience to setbacks and creating opportunities to recognise and reward success. We firmly believe that through an effective personal development programme and creating a culture of positive regard and mutual respect we are equipping our students with knowledge and strategies for living independently and keeping themselves physically and mentally healthy.

We also focus on instilling a sense of community inclusion both within and beyond the school. We actively provide that sense of community through our daily programme and students are supported and encouraged to be proud of their school and demonstrate a strong, community ethos through these values. They are also given opportunities to explore their own community and be included in it. This is achieved through numerous off-site visits that challenge and develop their resilience and build their confidence and self-esteem and enrich their cultural capital.

## **Aims**

Our curriculum aims to:

- Create opportunities and learning experiences that are engaging, meaningful and with an element of fun
- Provide a broad and balanced education for all students that is coherently planned and sequenced towards the acquisition of sufficient knowledge for skills, future learning and employment
- Provide a curriculum which prioritises a strong core of subjects and is supported by therapeutic approaches and interventions, which encourages and empowers students to reach their full academic potential in an emotionally contained safe space
- Support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding Support students' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and provide opportunities for them to be active and be aware of the positive impact of physical activity and outdoor learning on their mental health and wellbeing
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning for all students, with high expectations for every student and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high academic/vocational ambition for all students which allows students to gain nationally recognised qualifications
- Equip students with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Develop students' independent learning skills and resilience to equip them for further/higher education and employment
- Adopt mindful approaches and mindful classroom practices to enable students to self-regulate and to have positive mental health and wellbeing

- Provide inspirational and aspirational teaching which is supported by intervention and therapeutic support
- Encourage and support students to demonstrate Fundamental British Values and Citizenship in their communities

## Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Independent School Standards](#), [Independent School Standards guidance \(2019\)](#) and the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#), and which our school follows in providing a broad and balanced curriculum. As The Lion Works School is an Independent School we do not need to follow the national curriculum, however we endeavour to make best use of these programmes as part of our specialist curriculum. 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](#).

## Roles and responsibilities

### SLT

- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and overseeing the delivery of the curriculum.
- The Deputy Headteacher leads on Curriculum, and Teaching and Learning.
- The CEO and School Board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The CEO and School Board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Standards of teaching and learning are monitored in accordance with the assessment policy and staff handbook, and reviewed and supported by the SLT to inform staff appraisals
- Provide appropriate challenge and support through meaningful supervision, coaching and appraisal
- Promote a commitment to the use of an evidence-based model of collaborative reflective enquiry; being open to new learning and taking informed action

### Deputy Headteacher

The Deputy 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 aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Board
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some students are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum but decisions are always made in discussion with key stakeholders alongside providing a strong rationale
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs, including the range of SEN within our specialist setting
- Current practice is informed and developed through the provision of coaching and supervision

- for teaching staff
- Hold regular meetings to focus on teaching and learning and attend formal subject meetings

### **Teaching and Support Staff**

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy. Class teachers and subject leads will:

- Ensure that relevant schemes of work are maintained and reviewed regularly, and that their subject policy is implemented. Copies of up-to-date schemes and policies are stored electronically in the 'Curriculum' folder in the Teacher Shared drive.
- Hold formal subject meetings, where appropriate, submitting minutes to the Headteacher at least once a term.
- Ensure that the subject is appropriately resourced, and managed within the allocated budget.
- Design, implement and evaluate annual and three-year subject development plans.
- Keep abreast of the subject and current research regarding strategies for the teaching and delivery of each subject, ensuring that relevant information is disseminated to the subject staff.
- Ensure every relevant party follows the Assessment and Feedback Policy and implements regular and effective assessments including, where necessary, formal assessments.
- Use assessment and attainment data and record centrally to allow for attainment scrutiny, tracking and monitoring.
- Publish the above information in a subject handbook and ensure that all copies of this handbook are regularly updated, both in hard copies and on the 'Curriculum' drive.
- Attend curriculum development and review meetings, as required.

While responsibility for these areas lie with the class teachers and subject leads, it should be recognised that good practice requires consultation and collaboration with additional staff, such as our HLTAs and intervention specialists, about all matters that influence their work.

