Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

It should be read alongside:

119b – Remote/Blended Learning
Curriculum Statement

1. Objectives

1.1   TreeHouse School supports all pupils to achieve their maximum potential whilst having anexcellent quality of life. All our pupils and young people at Treehouse school have a primary diagnosis of Autism and have a wide range of needs, from those who benefit from a more sensory based curriculumto others who can access aspects of the National Curriculum for specific subjects. They all have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) that outlines the outcomes that are to be achieved at the end of each Key Stage and follow the curriculum pathway (pre-formal, semi-formal and formal) that is most appropriate to their needs which they are assessed against.

1.2   Teaching staff plan learning for the small classes of up to 8 pupils. Most pupils require at least 1:1 support. They will be supported by trained teaching and behaviour specialists (TABs) as well as specialist input from the transdisciplinary team consisting of occupational therapists (OTs), speech and language therapists (SaLTs) and Positive Behaviour Support specialists (PBSs).

1.3   The Ambitious Approach underpins all our thinking and practice. It is an approach to education created by Ambitious about Autism to support children and young people with autism. It has been developed to provide high-quality education whilst affording dignity, respect, and compassion, in all aspects of our provision, including the consideration of mental health and wellbeing. The Ambitious Approach is based upon a person's indisputable rights to be:

- Treated with dignity and compassion.
- Valued.
- Listened to.
- Supported to have the best quality of life possible.
- Empowered to make choices and decide on how they want to live their life.

We enact our Ambitious Approach and aim to ensure pupils have improved quality of life during, and beyond, their time in school through:
- Our Curriculum.
- Curriculum Delivery, including School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support.
- Collaboration.

1.4   Our assessment model aims to:
- To provide up to date information about progress of individuals and groups of pupils and where applicable the attainment data.
- To establish what pupils can do, know, and understand.
- To assess the readiness of pupils for future learning – to inform planning.
- To identify patterns over time (useful when pupils learn in very small steps).

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- Complete baseline assessments as a basis from which to set targets for improvement.
- To promote rigour and pace.
- To give an insight into the curriculum received by the pupils.
- To enable the school to review the effectiveness of the curriculum and models of delivery and use the data to support decisions for developing teaching and learning.
- To assess the progress of specific groups of pupils, e.g., such as pupils from a range of different ethnic groups etc.
- To assess the need for additional, specialist support.
- To help motivate pupils and staff.
- To encourage pupil motivation and self-esteem.
- To provide information to discuss with parents, teachers, and stakeholders.
- To satisfy statutory requirements.

1.5 Our curriculum model aims to:
- Individually planned
- Specialised
- Intensive
- Goal-directed
- Guided by pupil performance.

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 This policy reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010 and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

2.2 It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.

3. Principles

Curriculum and assessment are inextricably linked and are integral parts of the teaching and learning process.

3.1 Curriculum Principles

The term curriculum relates to both the *range* of subjects that are offered at TreeHouse and the content delivered within each subject.

Learners will study qualifications where appropriate and will balance academic rigour with other important curriculum offerings such as the social curriculum, PE, swimming etc.

Sex and relationship education is addressed at age-appropriate detail through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, including the promotion of British values, is addressed via PSHE, assemblies and class discussions.

In terms of curriculum content, TreeHouse delivers a carefully planned and sequenced curriculum that builds coherently throughout a learner's time at school. Teachers are expected to follow this curriculum which is set out in the long-term plans and our curriculum overview and intent documents. Teachers devise a detailed scheme of work in order to achieve the learning goals set out in the curriculum overview.

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We offer three different curriculum pathways to our pupils:

- Pre-formal
  A sensory based curriculum, with an emphasis on engagement and early development rather than subject specific study.
- Semi-formal
  For students who can access learning through slightly more formal subjects, although not yet at National Curriculum level.
- Formal
  Subject specific study is undertaken (Some of which is at National Curriculum level) and Entry Level Qualifications are achieved where appropriate from KS4.

The pathways are not necessarily sequential, neither are they linked to chronological age. The pupil follows the pathway that best meets their developmental needs rather than their age.

For example, an 8-year-old pupil could follow the Formal pathway whilst a 15-year-old pupil may follow the Pre-formal pathway.

Each curriculum pathway has elements which overlap and are embedded into each other to allow easy transition for pupils who may transition from one to another.

