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1.0 Introduction

This policy outlines Options Autism’s aims to ensure effective & consistent practice throughout the school that maximises learning opportunities and achievement through the highest quality teaching for every student at Higford.

Implementation: It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that staff members are aware of and understand this policy and any subsequent revisions.

Compliance: This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed in the *Compliance with Regulations & Legislation Statement*.

2.0 Aims of our Practice

1. To fulfil Options Autism’s Values & the aims of Every Child Matters to ensure we support the development of Young People who are:
 - Happy & Confident, with a Positive Self-esteem
 - Able to Learn Independently & Cooperatively
 - Independent & Sociable
 - Able to Communicate their Feelings, Wishes & Needs
 - Able to Make Choices, Manage their own Behaviour & Enjoy Life
2. To facilitate individual progress and attainment for all our students, through effective understanding of their needs as a learner with autism and complex needs and the effective implementation of appropriate curriculum, teaching strategies and assessment tools
3. To increase students’ adaptive functioning: their everyday functioning and skills in the areas of social communication, play and imagination, and in their ability to learn.
4. To prepare each student for a meaningful and purposeful transition to life as an adult.

- To ensure accurate formative and summative reporting to parents, carers, Local Authorities, Government agencies, and additional significant others as required.

3.0 Education, Health and Care Plans- “The Golden Thread”

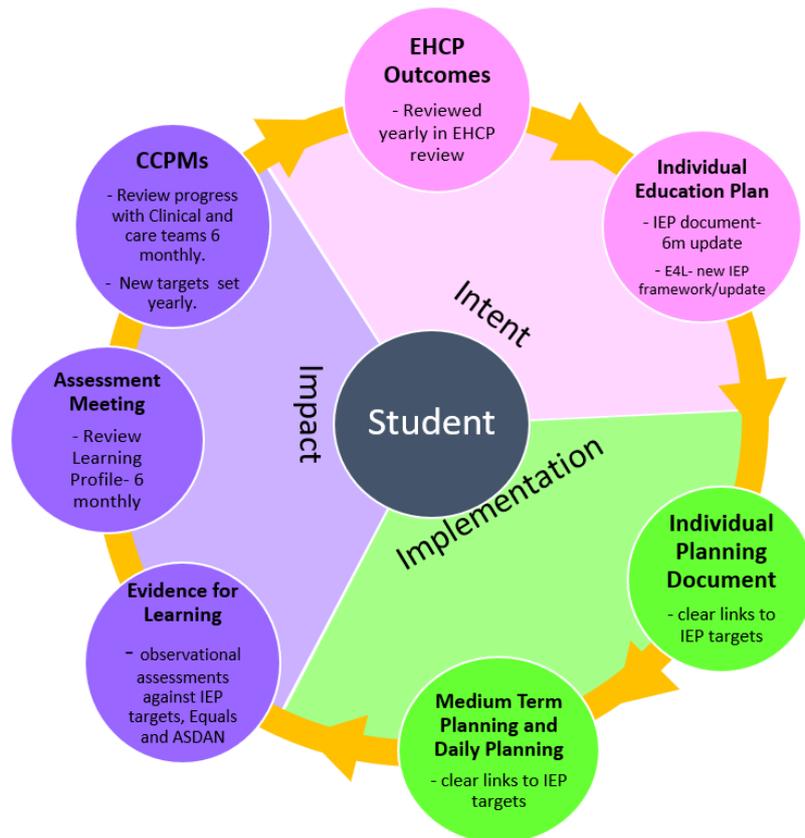
Each student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which sets out long term outcomes within five areas:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and Physical
- Independence- Although only statutory from Year 9, by the end of the 2021/22 academic year, all students have an independence target which supports them in Preparing for Adulthood.

These EHCP outcomes form the golden thread of each student’s individual curriculum provision, lesson planning and assessment, and impact on every aspect of each students’ education.

Yearly targets are written from the EHCP outcomes and are directly linked into medium term and daily planning as well as formative and summative assessment tools.

Each students’ curriculum and assessment links back to their EHCP outcomes and yearly education targets. The process that this takes is shown below.



