

# Curriculum Policy

## Intent, Implementation & Impact



**Southend YMCA  
Community School**  
building a future

**Approved by:**

The Governing Body & the  
Headteacher

**Date:** September 2024

**Last reviewed on:**

July 2024

**Next review due by:**

June 2025

## 1. Strategic Intent & Curriculum Aims

## 2. Implementation

- a. Whole School
- b. Teaching & Learning
- c. Assessment

## 3. Impact

### 1. Strategic Intent

Our curriculum:

- 1. is ***challenge focused***: allowing all children to achieve;
- 2. it ***provides equity of experience***: whilst providing personalisation, aspiration and achievement;
- 3. is ***child centred***: by building upon prior learning and enabling them to become a successful learner; one with improved confidence who is able to become a responsible citizen;
- 4. it ***prioritises core skills***: as enablers for success with a focus on literacy; reading, writing & oracy and thereby improving outcomes for all across the curriculum.

### Curriculum Aims

The curriculum aims to inspire and challenge; preparing young people for their future lives. It addresses any gaps in learning and extends and develops knowledge, skills and understanding for student's future learning pathways. The curriculum reflects the aim of the school, to provide opportunities for students to develop as independent, confident, successful learners with high aspirations.

Our students will know how to make a positive contribution to their community and the wider society. There will be a focus on developing their moral, spiritual, social and cultural understanding, building their resilience and nurturing a growth mind-set. The school wants to ensure that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain and can better cope with any future challenges.

The school environment is inclusive so that students can enjoy their education, make progress (in relation to their starting points) across a wide range of subjects and other aspects of learning. All students will be supported to ensure they can achieve their potential. Student well-being is important and students will have different pathways to follow, based on their need and level of

support. Our Pastoral Support includes immediate access to a Pastoral Manager and Mentor, Wellbeing and life skills coach and early intervention counselling.

The school curriculum enables young people to:

*Be challenged:*

- make progress in their learning;
- achieve, or be working towards, age-related expectations;
- maximise their potential.

*Experience equity:*

- in their access to a suitable curriculum that supports prior learning;
- succeed, regardless of background or prior attainment;
- actively participate on a learning journey from a broad and ambitious generalist curriculum, towards a more personalised and tailored provision; whilst being mindful of their individual educational and employment aspirations.

*Be at the centre:*

- teachers and leaders prioritise high quality personal, learning and thinking skills (plts), which enables them to become independent learners;
- teaching that engages, has value and relevance; preparing them for lifelong learning;
- with opportunities for learning outside the classroom through visiting speakers, workshops, achievement assemblies and a creative aspect to the curriculum as well as educational trips and visits;
- Students individually develop their life skills and are better prepared for life beyond the classroom.

*Be literate and numerate:*

- By developing the use of high quality and highly valued functional skills: reading, writing and oracy as well as confidence with number and mathematical fluency.

## **Curriculum Overview**

The most-able will be provided with opportunities to extend and be challenged, whilst those who may have some or significant barriers to learning will be encouraged and given targeted support to embed the skills needed to learn and gain a sense of achievement, in a style that is appropriate for their needs, personal circumstances or stage in their education.

The school's curriculum is sequenced to build on what students have already learnt, or has been identified as a gap, and ensure that they achieve essential qualifications to equip them for future studies or employment.

The school's focus on curriculum development is ongoing and routinely reviewed to ensure leaders provide coverage and progression. Curriculum opportunities will be provided to ensure learners have memorable experiences and this is delivered through an entitlement curriculum throughout years 10 and 11. These are set as drop down days where students are off timetable for specific events or activities. Our year 12 provision is for students with high level EHCP's where there is risk of

the student not attending due to a number of barriers. This provision is a stepping stone to college, supported apprenticeships or employment.

## **Curriculum Planning**

Southend YMCA Community School has also established a rigorous transition programme which aims to provide a seamless transition from their referring school or agency into our provision. The key features are as follows:

- a transition programme in the last few weeks of the summer term of year 9 for some students
- a range of transition pathways, including home tuition, reduced provision, remote learning, 1-2-1, all to support engagement for those students with higher than normal levels of anxiety
- a phased integration into a full school day to ensure a successful transition.

## **Interleaving Curriculum**

In order for students to retain essential knowledge, we aim to incorporate an interleaving curriculum in a majority of our learning areas. This ensures that students are regularly revisiting information across units of work and are developing the skills they need incrementally, rather than in chunks, to support metacognitive learning and retention of key knowledge. All subjects have an interleaving curriculum focus that they will attempt to emphasise during some lessons. Our interleaving curriculum for 2024-25 will be based on key examination language and reading comprehension.