For further details, see TreeHouse's Curriculum Statement.

3.2 Teaching and Learning Principles

- Improve the quality of life, through outstanding teaching and learning underpinned through an evidence based behavioural approach, of children affected by autism and those of their families
- Develop the necessary pivotal skills as building blocks for future skill acquisition and independent learning in other settings
- Enable every pupil to achieve their academic potential and aspirations
- Enable our pupils to develop knowledge, skills and understanding
- Ensure that each pupil is motivated to maintain, apply and generalise the skills that they have learned, beyond school and in the natural environment
- Nurture each pupil's functional independence with self-help and daily living skills
- Equip each pupil with the tools necessary to positively influence and manage their own life, with as great a degree of independence as possible
- Enable each pupil to develop the skills and strategies needed to participate in and meaningfully contribute to their local community
- Develop in each pupil an awareness of self and others
- Ensure that each pupil is equipped as fully as possible for adult life: including confident use of a functional communication system; self-management of any behaviours that act as a barrier to learning or participation; development of vocational and careers skills and a portfolio of independent life and leisure skills
- We're proud to stand with autistic children and young people.

3.2.1 Planning
All planning should be based on prior learning, differentiated to meet all pupils' needs and carefully sequenced to lead to progress.

3.2.2 Learners' work
Learners will be encouraged to maintain high standards when it comes to the presentation of their work – this will look different in different subjects.

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3.2.3 Recording & Reporting
- Value all pupils equally and free of bias
- Recognise and give credit for pupil achievements in and outside school.
- Involve pupils in self-assessment where appropriate.
- Form an integral part of learning and teaching.

- Use a variety of approaches to assessment.
- Provide valid and reliable evidence of achievement.
- Measure and monitor performance against agreed criteria.
- Identify positive achievements.
- Provide opportunities for contributions from all involved in pupils learning.

3.2.4 The Learning Environment

The classroom should promote effective learning. We expect that all learners will experience consistently high-quality and low arousal learning environments:

- Visual schedules for the day and lesson;
- Displays with curriculum information;
- Quality displays celebrating the pupil's work;
- Behaviour prompts and expectations;
- All classrooms will be clean, tidy and uncluttered.

Corridor displays change every term.

3.3 Principles of assessment:
- Assessment is both formative and summative.
- Planning is led by learning intentions not activities
- Assessment is not one thing it involves a whole range of activities and strategies.
- Assessment involves both pupils and their parents.
- Assessment takes account of the unexpected as well as the intended learning.
- The individual needs of our pupils are paramount.

4. Assessment approach

4.1 Definitions

Assessment methods at TreeHouse school vary depending on the profile of each pupil, however there

are some common definitions which apply to all:

- **Initial/diagnostic assessment** determines the learner's starting point for their learning journey. It is the process of identifying an individual's learning and support needs to establish their pathway and a behaviour support plan.
- **Formative assessment** or assessment for learning is a range of formal and informal assessment procedures during the learning process to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment.
- **Summative assessment** is used to evaluate learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined timeline —typically at the end of a project, unit, course, term, or school year.
- **Attainment** is the academic standard that pupils/learners reach in, for example, assessments and exams. It's usually recorded as grades, scores, or levels, and it indicates a pupil's/learner's result at the end of a Key Stage.
- **Progress** is a learner's/pupils' achievements over a period of time, for example from KS2 to KS4, or between Y1 and Y2 in school or termly.
- **Recording** is the selection and retention of significant and relevant information on the pupils'

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experiences and achievements, including what the pupil, knows and can do. This informs planning.

- **Reporting** is the communication of significant and relevant information on the individual pupils' experiences and achievements.

4.2 Baseline Assessment

On entry to the school, baseline assessments are conducted by the class teacher. The data from these assessments are recorded on the school assessment software 'Earwig'.

The class Teacher undertakes baseline assessment in all curriculum areas and TDT members undertake their own baseline assessment. This information is then used to support planning and target setting.

The TDT have further assessment tools available which are used on a case-by-case basis. This list of assessments used in each field is non exhaustive and can be updated at any time when the professional deems there to be a requirement to use a more suitable tool for assessment.

