



Outcomes
First Group

Curriculum Policy

The Tower School

CURRICULUM POLICY

To be read in conjunction with:

- Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) Policy
- British Values Policy
- Inclusion and SEN Policy
- Marking, Feedback and Assessment Policy

CONTENTS	PAGE
1.0 PHILOSOPHY & ETHOS	3
2.0 CURRICULUM INTENT	3-5
3.0 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION	5-6
4.0 CURRICULUM IMPACT	6
5.0 TEACHING & LEARNING	6
6.0 CURRICULUM PLANNING	6-9
7.0 EDUCATION – KEY STAGES & PATHWAYS.....	9-10
8.0 GENERAL	10-11

1.0 PHILOSOPHY AND ETHOS

At The Tower School, we believe that autistic young people deserve an exceptional education that recognises, values and develops their individual strengths. Our vision is underpinned by our company's ethos of *Ask, Accept, Develop*. We ask our pupils how they learn best and how they would like to be supported; we accept, celebrate and embrace neurodiversity; and we support every pupil to develop into confident, independent and employable young adults.

We are committed to providing a consistently high-quality education that enables every pupil to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. Our curriculum is designed to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, qualifications and personal attributes needed to participate meaningfully in society and achieve positive outcomes beyond school. Through personalised learning, therapeutic support, strong relationships and an autism-informed approach, we create an environment in which pupils feel safe, understood and empowered to succeed.

Our practice is further underpinned by the principles of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) and Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP). We recognise that pupils learn most effectively when they feel emotionally and physically safe, understood and connected to trusted adults. Through relational approaches, curiosity-driven support and a commitment to understanding the experiences and needs underlying behaviour, we foster a culture of belonging, regulation, self-advocacy and positive engagement in learning.

We recognise that every pupil's journey is unique. By providing appropriate support, reasonable adjustments and meaningful opportunities for challenge, we enable pupils to build upon their strengths, develop resilience, confidence and self-understanding, and make sustained progress towards their personal aspirations, EHCP outcomes and Preparation for Adulthood goals.

As such, our curriculum is built around three core aims: Positive Identity, Independence and Employability.

Positive Identity

We support pupils to develop a strong sense of self, self-belief and self-worth. Through a strengths-based and neuro-affirming approach, pupils are encouraged to understand and value their individuality, develop confidence in their abilities and become effective self-advocates.

Independence

We equip pupils with the academic, social, communication and life skills needed to navigate adulthood as independently as possible. Through a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, pupils develop the knowledge, confidence and practical skills required to participate successfully within their communities and make informed decisions about their futures.

Employability

We prepare pupils for adulthood by developing the skills, mindset and qualifications required for further education, training and employment. Employability is embedded throughout the curriculum alongside opportunities to develop communication, problem-solving, independent living and work-related skills. Through meaningful Preparation for Adulthood experiences, pupils are supported to identify their aspirations, explore future pathways and develop the confidence and competencies needed to achieve positive destinations beyond school.

2.0 CURRICULUM INTENT

The Tower School curriculum provides pupils with a broad, balanced and ambitious programme of learning that supports academic achievement, personal development and successful preparation for adulthood. The

curriculum is designed to enable pupils to acquire the knowledge, skills, qualifications and experiences needed to progress towards positive and purposeful destinations beyond school.

The curriculum promotes learning across academic, vocational, creative, physical and personal development experiences. Pupils are supported to develop literacy, numeracy, communication, digital literacy, creativity, independence, social understanding and emotional wellbeing through a range of carefully planned learning experiences.

Learning pathways are personalised to reflect pupils' strengths, interests, aspirations, EHCP outcomes and readiness for accreditation. As pupils progress through the school, they are provided with opportunities to access a range of qualifications including Entry Level Certificates, Functional Skills, GCSEs, vocational qualifications and project-based learning pathways, ensuring that accreditation is both meaningful and appropriately challenging.