### **Core Curriculum Subjects**

The core subjects of English, Maths and Science are the priority within the curriculum and are measures regarding the success of the curriculum over the duration of a student's journey through school. Although the core subjects are our priority, at The Lion Works School we believe it is also important for students to have the opportunity to study a broad and balanced curriculum in order that they may extend their understanding of the world in which they live and one which effectively prepares them for adulthood.

#### *English Language and Literature*

English is fundamental in everything that we say, see, hear, think and do. Mastering the key skills in reading and writing, speaking, and listening will help to prepare our students for their life beyond school, giving them the tools to apply their knowledge and experience to their everyday lives. We aim to equip our students with the ability to overcome any literacy barriers that they may face and instil the confidence to take on new challenges and allow them to move into adulthood and the workplace with confidence. The Lion Works School uses a variety of approaches in supporting the teaching and learning of English. We provide an engaging, multi-sensory approach to promote creative and

reflective thinking and develop functional literacy skills encompassing the key aspects of reading, writing, recording, speaking, and listening and wider communication skills. The teaching of explicit reading skills will also enable students to acquire knowledge across the curriculum and in the world at large and to develop a lifelong love of learning.

The study of English Language and Literature will provide our students with opportunities to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially.

In KS3, students will also study the English Mastery Writing curriculum. This programme of study is taught alongside the broader literature and language combined curriculum.

At Key Stage 4, students will develop their skills and knowledge in order to demonstrate their full potential in formal GCSE or Functional Skills qualifications at the end of year 11. Where appropriate, students will also have the opportunity to study English Literature leading to GCSE examination.

### Reading

At The Lion Works School it is our intent that we enable all our students to foster a love of reading for life and utilise their reading skills to support their everyday lives as they move into adulthood. We use a range of approaches to ensure that students can achieve the necessary confidence in reading to achieve their future goals. In order to recognise progress and achievement in reading, this area of learning is celebrated in weekly assemblies through a Headteacher Award for reading.

### Mathematics

At the Lion Works School we believe that Mathematics is a tool for everyday life and is taught using a range of methods including contextual based learning. It is a whole network of concepts and relationships which provide a way of viewing and making sense of the world. It is used to analyse and communicate information and ideas and to tackle a range of practical tasks and real-life problems. Mathematics develops students' abilities to calculate; to reason logically, algebraically and geometrically; to solve problems; and to handle data. Mathematics is important in many other areas of study, particularly Science and Technology. It is also important in everyday living, in many forms of employment and in public decision-making.

As a subject in its own right, Mathematics presents opportunities for creativity and can stimulate moments of pleasure and wonder when a problem is solved for the first time, especially when learners have had to work hard for the solution. It enables students to build a secure framework or mathematical reasoning, which they can use and apply with confidence. The subject transcends cultural boundaries and its importance is universally recognised. In KS3, students will study the Maths Mastery curriculum. At KS4, students will develop their skills and knowledge in order to demonstrate their full potential in formal GCSE or Functional Skills qualifications at the end of Year 11.

### Science

The Science curriculum at TLWS stimulates a love of learning and excites students' curiosity about phenomena and events in the world. Through science, students understand how major scientific ideas contribute to technological change – impacting on industry, business and medicine and improving the quality of life. The course is designed to give students life skills and knowledge of the world around them, helping them become able to discern fact from fiction in their lives after school.

All students are taught science throughout KS3 and KS4 with the aim of leaving school with either a GCSE or BTEC qualification in the subject. Students are encouraged to think independently and draw their own conclusions in lessons. This can be as varied as calculating information from a data set,

designing their own experiment to prove or disprove a hypothesis or exploring and evaluating a crime scene using previously acquired skills.

### PSHE

Personal, social and health education is fundamental for children and young people with SEND in understanding life as well as developing life skills and appropriate behaviour patterns. The aim of PSHE at The Lion Works School is to teach skills that are necessary for independent living, diverse social experiences alongside a healthy and safe lifestyle. It enables students the chance to develop confidence, self-respect and to establish effective relationships with others. It provides them with the opportunity to develop an understanding of what is right or wrong and why. It also allows them to experience and respond to cultural and religious events and encourages students to celebrate differences.

Students are encouraged to apply their PSHE skills across all areas of the school and curriculum. Our PSHE programme fully reflects our school's ethos and aims and encourages respect for other people, in line with the Equality Act of 2010.