- Our Positive Behaviour Support specialists do a range of assessments depending on the needs of the individuals, now focusing on quality of life.
- Our Allied Health Professionals (AHPS), including SaLTs and OTs do a range of assessments depending on the stage and needs of the individuals, this could include COMFOR and/or Derbyshire Language Scheme, Adult/Adolescent Sensory profile (adapted), Therapy Outcomes Measures (TOMs) and Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM).

Follow up assessments using the same assessment tool helps to evidence progress over time.

4.3 Formative assessment
- Informal observations
- Observation of practical activity
- Pupil folders- TABs comments
- Pupils' work in books
- Peer assessment
- Use of questioning
- Discussion / Plenary
- Marking policy

4.4 Summative Assessment
- Baseline assessments for pathway.
- Termly expected progress in all curriculum areas
- Termly curriculum assessments.
- Annual review- reviewing the long-term outcomes and their relevance and making amendments and changeswhere necessary.
- External accreditations.

The final combination of Assessment for Learning strategies used for any single pupils is dependent on which one of the 3 pathways the pupil is on (Pre-Formal, Semi-Formal and Formal), as well as the content of their EHCP and their individual needs.

The TDT members at Treehouse school will undertake ongoing assessments of their pupils using the most appropriate tools for the pupil.

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Evidence of progress through the curriculum framework (Recorded by Teachers) and evidence of progress against individual EHCP targets (Recorded by all TDT members) are captured then recorded on the Earwig software termly.

We use Earwig as our assessment tool, it contains the sequence of learning outcome for each curriculum areas as well as individual EHCP targets. These statements are recorded as follows:

1= Emerging
2= Securing
3= Achieved

Any other assessments (Such as SALT / OT / Behavioural) should be uploaded to Earwig as a PDF under the pupil's timeline. This ensures that all pupil assessments undertaken by the school are in one central location.

External Accreditation:
- We offer on a case-by-case basis external accreditation through OCN.
- We comply with the assessment policies and procedures from the awarding body.
- Once a qualification is achieved, it is uploaded to the pupils Earwig timeline, and tagged accordingly as 'Accreditation'.

4.5 Reporting
Once the data and evidence is recorded within Earwig, we can use the software to generate reports on progress against both the individual (EHCP) targets and the pupils' relevant curriculum framework.

EHCP Progress:
- Sent home to parent/carers once a year
- Reported at Annual Review meetings

Curriculum Progress:
- Regular parent/carer updates are provided through the creation of timelines in the 'Earwig App' Parentswho sign up have access to these regular snapshots 24/7.
- Curriculum progress is reported in greater depth at parent/carer evenings or meetings up to 2x per year.

5. Teaching and Learning

5.1 Our Delivery of Teaching and Learning
Personalisation and Differentiation
In accordance with statutory inclusion guidelines, each pupil's curriculum at TreeHouse takes account of the type and extent of any difficulties associated with their SEND. All pupils at TreeHouse are working at a level below the age-related norm. This means that pupils are working towards targets drawn from a curriculum that is relevant and meaningful to them; below those accessed by their typically developing peers. Skills and knowledge are taught using age-appropriate resources and learning opportunities, as well as pupils' personal interests to support engagement. Each pupil's learning journey is personalised, and the strategies used to support their engagement in the curriculum is informed by their EHC plan and their initial and ongoing assessments. These assessments also inform the pupils most appropriate pathway of study throughout their education at Treehouse.

This approach ensures that consistency in teaching approaches is achieved, research indicates this is important for successful learning for children and young people with autism.

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5.2 How we decide what and how to teach each individual pupil
Each pupil's individual starting points are established during the baseline assessments process. Each pupil's progression and the appropriate model for meeting their needs is identified through a person-centred planning process. Decisions are driven by our curriculum and the pupils EHCP which should reflect what is important to the individual and the family concerned. Targets are regularly reviewed by teachers and recorded on Earwig and through statutory annual reviews.

5.3 When and Where is Teaching and Learning planned?
Each class has a structured lesson timetable that informs when and where learning will take place. This is adapted for individual learners through the use of individual visual schedules and supports.

Our curriculum also allows for incidental learning opportunities, both through regular routines within school and through introducing new learning opportunities both at school and in our local community and on educational visits.

