Curriculum policy

The Beech House School

Approved by:	Camilla McInnes
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The Beech House School General Curriculum Policy

Introduction

The Beech House School provides a bespoke educational experience for children and young people aged 11 to 18, encompassing Key Stages 2 through 4. Students aged 16 and above may either continue with Key Stage 4 qualifications or engage in college courses, supported through part-time study at the school. Our provision is co-educational and uniquely designed to meet the needs of looked after children residing at The Beech House, Cherry Blossom, or Willow Lodge.

Vision and Philosophy

At Beech House, we recognise that our pupils have often experienced significant trauma, loss, and instability. We adopt a trauma-informed approach across all aspects of school life, creating a nurturing, therapeutic, and holistic environment that complements the ethos of our care homes.
Our small school model ensures high staff-to-student ratios, facilitating strong, safe, and consistent relationships—essential for rebuilding trust, resilience, and emotional regulation. We prioritise emotional safety, relational repair, and co-regulation while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters academic growth, vocational readiness, and social-emotional development.
Through predictable routines, boundaried role-modelling, and individually tailored timetables, we support each pupil's journey toward healing, self-worth, and academic success. Our curriculum promotes not only knowledge acquisition but also the development of empathy, identity, and a sense of agency.

Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum is underpinned by the National Curriculum for England, with adaptations made to suit the unique developmental, emotional, and educational needs of each child. We seek to:

- Re-engage pupils in learning through personalised, meaningful content.
- Provide opportunities for success to build confidence and intrinsic motivation.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity, and reflective thinking.
- Offer consistency and structure, which is particularly important for children who have experienced chaotic or unpredictable environments.

"It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said; and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement."
– National Curriculum Framework Document

Core Aims and Purposes

In line with the National Curriculum values and aims, our provision is designed to achieve the following overarching goals:

Aim 1: Promote Academic and Personal Achievement

- Provide a broad, balanced, and engaging curriculum tailored to individual needs.
- Nurture a love of learning and build the capacity for independent and collaborative work.
- Develop essential skills in literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and problem solving.
- Foster creative, critical, and innovative thinking.
- Encourage pupils to lead healthy lives, develop physical skills, and make safe choices.

Aim 2: Support Holistic Development

- Promote spiritual, moral, social, and cultural awareness.
- Foster self-esteem, emotional wellbeing, and meaningful relationships.
- Build resilience and support pupils to manage adversity and change.
- Prepare pupils for the transitions and challenges of adulthood.
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and confidence to navigate future learning, employment, and community life.

Curriculum Implementation by Key Stage

Key Stage 2

While students rarely join us at Key Stage 2, we are equipped to offer late-primary provision, particularly for Year 6 pupils. Emphasis is placed on foundational literacy and numeracy, with tailored 1:1 support to address emotional needs and ease transitional anxieties. Individualised lesson planning ensures pupils receive appropriate academic and therapeutic input.

Key Stages 3 & 4

Following a comprehensive assessment, pupils access a differentiated curriculum which includes:

- **Functional Skills (English & Maths):** Entry Level 1–3, Level 1 & 2
- **GCSE Subjects:** English Language, English Literature, Maths, Science (Double Award), Sociology, Psychology
- **Vocational Qualifications:** Entry Level 1–3, Level 1 & 2 (delivered over three days per week per academic year)
- **AQA Unit Awards** and additional accreditation pathways

Learning progresses at the student's own pace within a structured, emotionally safe environment. Teachers scaffold lessons using small, achievable outcomes that build confidence and competence.

Additional Curriculum Considerations

- **Careers and Work-Related Learning**
- **Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)** These areas are fully integrated into the wider curriculum to support personal development and future planning.

Trauma-Informed Teaching Practice

Beech House staff are trained in trauma-informed practice, recognising that emotional regulation and trust-building are prerequisites to effective learning. Teachers work collaboratively across disciplines, embedding therapeutic principles in every lesson. Cross-curricular links are encouraged to deepen engagement and build secure attachments to learning.

Personalised Timetables and Flexible Learning Spaces

Given our small-scale setting (two primary classrooms), we utilise various learning environments to create dynamic, responsive timetables:

- **Therapeutic Spaces**: Outbuildings used for art, music, and therapy.
- **Outdoor Learning**: Gardening and play within the house gardens.
- **Community-Based Learning**: PE in local leisure centres and college placements in nearby venues.

This approach supports movement, sensory regulation, and the practical application of skills—crucial elements in trauma recovery.

. Transitions and Progression

Transitions are carefully planned, recognising that change can be a significant trigger for looked after children. Key Stage 2 pupils receive additional support to settle in. At Key Stages 3 and 4, transitions are managed with clear routines and consistent adult support. As pupils prepare to move on, we focus on life skills, vocational readiness, and emotional preparation for post-16 pathways.

Staff Collaboration

Beech House educators are skilled in teaching across multiple age ranges and subjects. Frequent communication during non-contact time ensures consistency and coherence across the curriculum. Staff work collectively to maintain the emotional and educational continuity that our pupils require.