

Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

It should be read alongside:

119b – Remote/Blended Learning
Curriculum Statement

1. Objectives

TreeHouse School is committed to supporting all pupils to achieve their full potential while maintaining an excellent quality of life. Our pupils have a primary diagnosis of autism and present with a wide range of needs, from those who require a highly sensory and exploratory approach to learning, to those who are able to access subject-specific learning. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and their learning is delivered through one of three curriculum pathways: Pre-formal, Semi-formal or Formal.

To support personalised learning, the school offers a bespoke curriculum and assessment framework structured into nine levels within each subject area. This structure enables staff to capture and evidence small steps of progress across the curriculum. The assessment levels have been carefully benchmarked against national standards, ensuring clarity and a shared understanding of pupil achievement among parents/carers, professionals and local authorities. This framework supports meaningful progress tracking and is closely aligned to EHCP outcomes, enabling us to personalise and monitor learning in a way that reflects the holistic development of each pupil.

Teaching staff plan learning for the small classes of up to eight pupils. Most pupils require at least 1:1 support. They will be supported by trained specialist teaching assistants (STAs) 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).

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.

1.2 Our assessment model aims:

- To provide up-to-date information about progress of individual pupils and groups 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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- To 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.

1.3 Our curriculum model aims to be:

- Individually planned and person centred
- Flexible and adaptive.
- Centred around the quality of life (Wellbeing, Social Participation and Independence) model.
- Specialised.
- Collaborative.
- Holistic.
- Guided by pupil progress and engagement

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 School and the *content* delivered within each subject.

All pupils balance academic rigour with other key areas of the curriculum, including the social curriculum, PE, swimming and enrichment activities.

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is addressed at an age-appropriate level through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the promotion of British values, is supported through PSHE, assemblies and class-based activities and discussions.

Pupils in Key Stage 5 work towards accredited qualifications through the Open College Network (OCN), where appropriate.

In terms of curriculum content, TreeHouse School delivers a carefully planned and sequenced curriculum that builds coherently throughout a pupil’s time at school. Teachers are expected to follow this curriculum which is set out in the online assessment frameworks, topic cycle and our curriculum overview and intent documents.

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Teachers devise a detailed scheme of work in order to achieve the learning goals set out in the curriculum overview and intent documents.

We offer three different curriculum pathways to our pupils (**Pre-formal, Semi-formal and Formal**) each outlining the strategies, tools and methods we use to deliver the curriculum and support pupils in accessing it effectively.

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 eight yearold pupil could be supported to access the curriculum through the Formal pathway whilst a 15-year-old pupil may be supported by the Pre-formal pathway.

For further details, see TreeHouse School’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 development 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 are proud to stand with autistic children and young people.

3.2.1 Planning

All planning should be based on prior learning, differentiated to meet the pupils’ needs and carefully sequenced to lead to progress.

3.2.2 Pupils’ work

Pupils will be encouraged to maintain high standards in the presentation of their work; this will look different across subjects depending on the nature of the learning and the pathway. In some cases, pupils' work may be demonstrated through concrete, hands-on activities and reflected through records and evidence uploaded by teachers onto Earwig, our online assessment and evidence platform.

3.2.3 Recording and 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

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- 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 pupils will experience consistently high-quality and low arousal learning environments, including:

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

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 pupil'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. This is typically at the end of a project, unit, course, term or school year.
- **Attainment** is the academic standard that pupils reach in, for example, assessments and exams. It is usually recorded as grades, scores or levels, and it indicates a pupil's result at the end of a Key Stage.
- **Progress** is a pupil's achievements over a period of time, for example from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4, or between Year 1 and Year 2 in school or termly.
- **Recording** is the selection and retention of significant and relevant information on the pupil's 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 pupil's experiences and achievements.

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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. Follow-up assessments using the same assessment tools help to evidence progress over time.

4.3 Formative assessment

- Informal observations
- Observation of practical activity
- Pupils' work in books and feedback from specialist teaching assistantss
- Peer assessment
- Use of questioning
- Discussion / Plenary
- Marking policy.

4.4 Summative Assessment

- Baseline assessments against assessment framework
- Termly expected progress in all curriculum areas
- Termly curriculum assessments
- Annual review - reviewing the medium-term and long-term outcomes and their relevance and making amendments and changes where necessary
- External accreditation
- End of year curriculum reports.

The final combination of Assessment for Learning strategies used for any single pupil is dependent on which one of the three pathways the pupil accesses (Pre-formal, Semi-formal or Formal), as well as the content of their EHCP and their individual needs. A pupil's pathway may vary by subject and can change over time, depending on which strategies most effectively support their engagement and access to the curriculum.

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

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 and recorded on the Earwig software termly.

We use Earwig as our assessment tool; it contains the sequence of learning outcomes for each curriculum area 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:

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- In Key Stage 5 we offer 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 pupil's 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 pupil's 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'. Parents who 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 twice per year.
- Teachers gather evidence across all subject areas throughout the academic year to produce an end-of-year curriculum report shared with parents/carers.

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

6. 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.

7. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils.

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 of all pupils. However, this should also take into account the amount of effort the pupil puts in as well as the outcomes achieved.

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