We also provide a variety of extra-curricular activities which further create opportunities for pupils to practice skills, learn curriculum content, generalise skills into different contexts and/or develop their personal characteristics. Events include the Christmas Show, Sports Day, Black History Month, LGBTQ+ celebrations, British Values, visits, reverse inclusion, vocational placements and residentials.

5.4 Who plans, leads and supports teaching and learning?
We believe that the quality of the pupil's experience is largely determined by the quality of interaction between individuals and the staff who support them and therefore we commit significant investment to the expertise of our practitioners. At Treehouse we have a trans-disciplinary approach where we utilise the many skills of our staff team to provide specialist, integrated and appropriate teaching, learning and support, including Qualified Teachers, Specialist Teachers, HLTAs, PBS specialists, Occupational and Speech and Language therapists.

We know that building a positive rapport between each pupil and staff member underpins the success of any educational approach, and a pupil's motivation to learn.

5.5 Teaching and Learning Environment and Resources

Pupils learn well when the environment in which they find themselves is well ordered, low arousal and where there is structure and clarity about expectations. Environments will vary depending on the curriculum content or the characteristics that are being developed. Environments change from being the classroom, a 'quiet space', school corridors, school halls, the community, the home or play equipment in the school grounds. TreeHouse School is purpose-built with consideration of the needs of autistic learners. TreeHouse School uses a low arousal approach to provide the learners with the greatest possible chance to remain regulated, understand their environment and reach their learning potential. It is of course important that our learners are exposed to a wide range of sensory experiences and environments to support destinations and develop their enjoyment of community settings.

Multipurpose rooms are equipped to support pupils wellbeing and social and emotional regulation, such as our immersive room, sensory room and OT room

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6. Roles and Responsibilities, including monitoring:

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Governing Body	Oversee that a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities, which are ambitious, complies to its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum".	Ensure proper provision is made for pupils with their special educational needs and range of abilities. Monitors the improvement of teaching and learning via the SEF review and implementation of the SDP Carry out focus visits to observe teaching and learning in practise. Monitor pupil attainment	Be familiar with, and ensure implementation of, statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils Hold leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data
Head of School	Ensure that there is a broad and balanced curriculum in place. Ensure the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board Involve the governing board in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum Ensure Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs.	Have overall responsibility for the whole school SEF and SDP. Ensure that the school environment is best used to support successful teaching and learning.	Ensure that the policy is adhered to Ensure the school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements Report to governors on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years
Deputy Head and/or Assistant Head Teachers	Review and update this policy annually. Ensure the policy is adhered to.	Lead the observation processes. Further develop and implement the "Ambitious Approach". Organise parent/carers' evenings and.the sharing of reports with parent/carers Ensure a high quality CPD provision for all aspects of teaching and learning	Monitor standards in all subjects. Analyse pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups Prioritise key actions to address underachievement
Wider Leadership Team/Subject Leads	Ensure that long term planning and medium term curriculum overviews are in place. Lead the review and adaptation of these documents. Have action plans for each subject area.	Undertake regular supportive, ungraded observations.	Ensure that high quality summative assessments are in place. Monitor that formative assessment is taking place. Analyse summative assessment data and input into the school review process.

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Teachers	Follow the whole school curriculum. Participate in regular reviews of the curriculum. Have a good understanding of our curriculum intent and use this to inform their planning and teaching.	Deliver excellent, well planned engaging lessons that support progress. Respond to snapshot feedback and proactively improve practice.	Follow the assessment procedures outlined in this policy Have a good understanding of pupils who are making less than expected progress and plan and implement appropriate strategies and interventions. Use baseline assessments to establish individual starting points and expected progress over time.
Parent/carers	Ensure their child has the best attendance possible Ensure their child is equipped for school Inform relevant staff if there are matters outside of school that may affect a child's performance or behaviour Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.		

7. Continuing Professional Development

TreeHouse is a research-engaged school.

- Senior and middle leaders are expected to engage with the developments in assessment through reading widely (books, blogs), attending conferences and CPD opportunities and then curate the key findings for teachers. Teachers are encouraged to be equally proactive in developing their understanding of assessment.
- The overall responsibility for the quality of CPD is with the Deputy Head of School.

8. Inclusion
The principles of this assessment policy apply to all learners, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

Assessment will be used to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils'special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations ofall pupils. However, this should account for the amount of effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

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