Through the curriculum, we aim to ensure pupils:

- can communicate effectively and confidently in a range of contexts;
- develop secure literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills;
- acquire knowledge and understanding across a broad range of subjects;
- become increasingly independent in their learning and daily lives;
- develop self-advocacy, resilience and decision-making skills;
- engage positively with their local community and wider society;
- access meaningful careers education, work-related learning and preparation for adulthood opportunities;
- gain relevant qualifications and recognised achievements;
- develop healthy lifestyles and positive wellbeing;
- demonstrate respect, tolerance and understanding of others;
- build on their social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding; and
- leave The Tower School prepared for their next stage of education, employment or adult life.

Curriculum Design Principles

To achieve these aims, the curriculum is:

- **Broad and Balanced:** providing academic, vocational, creative, physical and personal development opportunities which allow pupils to discover strengths, develop interests and experience success.
- **Personalised and Adaptable:** responding to individual learning profiles, interests, aspirations and EHCP outcomes while maintaining high expectations for all pupils.
- **Aspirational:** supporting pupils to achieve meaningful qualifications, develop confidence and work towards ambitious future destinations.
- **Communication-Focused:** promoting speaking, listening, communication, literacy and self-advocacy across all curriculum areas.
- **Purposeful and Relevant:** connecting learning to real-life situations, community participation, independent living and future employment opportunities.
- **Inclusive and Supportive:** ensuring that all pupils can access learning through appropriate adjustments, therapeutic support and personalised approaches.

Implementation of this policy: 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*.

3.0 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

The Tower School provides a broad and balanced curriculum over time, with learning broken into small steps and frequent opportunities to repeat and practise skills before becoming independent. We use evidence-based practice to identify the unique needs, difficulties and learning skills of each pupil and 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 pupils to be involved in making choices and decisions (Ask, Accept, Develop).
- have a cross-curricular focus on developing functional skills, knowledge and understanding.
- include planned opportunities to generalise skills, knowledge and understanding in natural situations and settings (including the family home and the community).
- prepare for adulthood and a life that is as independent and fulfilled as possible.

The delivery of the curriculum at The Tower School is personalised to meet the individual needs of our pupils. It has an emphasis on experiential and sensory learning across the curriculum, while providing access to a holistic curriculum which leads on to a range of accreditations. The curriculum places an emphasis on addressing the core characteristics and challenges associated with autism by offering a comprehensive educational programme via their timetable, designed to promote social communication, language, literacy, problem-solving and self-management of behaviour and emotions.

Teachers plan, personalise and adapt learning to ensure the curriculum is accessible, ambitious and responsive to individual needs. Curriculum planning is informed by statutory guidance, subject-specific programmes of study, qualification specifications, pupils' EHCP outcomes and evidence-informed approaches to supporting autistic learners and those with additional needs.

We ensure effective and consistent planning and delivery of a personally engaging curriculum that maximises the ability of our pupils with autism and complex needs to enjoy learning and achieve their individual potential.

We support staff in making personalised professional responses to meet the profile and learning need of each pupil through recognised approaches based upon best practice in Autism and SEND Learning Needs. Our curriculum policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of different staff within the school, promoting curriculum access and achievement.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that introduces new ideas and experiences to all. We teach respect and consideration for their own and others individuality, backgrounds, cultures and religions as reflected in the inclusive ethos and multicultural nature of the school. These skills prepare pupils for life in a diverse society, promoting and supporting the development and understanding of Fundamental British Values.

We also aim to offer:

- The benefits of learning and growing in a calm, friendly, stable and structured environment.
- An education, which prepares them for successful, inclusive, enjoyable, rich and active lives.
- An education, which promotes high expectations for their future.
- A curriculum that builds on a variety of approaches to teaching and learning.
- An education that allows development and expression through creative opportunities
- An education that uses real experiences as a foundation for learning.

- A curriculum that supports the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual development of the child.

4.0 CURRICULUM IMPACT

We hope and aim that our curriculum will lead to qualifications and skills that hold currency for employers and for entry to further education while fulfilling statutory requirements. We prepare pupils to make informed and appropriate choices at the end of Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and beyond, ensuring continuity and progression within the school and between phases of education, further education, careers and beyond.