4.0 Curriculum Intent

Options Higford Curriculum and Assessment Pathway 2021-2022		
	Curriculum Intent	Impact Assessment Tools
KS2 and 3	<p>Thematic curriculum underpinned by Equals Semi-formal SLD curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My communication - My play and leisure - My physical well-being - My Outdoor School - My music - My dance - My art - My drama - My independence - My citizenship - The world about me - My literature - My thinking and problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP- 6 monthly update against targets and MAPP. New targets written each year in line with EHCP review. • Evidence for learning app- continuous. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IEP targets - Equals semi-formal curriculum. • B2 termly update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement steps/ progression steps- all students to start on engagement steps.
KS4	<p>ASDAN Focus curriculum programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication - Numeracy - Horticulture - Independent living - Meal preparation and cooking - Money - Using computer technology - Using leisure time - Using transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP- 6 monthly update against targets and MAPP. New targets written each year in line with EHCP review • Evidence for learning app- continuous. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IEP targets - ASDAN Focus modules • ASDAN Focus portfolio. • B2 termly update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement steps/ progression steps- all students to start on engagement steps.
Post 16	<p>ASDAN Personal Progress and Personal and Social Development qualifications.</p> <p>Thematic curriculum underpinned by the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-help skills - Functional literacy and numeracy - Social skills - Community access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP- termly update against targets and MAPP. New targets written each year in line with EHCP review. • Evidence for learning app- continuous. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASDAN PP/PSD Units - IEP targets • ASDAN Personal Progress and Personal and Social Development portfolios. • B2 termly update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement steps/ progression steps- all students to start on engagement steps.

The school is split into three areas by age, each with a different curriculum which builds on the previous one. These curriculums all support the development of communication, functional literacy and numeracy, problem solving, awareness of the community and world around them as well as social skills and citizenship.

Each student's personalised planning places an emphasis on addressing the core characteristics and challenges associated with autism by offering a comprehensive educational programme via their personalised timetable designed to promote social communication, language, literacy, problem-solving and self-management of behaviour and emotions.

We use evidence-based practice to identify the unique needs, difficulties and learning skills of each student, then provide personalised learning experiences that:

- are appropriately challenging and enjoyable in varied environments
- utilise approaches, programmes and plans based on evidence of their progress and learning outcomes
- include opportunities for students to be involved in making choices and decisions

- have a predominantly thematic focus
- include planned opportunities to generalise skills, knowledge and understanding to natural situations and settings (including the family home, care-setting and the community)
- prepare for adulthood and a life that is as independent and fulfilled as possible
- is broken into small steps and provides frequent opportunities to repeat and practice skills
- has an emphasis on experiential and sensory learning,

The implicit curriculum includes all routines of the school day such as transition time, lunchtime, snack time, leisure time etc. These occasions are regarded as an integral part of the curriculum for students with autism and complex needs. Each class has access to a weekly onsite forest school session which supports the development of appropriate risk taking, social skills and sensory exploration. Students also regularly take part in activities in the local community, including shopping, library, swimming, horse riding and café experience. Links with local businesses will be established to support work experiences when applicable.

5.0 Curriculum content

At Options Higford we work with a diverse range of students with challenging and complex needs. We use a semi-formal curriculum to meet their needs across all key stages. This curriculum focusses on the development in the areas of functional literacy and numeracy, community access, social skills, personal development, independence and outdoor learning. Ensuring our students make progress holistically is at the heart of our curriculum to ensure they achieve their potential.

Areas of Higford curriculum	NC Subjects	Key stages 2 and 3- Equals semi-formal curriculum	Key stage 4 ASDAN Focus	Post 16- ASDAN Personal Progress	Post 16- ASDAN PSD
Literacy and communication	English Languages	My Communication My literature	Communication	Developing communication skills. Developing reading skills. Developing writing skills. Having your say.	Working towards goals Dealing with problems in daily life. Working as part of a group. Developing self. Managing social relationships.
Maths	Maths	My thinking and problem solving	Numeracy Money	Developing number skills. Position. Shape Measure. Sequencing and sorting. Understanding what money is used for.	Managing own money
Sport and leisure	Physical Education	My physical well-being	Using leisure time	Being Healthy. Participating in sporting activities.	Healthy Living Making the most of leisure time

