

Barley Lane School

Hard work, humility, kindness

The curriculum 2018-19

Three priorities inform what we offer the children:

- Firstly the notion of equality of entitlement to as challenging and credible and diverse a curriculum as any student in mainstream including GCSE and equivalent accreditation consistent with our core belief that *"The children and young people in our care are innately good, bursting with learning potential and as bright and capable as any student anywhere."*
- Secondly the need for each teacher to be flexible and innovative and make learning meaningful and accessible for young people often disconnected and disaffected from and by school and learning our teaching and learning policy sets out, *"the dignity and credibility of our specialist work is built on **all teachers** being "leaders" in their classrooms and subjects and being resourceful, problem solving and creative not excuse making and at upper pay levels it is proportionate to expect sustained high performance"*
- Thirdly as a result of priorities one and two intelligent differentiation and dynamic and pragmatic personalisation that meets the diverse and shifting needs of an equally dynamic and eclectic student body as they mature and move through the school and key stages and with our support their future aspirations and plans start to coalesce so next steps beyond school become naturally clear and achievable; the on-going development of vocational education at college and the workplace has been notable and in school improvement last year 2016-17 it was prioritised, *"The continued and developed use of alternative provision, personalised packages and vocational learning that has proven repeatedly successful in its inclusive impact on both individuals and wider community"*

The spirit of the curriculum offer

We must then deliver the prescribed curriculum and subject specialisms but do so in a specialist setting where we must mediate and innovate so learning is engaging and practical and relevant to the young people...and fun !

We must constantly reflect on augment and innovate and provide enrichment opportunities so students experience a diversity of learning in a variety of settings including sporting, cultural, social and vocational ; on the playing-field, in a canoe, up a rope, on the trail, in the theatre and the museum, in restaurants and shops, in the workplace and the workshop and through fun and play in school and beyond in their communities and in any and every other way we can explore and innovate for them.

What is taught should drive and embed a love of learning in all the variety and diversity that brings both economic well-being and personal happiness.

School improvement always privileges key characteristics

- i. The humility to recognise where practice has frailties and standards are slipping and behaviour and learning are at risk and the humility too to speak up and seek help to improve;
- ii. Continuously seeking to understand the children better in all their diversity and complexity, spark and challenge and being a “present” and active listener and contributor to and sometimes leader of the shifting and dynamic conversation formal and informal about best-practice;
- iii. Consistently demonstrating the graft and energy to make real both emerging and the established best practice we have learned and shared and set out over time through bloody hard work and being alive and open to new ideas and ways of working.

Different routes for different children the actual offer

One common and apparently contradictory characteristic of the children and young people in our care is their diversity and difference and like all children as they mature their strengths and interests develop and shift. Throughout there is often the powerful residual hurt and uncertainty about the whole business of learning that must be supported and softened and having the right opportunities and blend of learning key in this.

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| Strand or route | 1. Critical core subjects | 2. Options to tackle a range of other academic subjects | 3. Vocational and work based learning* | 4. Access to enriching sporting, social and cultural activities | 5. Access to mentoring, counselling and therapeutic support |
| | Education with character is imbued throughout as is the pursuit of recurrent EHCP goals of :greater self-awareness and self-control; building positive relationships with peers and adults and accepting adult direction. | | | | |
| Rationale | To be literate, numerate and IT literate critical to future economic wellbeing and personal worth and dignity. Access to next step learning and career opportunities | It has been too easy in the past to narrow the opportunities for SEMH students and studying arrange of subjects to GCSE is both an entitlement and fun. Evidencing you are a rounded learner and person improves access to future learning and career opportunities. | To ensure academic opportunities are promoted is not to diminish the value and pertinence and powerful draw of vocational learning Shakespeare and brick laying both things of beauty ;-) The balance and variety of setting and subject and activity has proven beyond question critical to keeping our young people engage and motivated. | It is a healthy legacy of the residential model for SEMH the notion of having fun and developing esteem and insight and character by experiencing a range of physical, social and cultural experiences from abseiling to opera; rounded happy people have enthusiasms and interests. Many of our young people have limited opportunities outside school. | SEMH is something we make clear we all experience and it is an impediment to our learning, happiness and wellbeing. For many students the “good relationships” with staff and flexible curriculum ameliorate and support them but for a significant minority there is a need for more specialist support. |
| Content | English, Maths, Science, IT | Art, PE, Humanities, English literature, Media Studies, DT, Home Cooking Skills, Improving Health and Nutrition, Exercise Studies | Catering, Construction, Automotive engineering, Mechanics, Agricultural studies, work placements | A range of outdoor education opportunities for example climbing and abseiling. A range of social and cultural activities from football matches to the English Touring Opera. | In-house mentoring and qualified specialist counselling. THRIVE and emotional literacy. Access to mentoring at SWIS and 1-1 Close working with social care and family support services and other supporting professionals for example EPS and EWS |
| Accreditation | GCSE, AQA functional skills L1 L2, NCFE L1 L2, BTEC L2 | GCSE, NCFE L1 L2, WJEC L2 L3 | BTEC L1, ABC L1, IMIAL EL3, | John Muir Award, DoE, NICAS L1 L2 L3, BCU 1&2 star, MIAS L1 L2 | |
| | Each student builds a route across strands so for example an academic child would be loaded to the left an able student in vocational learning to the right that said all must access 1. Core subjects. *access from KS3 Y9 | | | Every student has access to a range of activities | The more complex and vulnerable the child the greater the access. |

The offer as children and young people move through key stages

All children will be profiled and their personal “offer” reviewed annually and a balance and blend sought from the above menu in step with their needs, age and key stage.

For some ongoing monitoring and tweaking and developing of their personalised “offer” will be needed others will move more predictably and securely through a conventional route.

Sometimes in crisis radical change is needed for example a period of off-site mentoring and tutoring and a supported reintegration to school.

Predictable and embedded routines and expectations characterise the learning environment at KS2/3 but this shifts and in KS4 what is taught is incrementally and increasingly highly personalised and GCSEs are taken early in this specialist and very particular setting to allow young people to stay motivated and engaged and pursue the vocational learning that many will continue beyond school in college and the workplace.

At KS2 a thematic model is still used and the children have a class teacher but as the unit is attached to a secondary school and occupies a discrete space but the same site the children and young people can access specialist classrooms and teachers in PE, Science and IT for example and this also prepares them for the transition to KS3.

Some children can remain in the primary school for longer if their needs best met by that stability and in a small pragmatic flexible special school we have created “bridge” or transition classes where children remain with their primary teacher but access the secondary school for breakfast, lunch school meetings and break times.

Access to 4 “enriching sporting, social and cultural activities” and 5 “mentoring, counselling and therapeutic support” supplements and supports the core curriculum.

At KS3 (and KS4) a secondary specialist teaching model is used and children move in groups organised by ability and social mix and compatibility between subject specialist secondary teachers.

There is a primary class embedded in the secondary school for children and young people who need the consistency, stability and support a familiar and ever present teacher provides.

In year 9 vocational learning opportunities open up alongside 4 and 5 broadening the opportunity to personalise further.

At KS4 as described above the curriculum offer is “*incrementally and increasingly highly personalised*” and in the grid above “*Each student builds a route across strands so for example an academic child would be loaded to the left an able student in vocational learning to the right that said all must access 1. Core subjects.*”

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