We aim to develop pupils' enquiring minds and the confidence to explore through trial and error, while communicating effectively in both verbal and written forms. Pupils are taught to access and evaluate information from a variety of sources, including digital platforms, enabling them to recognise misinformation, think critically, and make informed decisions about their education and their wider lives.

The opportunities provided during work experience placements support pupils in exploring job opportunities they may not have considered and make an informed decision about further studies they would benefit from attending once they leave The Tower School.

We aspire to ensure all pupils who attend The Tower School become:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve.
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

5.0 TEACHING & LEARNING

Teaching at The Tower School is the practice carried out by all staff to ensure all pupils acquire knowledge, skills and understanding as they progress through a curriculum designed to meet their special educational needs. Learning is the process through which the pupils can develop their knowledge, skills and understanding to the point where they have retained and generalised what has been taught. Teaching and learning is carried out in a context, which is relevant and meaningful to all pupils with autism to ensure effective learning and appropriate accreditation.

The curriculum design across all age ranges connects each pupil with the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding, enabling pupils to succeed. This design makes meaningful connections for pupils, which maximises their potential for success, access and independence.

6.0 CURRICULUM PLANNING

Teachers plan, personalise and adapt learning to meet the diverse needs of pupils whilst maintaining high expectations. Curriculum planning draws upon statutory guidance, recognised subject frameworks, qualification specifications, assessment information, EHCP outcomes and evidence-informed approaches to teaching autistic learners. This enables pupils to access learning that is both appropriately challenging and relevant to their individual strengths, needs and aspirations.

Transactional Support

Where appropriate, teachers will use a variety of transactional supports, in order to help the pupils to identify and understand the key learning of the lesson, the focus and the intended learning objectives within each lesson. This enables the pupils to know what is expected of them, discuss the relevance of what is being learned, and identify and celebrate achievement within the sessions.

Planning

Teachers develop the curriculum by creating clear, sequential curriculum maps which ensure each pupil develops the concepts, attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to make effective progress within each key stage. Teachers then adapt these planning documents into medium-term plans, which clearly map out how teaching and learning will take place over each half-term. Plans for the subject content are then tailored to meet each pupil's individual needs adapted to cover the breadth of the curriculum aims and objectives.

Resources

The school recognises that quality education requires quality resources and there is a commitment to provide a breadth of exciting, suitable and up to date resources in all subjects.

Across the different key stages, the curriculum is planned to provide a wealth of opportunities to design engaging, challenging and coherent learning experiences, which will improve progression and achievement for all children who have autism. While the school sets out the curriculum in traditional areas of learning, planning is focused on making many of these connections more explicit and manageable. All pupils work at their own level through individualised teaching strategies and differentiated lessons, based on the expectations of our holistic curriculum and accredited courses.

Key Stage 3

CORE CURRICULUM

- **English:** Writing, reading, social communication and functional skills. Including direct teaching of speaking and listening skills
- **Mathematics:** Including direct teaching of problem-solving and reasoning skills
- **Science**
- **Computing**
- **Physical Education**

WIDER CURRICULUM

- **Life Skills:** including social communication and preparation for adulthood
- **Pathways:** Careers
- **PACE:** In which pupils explore pro-regulation strategies with the Clinical Team
- **Outdoor Learning**
- **PSHE, including Relationship and Sex Education**
- **Topic:** Designed to impart knowledge, evoke critical thinking and allow pupils to experience different aspects of their communities, with British Values at the heart
- **Music**
- **Computing**
- **Art**
- **Food Technology**

Key Stage 4 & 5

CORE CURRICULUM

- **English:** Entry Level, Functional Skills and GCSE
- **Mathematics:** Entry Level, Functional Skills and GCSE
- **Science:** Entry Level and GCSE Science

- **Physical Education**

WIDER CURRICULUM

- **PSHE, including Relationship and Sex Education**
- **Independent Living:** including Social Communication and preparation for adulthood
- **Pathways:** Careers with Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 Employability Skills

OPTION SUBJECTS

At Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, pupils have the opportunity to personalise their learning pathway through the selection of up to three specialist subjects. These subjects are designed to build upon pupils' strengths, interests and future aspirations whilst supporting progression into further education, employment and independent living.