RSE addresses the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

### Physical Education / Outdoor Education

Physical Education occupies an important part of the Curriculum at The Lion Works School. Substantial time is allocated within the timetable to accommodate the various aspects and activities which make up our PE curriculum. The Lion Works School follows the National Curriculum statutory requirements for Physical Education, though there are constraints imposed by virtue of school size, gender ratios, resourcing and specialist facilities. The Lion Works School makes every attempt to surmount difficulties caused by such issues.

### Religious Education

Religious Education is not taught as a discrete subject but is woven in through assemblies, PHSE and across the curriculum. Students are taught about a range of religions and belief systems to foster mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

### Art

The Art curriculum builds a sense of curiosity within the world of art and design to engage and challenge students. Students are introduced to a wide variety of 2D and 3D materials during the first three years of school including cardboard construction, lino printing and mixed media. Students learn to record their ideas and experiences in a working sketchbook where they can develop their own unique style.

Art is delivered to all Key Stage 3 students until Year 9. The Curriculum is designed to build a student's ability to navigate their own creative journey. Projects cover a wide range of topics which encompass key British values such as different cultures/countries, war and poverty, diversity and politics. We explore a variety of artists and makers, historical and contemporary and delve into aspects of art and design history. Each project allows freedom of interpretation for each student to encourage independence and confidence. In Key Stage 4, students learn how to navigate an art project more independently, working with a shared focus point such as 'Animals' and choosing their own artists and designers to help them make informed decisions about their work. We build skills to



develop critical understanding through analytical activities, develop and refine ideas and skills formed from Key Stage 3 and finally, develop creative, imaginative and intuitive capabilities. Students are able to access both GCSE and BTEC based on their individual strengths and preference.

### History

The fundamental purpose of the history curriculum is to empower students with the confidence to question the world around them, guided by an understanding of past events and concepts and how they have shaped our current societies.

At KS3 history is taught in line with the National Curriculum guidelines covering a variety of time periods and topics from the Neolithic age to World War Two. Students discover the impacts of changes in society over time and have the opportunity to attend a range of trips and visits to enhance their knowledge of these periods and events.

At KS4 students can study GCSE history via the AQA syllabus and the units offered are: Britain: migration, empires and people, Russia 1894-1945, Norman England 1066 – 1100 and Conflict and tension in the Gulf and Afghanistan 1990 – 2009. These carefully chosen units offer a range of historical overviews from the Norman to modern period and the course includes a range of engaging trips and visits to complement the syllabus.

### Careers Education

At The Lion Works School we follow the best practice guidance of The Gatsby Benchmarks. Students are currently offered a careers-based programme of study within Tutor time and PHSE to learn more about skill sets, application processes and interview skills, along with labour market information. Our curriculum endeavours to make links to job sectors within our long-term planning and there is available information accessible throughout the school on display boards and in our Careers Hub which is located within our library.

Students are invited to a variety of trips to experience Open Days at local colleges and universities and Volunteer fairs to experience a variety of pathways Post-16. We have a work experience programme in for our KS4 students, with an aim that our young learners can experience suitable work places for each individual's interests and needs. All our students are offered personal advice and guidance by external careers counsellors (SAMEE project) during the year and each student has their own action plan provided for them. All learning is stored within their ever-growing Careers Education folders. We also provide an exciting annual Careers Day where students are able to experience visiting professionals and inspirational speakers.

As a school we want to support each child with their individual pathways Post-16 and aim to build understanding, confidence and reassurance to each of our students to develop their skills for life as they prepare for adulthood.

### Enrichment

Our curriculum provides numerous curriculum-linked enrichment opportunities which brings learning to life, makes learning enjoyable and relevant, and supports students to have agency over decision making. These include the use of our KS3 Excellence Afternoons, local community trips, theatre visits, outdoor learning including Duke of Edinburgh.

Outdoor learning forms a significant part of our curriculum, with all pupils in Key stage 3 attending weekly sessions, engaging in a diverse programme of creative and adventurous activities, including bushcraft and survival. In Key stage 4 pupils have a the opportunity for session of outdoor learning

each week, to support their preparation for the Duke of Edinburgh Award, with an expedition planned annually.

We also use all opportunities to optimise and acknowledge incidental learning opportunities throughout the school day; tutor time, lessons, lunch, clubs and social times.

