



Curriculum Policy

Amended by	Richard Keightley	Date: February 2025
Approved by:	Catherine Beard	
Last reviewed on:	Updated February 2025 to reflect current practices. August 2023	
Next review due by:	January 2026 (or if further guidance changes)	

Our Vision

To provide individualised education and care that inspires young people to recognise their skills, believe in themselves and develop their character, therefore ensuring that they have every opportunity for a secure and positive future.

General Approach

This policy outlines our approach to the education of young people in Key Stage 4 and above. We integrate therapy, care, and education to ensure each young person has a unique and personal experience. Many of our students have experienced trauma and have been out of education for extended periods, making transition a critical time. We ensure smooth integration by allowing time for adjustment and familiarization.

We operate a therapeutic approach to learning and behaviour, using punitive measures as a last resort. Every lesson and every day is a fresh start. Students are expected to be respectful and have a positive attitude towards learning. Merit points are awarded for exceptional behaviours and attitudes, with termly certificates (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum) and annual awards from the Headteacher. Attendance is monitored, and students with 97% or above are entered into a draw for an experience prize.

Facilities

Classrooms and ICT: Six classrooms, an ICT suite, and a practical room for design technology and art. A laptop trolley is available for ICT access in all lessons.

Library: A small, well-stocked library with student input on book selection, also used as a separate learning space.

Vocational Studies: Taught at Oakdene in a purpose-built garage/workshop.

Dining Area: Used for Food Tech, lunches, and daily meetings.

Outdoor Facilities: Grassed area and basketball court for various games.

Physical Education: Classes at a nearby sports center and local pitches, with participation in the Sussex & Surrey Special Sports Association.

School Day and Structure

Timetable: The school day runs from 09:00 to 15:30, with six 50-minute sessions. There are five teaching groups based on year groups.

Autonomy: Students can take 'time out' in quiet chairs, with an expectation to return within five minutes.

Academic Year: Follows the West Sussex calendar with a two-week October half term and five INSET days.

Work Experience

Supporting the careers program, and with consideration to the Gatsby Benchmarks, when conditions are met, work experience is offered at Key Stage 4 or 5 on an individual basis coordinated by the Deputy Headteacher supported by EBP South [EBP South Work Experience](#).

Quality of Education

CURRICULUM INTENT

- In collaboration with the headteacher, subject teachers have designed a curriculum that is ambitious for all young people, regardless of their past and present circumstance.
- All young people are challenged to achieve and given the opportunity to access formal qualifications.
- To ensure all students can access the learning, recall what they have been taught and make links across the curriculum, the content knowledge and skills are planned and sequenced coherently.
- The curriculum is carefully designed to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people in their next stage of learning, whether that is within this organisation or an alternative provision.
- Every young person has access to a broad and balanced curriculum, this includes opportunities to develop their cultural awareness and embed British values in all aspects of their daily life.

Key Stage 4

- At Key Stage 4 all young people follow a broad and balanced curriculum that includes the core subjects of English, Maths and Science, the Humanities, and Art. All can be studied to GCSE if appropriate to the learner.
- In addition, the curriculum is designed to be dynamic to support the transient nature of our young people so that regardless of their admission or leaving date, they have the best possible opportunities to succeed.
- Other qualifications are also offered (Vocational courses and functional skills) so that all learners can succeed commensurate with their learning style and motivations. These cover topics such as DT, Further Learning and Employment, Independence, and ICT.
- A two-year study plan at Key Stage 4 allows the curriculum to meet the demands of the qualifications and the individual needs of our young people.
- The curriculum is designed to ensure that concepts, skills, and content can be revisited and reviewed, then with diagnostic testing to ensure all young people can master each subject.

Key Stage 5

- The curriculum is organised and planned in such a way as to provide the greatest flexibility for young people in terms of the combination of college placement and school-based curriculum subjects (including GCSE / Vocational additions)
- We can support a broad range of courses (on and off site) to ensure our young people are able to pursue both their interests and future aspirations.
- Opportunities are designed to support the young person's personal development, employability and ability to learn. In addition, those who have not met the academic requirements at Key Stage 4 can re-visit core GCSE's.
- We work with the care team to prepare young people for their next steps as they transition away from the Apple Orchard community.
- Full time A Level programmes can also be offered for those seeking either University or degree apprenticeships post 18.