A range of academic, vocational and practical qualifications are available, enabling pupils to access appropriately challenging and meaningful accreditation pathways. Depending on individual needs, interests and readiness for accreditation, pupils may study qualifications including GCSEs, Entry Level Certificates, Functional Skills, BTEC qualifications, Project Qualifications and AQA Unit Award Scheme programmes.

Specialist subject options may include:

- **Art and Design** (BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award and BTEC Level 2 Certificate) - KS4/KS5
- **Sport** (BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award) - KS4/KS5
- **Music** (BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award) - KS4/KS5
- **Home Cooking Skills** (BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Home Cooking Skills) – KS4/5
- **Duke of Edinburgh Award** (Bronze/Silver) - KS4/KS5
- **Computing** (Digital Functional Skills Entry Level/ Level 1, GCSE Computer Science and BTEC Esports) - KS4/KS5
- **English Language GCSE** - KS4/KS5
- **English Literature GCSE** - KS4/KS5
- **Mathematics GCSE Foundation and Higher** - KS4/KS5
- **Science qualifications, including Entry Level Science, GCSE Combined Science and GCSE Biology** - KS4/KS5
- **Foundation, Higher and Extended Project Qualifications** - KS4/KS5

The specialist subject offer is reviewed annually and may vary according to pupil interests, curriculum demand, staffing expertise and qualification availability. Individual option pathways are determined through ongoing assessment, pupil voice, aspirations, EHCP outcomes and destination planning.

Curriculum offer and progression

Subject	KS3	KS4	KS5
Preparation for adulthood	Life Skills	Independent Living	Preparation for Adulthood
Pathways	Careers	Careers NCFE Employability Skills	Careers NCFE Employability Skills
PACE**	Clinical Team led sessions		

Outdoor learning	Outdoor Learning	Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award*	Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award*
English (Core and SLC)	English	Entry Level Certificate EL1/2/3	Entry Level Certificate EL1/2/3
		Functional Skills English L1/L2	Functional Skills English L1/L2
		GCSE English Language	GCSE English Language GCSE English Literature*
Maths (Core and problem solving)	Maths	Entry Level Certificate EL1/2/3	Entry Level Certificate EL1/2/3
		Functional Skills Maths L1/L2	Functional Skills Maths L1/L2
		GCSE Mathematics (Foundation and Higher)	GCSE Mathematics (Foundation and Higher)
Science	Science	Entry Level Science	GCSE Biology*
		GCSE Combined Science	
PSHE / RSE	PSHE and RSE	PSHE and RSE	PSHE and RSE
PE	PE	PE	PE
		BTEC L1/2 Sport Tech Award *	BTEC L1/2 Sport Tech Award *
Topic	Topic	Foundation Project Qualification* Higher Project Qualification*	Foundation Project Qualification* Higher Project Qualification* Extended Project Qualification*
Computing	Computing	Digital Functional Skills ELC/Level 1*	Digital Functional Skills ELC/Level 1*
		BTEC E-Sports* GCSE Computer Science *	BTEC E-Sports* GCSE Computer Science *
Food Technology	Food Technology	BTEC L1/2 Home Cooking Skills*	BTEC L1/2 Home Cooking Skills*
			Food and Catering Unit Award Scheme Certificates* Barista Training* Food Hygiene & Allergy Training*
Art	Art	BTEC L1/2 Art and Design Tech Award*	BTEC L1/2 Art and Design Tech Award
			BTEC Art and Design L2 Certificate*
Music	Music	BTEC L1/2 Music Tech Award*	BTEC L1/2 Music Tech Award*

***Option subject**

****PACE** - The Tower School adopts a whole-school PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) approach to relational practice. This framework underpins interactions, behaviour support, emotional regulation and pupil wellbeing across all key stages and is embedded throughout the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone subject.

8.0 GENERAL

Equal Opportunities

We actively promote through our teaching, both discretely and in direct ways, the rights of all individuals to receive the optimum opportunity in all facets of school life. This is an integral part of the school's ethos and practices. We aim to promote acceptable values and attitudes in this area for all our pupils.