Community access	PSHE/ citizenship Physical Education Geography History	My play and leisure My independence PSHE/ citizenship The world about me	Money Using transport	Getting out and about. Travel within the community- going places.	Community action Managing own money.
Forest School	Science Geography PSHE/ Citizenship	My Outdoor School The world about me	Horticulture	Getting on with other people	Environmental awareness
Horticulture	Science Geography	My Outdoor School	Horticulture	Growing and caring for plants.	Environmental awareness
Independence and life skills	PSHE/ Citizenship Maths (cooking)	My Independence	Independent living Meal preparation and cooking Money	Looking after your own home. Personal Presentation. Preparing drinks and snacks.	Preparation for work Managing own money Individual rights and responsibilities. Personal safety in the home and community.
Creativity	Music Design Technology Art and design	My creativity (music, dance, art, drama)		Engaging in new creative activities.	
PSHE/ SRE	PSHE/ citizenship History (personal history)	My citizenship My independence The world about me.	Independent living	Developing self- awareness: all about me.	Healthy Living Working as part of a group. Developing self. Managing social relationships.
Computing	Computing	My thinking and problem solving	Using computer technology	Developing ICT skills.	Using technology in the home and community.
Religious studies and culture. These sessions are embedded into the other curriculum areas as opposed to being standalone sessions.	RE	The world about me			

6.0 Curriculum areas

Literacy and communication

Literacy and communication are taught across all key stages in a functional and meaningful way. We aim to develop each student's communication skills so that they can communicate their needs, wants, views and feelings in the most meaningful and appropriate way for them.

Literacy and communication are taught through standalone and thematic literacy lessons as well as embedded through all aspects of the students' day. All students have a communication profile, written by the onsite Speech and Language Therapist, in liaison with the key staff members and family. This document is used to ensure that communication strategies are appropriate and relevant targets are set and followed.

Literacy lessons are planned, primarily in a thematic way, to develop communication skills, including reading and writing where appropriate as well as develop a passion for reading and books. The content of the books covered is wide ranging and includes a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts over the year. The texts used in lessons, and available in the library, include a wide range of characters including those of different ethnicities, disabilities, genders, religions and sexualities. There are books available that represent all of our students in the school. These texts also challenge typical stereotypes, discuss emotions and promote the British values of rule of law, democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs.

Our students are supported by a range of communication strategies, as set out in their Communication Profile, which may include the use of visual support tools, high and low tech augmentative and alternative communication, photos/symbols/ object of reference, written support tools and Makaton.

Separate to literacy lessons, all students also take part in daily phonics and reading sessions. The students are all at different stages of their phonic awareness and this is recorded on a whole school document. We initially ensure all students have developed the foundations of speaking and listening skills through the use of Letters and Sounds phase 1 resources. This stage will support students in attuning with the sounds around them and readies them to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills. Once students have developed these skills they work through the Read, Write, Inc programme of phonics. Some of our students then progress onto reading for pleasure. These students are supported by reading champions who have received 'Better Reading Support Partner' training.

Maths

Maths is taught as a standalone lesson for all students. The aim is to develop the mathematical skills and awareness of all students to benefit them, functionally, for lifelong independence where possible. The areas covered in maths are set out in the yearly planning overview document to ensure the breadth of coverage across the academic year. The areas covered include:

- Number and place value
- Addition and subtraction
- Multiplication and division
- Handling data
- Shape
- Fractions

- Problem solving
- Position and direction
- Time
- Capacity and weight
- Money
- Length

Maths lessons are taught in hands on, practical sessions where possible and class-based learning is transferred to real life experiences where applicable. Sessions such as cooking are utilised to teach mathematical concepts such as capacity and weight. Offsite visits also support the development of knowledge of maths concepts including the use of money in real life contexts.

Sport and leisure

All of the students at Higford engage in a wide range of physical activity interspersed throughout their curriculum to aid regulation. This is suggested in each students' individual sensory motor profile where it is relevant. These physical activities are benefited by onsite facilities including trampoline, indoor and outdoor gym equipment, indoor and outdoor waterplay, play equipment and onsite bikes and scooters. Options Higford also utilises its rural location and the students take part in regular walks in the local environment.

Formal PE sessions are focussed on a number of areas that develop gross motor skills in a variety of areas. These include:

- Sports- invasion games; net and field games; striking and fielding
- Athletics and basic movement
- Outdoor and adventurous activities
- Fitness
- Gymnastics and movement including dance and yoga
- Swimming and aquatic sports.

Community access

All students at Options Higford have regular access to offsite and community access in the most appropriate way for them. Our aim is for all students to be able to live the most independent lives possible where they can access a range of facilities and be able to make contributions to their community.