## **Implementation Teaching and Learning**

### **Learning Journey / Overview**

A Learning Journey document is a summary of learning across each year group in each subject. They outline the skills and content being taught and once updated they will be published on the website to allow parents/carers and students to prepare themselves for the curriculum at the start of each year and term. These will also be displayed in classrooms to allow students to gentle reminder of what they are study at that time.

### **Schemes of Learning**

Schemes of learning are available for every unit of work across all learning areas and act as a guideline for the teachers. Schemes of learning are bespoke to the students at the Southend YMCA Community School and aim to highlight preferred teaching styles and shared best practice teaching strategies. They will be reflective of the range of student ability and starting points of our students when they arrive to our provision.

Schemes of learning across all areas aim to capture opportunities for further enrichment (educational trips/external speakers etc) to ensure that students across all year groups are accessing a wider cultural field and thinking about the subject beyond the classroom. Each subject area has their own 'subject intent' which is clearly highlighted on the front page of all schemes of learning.

## **Knowledge Maps**

Knowledge maps capture the subject knowledge that a student needs for the assessment as well as the wider knowledge of the subject. Whilst we have a consistent approach to knowledge maps, these are essentially a pedagogical tool that is specific to each class. Knowledge maps will be made accessible to students during each unit of work. These will also be displayed in class or given to students as support and revision. These will be presented in a number of different ways within each area and subject.

Students receive regular low-stake knowledge tests which serve to inform the teacher's planning process. The knowledge required for these low stake tests is readily available on their knowledge map and allows students to experience success with no risk, building confidence and resilience to attempt more formal testing.

## **Teaching groups, class sizes and grouping by ability**

The maximum class size is 10 throughout all year groups with an average of 9 at any one time. Students attend lesson in classes that are based on the needs of the students. Some classes have a mixture of students from different year groups, the majority of classes are based on attainment and ability as well as group dynamics and student need. Due to the flexibility in the curriculum we are able to teach a mix class of all year groups without impacting on the learning.

The school day starts at 9.00 am and ends at 2.10pm. The day consists of five 50 minute lessons split by two breaks one at 10.40am (20 minutes) and one at 12.40pm (20 minutes).

## **Year 10 & 11**

Students will follow a set of core courses, most leading to a potential qualification. These core subjects will be supported by the Princes Trust qualification that helps prepare our students for adult life and build independence. This qualification has a number of different modules including money matters, charity, healthy lifestyle and cooking.

'Who am I?' is a bespoke programme designed to develop the emotional intelligence and literacy of our students. It encompasses self reflection, self development and gaining a better understanding of who they are.

Literacy is an additional subject which is designed to support the students develop their reading and comprehension skills. Students will follow structured tasks that allow them to develop better understanding of the English language including reading, grammar, spelling and comprehension.

Core subjects are as follows:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Maths
- ICT
- Princes Trust
- History
- Physical Education
- Food Technology
- Vocational Studies
- Science

- Current Affairs
- Feedback Friday
- PSHE (Branded as 'Did you Know?')

| Year 10              | Hours |
|----------------------|-------|
| English              | 3     |
| Maths                | 3     |
| ICT                  | 3     |
| PE                   | 3     |
| Vocational Studies   | 1     |
| Princes Trust        | 3     |
| History              | 1     |
| Food                 | 3     |
| Literacy             | 1     |
| Did you Know? (PSHE) | 1     |
| Science              | 1     |
| Current Affairs      | 1     |
| Feedback Friday      | 1     |
|                      | 25    |

| Year 11              | Hours |
|----------------------|-------|
| English              | 3     |
| Maths                | 4     |
| ICT                  | 3     |
| PE                   | 3     |
| Vocational Studies   | 1     |
| Princes Trust        | 2     |
| History              | 1     |
| Food                 | 3     |
| Literacy             | 1     |
| Did you Know? (PSHE) | 1     |
| Science              | 1     |
| Current Affairs      | 1     |
| Feedback Friday      | 1     |
|                      | 25    |

| Year 12               | Hours |
|-----------------------|-------|
| ASDAN                 | 6     |
| Functional Skills E/M | 4     |
| Did you Know? (PSHE)  | 1     |
| Social Stories        | 1     |
|                       | 12    |

## Enrichment

An additional enrichment programme includes a range of sporting activities and extra learning opportunities throughout the year. Study support is also available especially for Year 10 and Year 11 depending on the individuals' learning needs. One to One intervention is used for students who wish to have additional sessions after school for academic subjects. Students will have access to a number of trips throughout the year ranging from local trips for coffee (to build social skills) to trips to the City of London (to experience the city for the first time), this may include trips to the theatre and other attractions that students may have not experienced.