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Values

Spiritual Development:

The specific spiritual needs of young people with autism are as diverse as their academic profiles. At The Tower School, spiritual development enables our young people to look within themselves, at their human relationships and at the wider world. The spiritual development of all our children is addressed through the ethos of the school and explicitly through the curriculum.

We are committed to:

- Celebrate the religious and non-religious beliefs and values that our pupils bring as part of their family/culture heritage and to building an awareness of and respect for others' spiritual and religious beliefs.
- Foster common human values and build spiritual capacities to promote self-worth.
- Help our pupils to come to an understanding of themselves as individuals and encourage them to reflect on ultimate questions.
- Develop our pupils' curiosity, imagination, and creativity and promote a sense of awe and wonder.

Moral Development

Moral development is the ability to know what is right and wrong and to act on it accordingly. We are committed to encourage pupils to:

- Be truthful and honest.
- Respect the rights and property of others, their opinions and customs, even when they are different from their own.
- Help others.
- Solve differences of opinion in non-violent, non-judgemental ways.
- Reject all forms of bullying, cruelty, dishonesty, violence and discrimination.

Social Development

Social development is at the very core of our educational ethos in that social communication is a core deficit that accompanies a diagnosis of autism. We are committed to:

- Develop a social skills curriculum that is tailored to the individual needs of pupils in order for them to be able to access the wider world outside of school
- Provide an environment where pupils can take responsibility for themselves and others in school and the wider society
- Develop the life skills required to socialise appropriately and independently

Cultural development

We believe in affirming and respecting the diverse cultures represented within our school environment and in society as a whole. We aim for our pupils to develop awareness of differing cultures and heritages, be tolerant of different viewpoints, and be able to join and share the delights of our diverse population from an informed position.

Citizenship

We believe that The Tower School has a role to play in developing responsible attitudes from our pupils towards society. We actively promote the common tenets of good citizenship through Votes for Schools form sessions, PSHE, Topic, Trips and Visits, and whenever the opportunity arises throughout our daily activities. The ethos and practices of the school combine to establish this as a feature of everyday interaction between pupils, staff and visitors of the school. We aim for our pupils to be motivated to join in with positive citizenship practices.

Careers Education / Environmental and Economic Understanding

From Key Stage 3, these skills are embedded through timetabled Pathways (careers), outdoor education,

PACE and PSHE lessons. In Key Stage 4 and 5, pupils have access to work experience opportunities in school and external placements, a careers and work experience coordinator, access to the community with training in how to travel safely, and a holistic approach throughout the curriculum to prepare for the future after The Tower School.

Role of Parents & Wider Community

Parents, carers and the wider community are welcomed into the school. Parents are a valuable resource to the school, and their knowledge of their children is central to all planning. Parents may have their own expertise, which can help provide stimulus to a topic or lesson. We aim to involve the local community in the curriculum through assemblies, guest speakers and visits to local areas, as a further, concrete aid to learning.

Monitoring

Leadership and management of the school monitor the content of the curriculum and its implementation to ensure partisan political views are not promoted in school. When global and sensitive issues have been discussed, a balanced presentation of views is offered to pupils.

Themed Months

Anti-bullying month, Black History Month, Armistice Day, Festivities Around the World, Tolerance and Acceptance, Keeping Safe Online, Careers and Enterprise, Autism Awareness, Independence and Mental Health and more themed weeks are all regular features of the curriculum.

The Tower School is operated by Options Autism and is owned by Acorn Care and Education Ltd, a subsidiary company of Outcomes First Group (proprietary body). The Chairperson of the proprietary body is Richard Power (COO). The Tower School has its own dedicated management team, under the leadership of Lauren Gibbs. Oversight of school management is provided by the Regional Director for Options Autism, responsible to the Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer.

Key decisions are referred to the Outcomes First Group's Board of Directors. In addition, the group extends its robust governance through local governing committees, a national education performance board and an independent Safeguarding and Quality Committee with three independent members.



Outcomes
First Group