Enrichment activities are included as an integral part of our curriculum offer, providing young people with opportunities to learn new skills and broaden their life experiences away from the school environment.

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Critical to the implementation of our curriculum intent are:

- Skilled and knowledgeable teachers
- Effective whole school leadership
- Clear priorities and expectations across the whole school

Skilled and knowledgeable teachers

Key to effective curriculum implementation is the subject, pedagogical and pedagogical subject knowledge of our teachers. Therefore:

- We proactively seek to appoint the best teachers we can and attempt to ensure we have subject specialists for all core areas.
- We seek to retain teaching staff through a commitment to their wellbeing, their voice and CPD.
- We commit time through the CPD program to allow all staff to develop their expertise.
- We actively encourage personal development and give time for this.

Effective Leadership

Critical to the effective implementation of the curriculum is the leadership across the school and the implementation of the whole school priorities.

- Subject teachers design the lessons and the sequence of lessons to ensure best outcomes for young people.
- All subject areas have comprehensive schemes of work, assessment maps and curriculum plans.
- All subject areas follow the school's assessment and feedback policy, adapting to meet their needs when necessary.
- SLT regularly scrutinises the curriculum intent and implementation in all subject areas.

- There is a clear and distinct focus on engagement in all lessons.
- There are clear and manageable expectations regarding feedback and assessment, clearly set out in the assessment policy and the marking and feedback policy.
- All young people at Apple Orchard are vulnerable, most have had periods of absence from education, therefore all are considered priority.
- We believe that good teaching and learning is at the heart of meeting the needs of all learners.
- Where young people have specific learning needs, we ensure that we teach in way that is adaptive, inclusive and fair.
- We use SNAP, PIRA and PUMA assessments to inform the development of successful strategies across the school so that we understand the entry point and can measure progress and success against this.

CURRICULUM IMPACT

Young people will achieve a full range of qualifications through formal examination, will develop their personal strengths, skills and qualities through vocational opportunities and enrichment and will leave ready for their next step whether that be continued secondary education, further education, apprenticeship, or employment.

All young people will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of their future options post Apple Orchard School.
- Be in a position to become responsible and reliable future employees.
- Have a greater sense of confidence in their ability and an understanding of areas they need to develop.
- Develop employability skills.
- Develop appropriate subject knowledge (academic and vocational) so that they may flourish, reach, and exceed their academic / vocational potential by embedding key strengths, skills, and qualities.
- Read fluently.
- Write in a style to communicate effectively to a range of audiences using correct spelling and grammar.
- Communicate (speaking and listening) confidently and clearly to a range of audiences and purposes.
- Develop self-worth, confidence, and pride.
- Through half termly cultural awareness days, develop an understanding of the society we live in and a tolerance for other religious groups.

In addition:

Key Stage 4

- All young people gain qualifications in 5 core subjects – Maths, English Language, Science, (Combined for those completing GCSE) ICT and PE – this is either at GCSE or Functional Skill Level.

- All young people gain further qualifications (Entry Level to Level 2) in History, Geography, and Art
- All young people achieve in vocational subjects such as DT and Work-Related Learning. Certificates are awarded from portfolio completion.
- Music is offered with 1:1 tuition and also explored during cultural lessons.
- MFL is not taught explicitly but opportunities are sought within cultural lessons.

Key Stage 5

- In conjunction with our local FE partners some young people (those with GCSE grades at 3 or below) complete re-sits in GCSE English Language and Maths
- Those young people achieving grade 4+ (English and Maths), complete GCSE English Literature and a certificated financial literacy (independence) course.
- A Levels are also available (Physics, Maths, Geography) for those wanting a FT Level 3 programme of study.
- All Young people develop their independence skills to support future endeavours by achieving short (certificated) courses in:

Core

- Foodwise (Food preparation and Cooking)
- Roadwise (preparation for driving)
- Sport and Fitness
- Land Based (Gardening or Animal Care)

Optional

- Leadership
- Environmental (in conjunction with the wildlife trust)
- Work Right (transferrable employability skills)

What additional support is available for children struggling with their mental health?

The school continues to offer full welfare support for all students. This continues to be signposted to the care community and parents via regular communication and includes relevant online links to mental health and wellbeing support.