When students start at Higford these community visits are built upon gradually in line with individual needs. Although not prescriptive these visits usually start as walks onsite and then the local area before short car rides in the local area. These extend over a relevant time frame and appropriateness for each student to accessing a range of facilities including local parks, shops, including supermarkets, clothes shops and post offices as well as leisure facilities, swimming pools, horse riding, public transport and cafes and restaurants.

Community access supports the students in developing independence e.g. following a shopping list when in a supermarket, using public transport, understanding and using money as well as developing the ability to communicate with members of the public and regulate their emotions, both through co and self-regulation, away from their secure environments.

Outdoor learning

All students at Options Higford have access to weekly Forest School sessions run by Level 3 Forest School leaders. These sessions take place onsite at one of our two Forest School sites throughout the year.

Forest School sessions support students in developing an appreciation and awareness of the natural world whilst also developing tolerance of and shared working with peers.

Students also take part in weekly horticulture sessions where they take part in growing and caring for a range of plants. There is a horticulture pod onsite that acts as a greenhouse as well as a selection of planters across site.

Independence and life skills

Students access a curriculum that develops skills for lifelong independence. These are embedded throughout the whole school day within lessons and also through transitional times such as snack and lunchtime. The skills supported include developing interactions with peers, preparing drinks and snacks, cleaning and personal hygiene.

Creativity

Students creativity is supported throughout the curriculum within all subjects. Dance, drama, art and music are all planned for over the term and embedded within the thematic planning.

All lessons are made fun, hands on and incorporating a range of creative sensory resources where possible to support engagement in sessions. Students' sensory profiles are taken into account when these sessions are planned.

PSHE/ SRE

The PSHE/ SRE curriculum supports students in developing emotional awareness of self and others, develop and build on relationships with others as well as an understanding of their body and how to care for it. There are six 'modules' covered over the year including:

- Body awareness
- Hygiene- self and home
- Relationships
- Knowing yourself/ others
- Health
- Sex (only taught when relevant).

The PSHE/ SRE curriculum is taught to all students at an appropriate developmental level and all individual needs are considered. The statutory requirements from the Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (2020) are considered throughout and all lessons are taught in an inclusive way that is non-discriminatory against any protected characteristics.

Computing

Computing is taught to all students at an appropriate level. The areas taught are:

- Knowing the computer
- Technology in the world
- Digital content
- Photography and editing
- Computer science and programming

- E-safety.

Religious studies and culture.

Religious studies are embedded into the other curriculum areas as opposed to being standalone sessions on the timetable. Religious studies are also sometimes covered through focus days over the year that arise as part of the calendar e.g. religious festivals. At Options Higford we also ensure all students' religious views are supported and celebrate these across school to support all students mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths.

Students' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development is supported throughout the curriculum and through staff instilling appropriate values in all of their interactions and support of students.

To develop spiritual awareness students are supported to develop a sense of self and explore their own views and beliefs as well as respect others views. This may be through choice making, taking turns or listening to others.

At Options Higford we support students to develop their moral awareness through assisting them in understanding what is right or wrong and the consequences of their actions as they arise. We use a non-sanction-based approach to behaviour and this is followed by all staff as discussed in the Positive Behaviour Support Policy.

Social development is embedded in the whole daytime routine of all students. Each class has a shared registration and circle time each day as well as other opportunities throughout the day for development of social skills including shared lessons and meal times as well as assemblies, Forest School and play times. These shared activities support students in developing their fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of others.

Students awareness of their own and others' cultures are supported through all aspects of the curriculum. At Options Higford we are proud of our multicultural community and ensure all are treated with respect. We ensure all students feel included, regardless of their cultural background and ensure that learning resources represent all students and cultures. Cultural events are celebrated as a school through events run over the year.

7.0 Implementation (Planning practise)

Each student has a termly planning overview which links their individual education targets to the termly topic. This planning sheet goes into specific detail about the curriculum areas and how the individual targets can be implemented through these.

Teachers will then put together a class medium term plan using the information from the individual termly planning overviews. This sets out the activities that will take place each week in each curriculum area and includes learning objectives, activities, links to ASDAN modules and individual targets.

Daily plans are written which set out the learning objectives, activities, resources needed and specific assessment tools to be used each day. These documents are accessible to all class staff to encourage sharing of targets, responsibilities and assessment input.

Medium Term Plans are collected and audited by the subject leads at the beginning of each half term.