These are good examples of our curriculum following Ofsted's inspection framework emphasising the importance of “personal development and extending the curriculum beyond academic achievement”.

Digital Literacy / Technological Skills

The use of technology is continually increasing and developing in every area of society, and this is only going to continue as our students move through the school and into adulthood. We aim to develop student’s digital capabilities and ensure that they are given opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills needed for life, learning and work, in our ever-changing technological society.

Digital literacy is described as the ability to produce clear information through various forms of communication on a digital platform. Being digitally literate means that students will be able to do more than just use technology. They will be able to use their digital skills safely to support and develop their learning throughout the curriculum. These skills are developed across all subjects using a range of digital tools and applications, developing a set of basic skills which include the use and production of digital media, information processing and retrieval, participation in social networks for creation and sharing of knowledge, and a wide range of professional computing skills.

**Accreditation**

Students will have the opportunity to study GCSEs, Functional Skills and BTECs in the following subjects:

<b>GCSE (Grades 1-9)</b>	<b>Functional Skills</b>	<b>BTEC (Levels 1 &amp; 2)</b>
English Literature	English (Entry, Level 1, Level 2)	Applied Science
English Language	Maths (Entry, Level 1, Level 2)	Art and Design
Mathematics		Esports
History		Home Cooking
Combined Science		Digital Media
Art and Design		Creative Media Production
		Vocational Skills
		Child Development

## **The 'Hidden Curriculum'**

The hidden curriculum includes the unspoken or implicit academic, social, and cultural messages that are communicated to students across the school day. Most neuro-typical people pick up on the hidden curriculum automatically. People on the autism spectrum generally do not. It is defined as 'the unwritten rules or guidelines in relation to attitudes, beliefs, terminology, behaviour and social interaction/ situations which are often not directly taught but are considered to be known and universally understood'. (Smith-Myles, B, Trautma, ML and Schelvan, RL 2013).

The goal of teaching this concept is for students to decipher the hidden rules which will help them learn to understand the behavioural expectations for a situation. Without this, the world can be a confusing place and cause people who are not neurologically wired to automatically "get it" feel isolated and "out of it".

## **Social Cognition**

All staff have been trained in the use and benefits of the principles of social cognition practical strategies that can be used to support students to develop their social understanding, such as Social Thinking and Zones of Regulation. These approaches focus on teaching students how to think in social situations, through observing, thinking about and recognising their own and others thoughts and feelings, and learning the connection between thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The Lion Works School will aim to always recognise, acknowledge and promote positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes for all our students and staff. This value will be demonstrated throughout our school's culture, curriculum and ethos. This practice will endeavour to effectively prepare and equip all of our students to be active citizens within their communities and live their lives with meaning and purpose and a strong sense of belonging.

We are all trained and aware that our neurodiverse students are disproportionately vulnerable to mental health and wellbeing concerns. As such, we need to help and support them to build their resilience and emotional wellbeing whilst being provided with a safe, nurturing environment and a range of trusted adults in school with whom to build positive relationships built on unconditional positive regard.

The school offers a range of targeted support based on planned and unplanned interventions which support their mental health and wellbeing of our students and equip them with a range of strategies that they can draw on in preparation for adulthood.

## **Removing Barriers to Learning**

We recognise the needs of our students and the barriers to learning which might be presented by their autism and other comorbid conditions. Our learning environment and our curriculum is therefore designed to be inclusive in nature. Learning spaces are designed to be welcoming and support the individual child and effective work with small group learning. Other areas have been created as break out spaces, for example the mindfulness room, which helps students regulate their emotions and therefore re-integrate more quickly / readily back into learning within their classes. These spaces are also used proactively to work with pupils on a 1:1 basis with their mentors and at other times when appropriate.

## **The Protected Characteristics**

In the 2010 Equality Act, the government set out nine areas in which people can be expected to be protected from discrimination. These are known as the 'Protected Characteristics' and are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

It is our intention to develop in our pupils a sense of respect and tolerance towards those who demonstrate a protected characteristic. The anti-bullying policy identifies a commitment to eliminating bullying in relation to a protected characteristic.

## **Fundamental British Values**

We ensure that any curriculum resources used do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## **Links to Other Policies**

Assessment Policy

SMSC Policy

Special Educational Needs an Inclusion Policy