## Curriculum Reviews

Curriculum reviews happen once a term and are led by the senior leadership team. The purpose of a curriculum review is to get a clear understanding of what the learning experience is of a student per year group and per lesson. The information gathered from a curriculum review largely comes from learning environment drop ins (LED's); book scrutiny and student voice and typically focuses on:

- Student understanding of how they are being assessed
- Engagement
- Enjoyment of lessons
- Quality of teaching
- Literacy

- Knowledge retention
- Quality of feedback and marking
- Progress of key groups

Throughout the term there will be learning environment drop ins, LED's, that will capture the climate and learning environment of lessons.

## **Transition**

It is of paramount importance to us that we work closely with our referring schools to ensure a smooth transition across all year groups.

Once students are referred we follow a simple admission process. This will then include all academic and pastoral reports being transferred to support the student. All students will complete a transition day and induction. This includes baseline testing, and the completion of a student passport to support any safeguarding, pastoral and academic concerns that may have been raised. Following the learning passport and admission process, if required, a bespoke curriculum will be put in place to support transition and re-engagement with their learning. Any pastoral barriers that have been identified will be addressed and any support needed will be arranged for a smooth transition. The DSL, DDSL, or LAC/CiC will attend any agency meetings to support transition. These will include PEP's, CiN, CP or any other professional meetings to ensure all information is shared, understood and an action plan is implemented to support the admission to a new setting.

## **Assessment**

### Assessment principles:

- one assessment system for both year groups 10 & 11 with common language and approach;
- grades awarded for progress to take account of;
- starting points and previous academic report (including their expected grades);
- assessment targets will be set on the baseline assessments completed by students on their transition day.

### Sub Levels:

We use .3, .6 and .9 to account for sub levels (e.g. 4.3, 4.6, 4.9) – whilst this is not mathematically exact it is a method for identifying those almost working at the next level and those who are at risk of falling behind into the previous level and those that are close to achieving a higher level. These are also easier for analysis than symbols when using the reporting system.

There are four layers of Assessment:

- knowledge tests
- formal assessments
- PPE exams
- GCSE exams

### **Knowledge Tests**

These are low stake, mini tests that are summative of classroom learning and home-learning (where applicable). In terms of frequency, these should happen at least twice a half term but should be on a regular basis. Students are given a score in all knowledge tests, which will be tracked by the subject teacher and then discussed with the class teacher and the DHT for Assessment. These can be used to support the learning and work towards the Rosenshine principles that teaching staff will use as strategies to ensure learning has taken place and progress can be understood.

### **Formal Assessments**

These are high stake and such assessments would be cumulative of the topics studied so far. Knowledge tests and home learning (where applicable) would stem from these, so planning in advance is essential. Formal Assessments are quality assured centrally. The results of these assessments will directly correlate with the grade given in a data drop.

### **Pre-Public Exams (PPEs)**

These are representative of the GCSE (or equivalent) exams and marked according to the GCSE mark scheme. Year 11 will have 2 PPE sessions, November and March, plus their final exams. Year 10 will have 3 PPE sessions across the year, November, March and June.

### **Reports**

Parents and referring school or agency will receive 3 reports throughout the year, these will include:

- progress data report for each subject
- subject report with written comments from their form tutor

### **Academic Review Day**

Each term an academic review day will take place with students. These meetings take place face to face and virtually in the last week of the term. Staff review the progress, both pastorally and academically, that students have made and review what support students need to make the expected progress. All meetings are recorded and shared with the students and families.

### **Impact**

Our curriculum aims to ensure that students make progress and achieve the necessary qualifications they need to take their next step in further education or work. Students acquire the cultural capital they need to be good citizens and can make informed decisions regarding their future.

When students arrive they have a number of complex barriers that have had a negative impact on their prior learning. Our enhanced pastoral support, enables students to re-engage in education and develop strategies to support them to remove barriers that have previously impacted them and their education, allowing them to experience success, progress academically and be the best version of themselves.