



Curriculum Policy

September 2023

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Approved by: Chair of Trustees

Principal: Neil Bain

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1. Wemms Curriculum Statement.

Intent

At all key stages, the overall intent is each student engages, achieves, and makes the most personal progress they can over time to enable them to have the most fulfilling, enjoyable, and independent life possible. We aim to provide a rich curriculum that is matched to every student in the school so they fulfil their potential, thrive in school and are successful.

The school has mapped out:

- The National Curriculum subjects provide a context for cross- curricular delivery to engage students in learning both skills and knowledge, with a focus on the 12 month outcomes set with parents/carers at annual review of the EHCP. Some students will access elements in the continuum in the subject specific skills and knowledge based on their next steps.
- In Key Stage 2 and 3 we aim for our students to cover a wide range of subjects to ensure they have a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding. This supports them in making informed choices for their GCSE subjects. We aim for our curriculum to be relevant, bespoke, exciting and provide a positive learning experience for all our learners.
- As we are aspirational for all students, they are supported and encouraged to gain the EBacc qualification in Key Stage 4, as this gives them options for further study and future careers. It also provides equality of opportunity with their peers in other schools.
- In Key Stage 5 we want our students to have an appropriate curriculum which will prepare them for the next stage in their journey, be that college, university and work. We pride ourselves on knowing every student extremely well and providing a curriculum that is well suited to their needs and aspirations.
- For students who are working towards/within subject specific learning, the school has mapped out the intended progression of skills and knowledge leading to the end points that are outlined in the National Curriculum. Students work on 12 month outcomes set with parents/carers at annual review of EHCP. The outcomes target key next steps to achieve and retain.

For each student, their next step will be based on their assessed previous skills and knowledge rather than for their age or year group; it will be highly personalised. The curriculum provides the opportunity for students to access a broad, balanced and connected curriculum that is ambitious for all our learners but accessible according to the specific needs of our students.

The following form the foundation of all delivery:

- Engagement and enjoyment.
- Communication and understanding.
- Personal and social development including increasing awareness of self, their own emotions and relationships with others.
- Communication skills particularly in social situations.
- Independence including life-skills.
- Academic achievement.

Progression is not necessarily just about movement up a ladder of skills and knowledge. Lateral progression is important so that our students can apply the skills and knowledge that have been learned. We aim for our students to have a breadth of knowledge that can be applied to different contexts, situations, with different people, in different environments. We use adaptive teaching according to the individual needs of all students.

We support our students in knowledge and skill retention by embedding knowledge and skills into the long term memory – to know more, do more and remember more.

We want all students to have a successful transition into and out of our setting.

Implementation

The Wemms Education Centre provides high quality teaching. Teachers carefully assess each students' abilities. Teachers work with parents/carers and any linked professionals to target the next key steps in priority areas that include communication/understanding, personal and social development and key skills. These are agreed through 12 month outcomes set as part of the EHCP process and are reviewed every 6 months with parents/carers. Teachers also plan the next individual student steps in all curriculum areas. Teaching is informed by the planned and sequenced knowledge and skills in all areas.

Alongside this, teachers identify the strategies that each student needs to access the curriculum and engage to achieve and make progress. This is individual to each student. Strategies include: Intensive Interaction, structured visual support, work/reward/ multi-sensory delivery, repetition and keeping focus with changes of delivery method to facilitate engagement. Teachers use a range of strategies to support students to learn and retain information. In partnership with parent/carers, elements of an NHS health linked professional therapy program may be implemented or integrated into the school day, balanced with the educational access to the wider curriculum e.g. Salt provision or OT.

English and Maths are taught through an academic route or if necessary through daily functional skills sessions and timetabled lessons. They are based on careful assessment of students' abilities and needs and their progressive sequenced next step of learning. Students are also supported through the whole curriculum where communication and understanding, early literacy and Maths skills, knowledge and personal development are integrated into all learning as appropriate. The sequence of learning, as it is in all subjects, is personal to student or groups of students based on their prior learning. Engagement in learning is central to all. Maths and English have a bank of resources and activities that can support teachers in the work with each student. Any gaps in the learning process, caused by extended periods of absence due to ill health or a break down of educational provision, are identified and dealt with.

The curriculum overview outlines the units of work for other subjects to be delivered across the rolling program. This therefore allows students to be grouped in classes based on a range of factors e.g. student needs, abilities and friendships. The content has been carefully planned to enable repetition over time.

Students with specific learning difficulties, may access a reduced number of units to enable time for other priorities. This may be short term, to allow support for more academic units to be put in place e.g. working with animals off site at Elysian Animal Therapy Centre. For younger students new to Wemms Education Centre, the planned curriculum units provide a theme/context for delivery as individually appropriate. Older students focus on GCSE subject based units, using the guidelines of the National Curriculum. Students work on cross curricular priority areas of learning often including those set in the 12 month outcomes of the EHCP. The planned curriculum units enable students to access a wide range of creative and exciting planned activities to extend and build on known interests and motivations. The curriculum

theme also enables repetition to sustain each student's achievements. There is an intensive focus on all aspects of communication and personal outcomes and engagement through the themes. Staff work continually to model social behaviour at lunch time and breaks to facilitate and encourage development in areas that may be anxiety inducing or uncomfortable. The planned units lead to shared opportunities for all, to learn together and it does not ceiling student's progress. There are opportunities to co-learn with staff, on a First Aid Course, for example.

Please see below for a comprehensive list of study offered at Wemms Education Centre.

- **KS 2**
English, Maths, History, Geography, MFL, Music, PE, Art, Science, Drama, PSHE, DT
- **KS3**
English, Maths, Computing, Art, DT, Drama, History, Geography, MFL, Music, PE, PSHE, Science
- **KS4 and 5**
Drama, PE, PSHE, Art.

In addition, students study their GCSE subjects which include:

- English Language
 - English Literature
 - Maths
 - Science – Triple or Double
 - Geography
 - History
 - Sociology
 - Psychology
 - Modern Foreign Language
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- **A Level**
 - English Literature
 - Maths
 - Biology
 - Chemistry
 - Physics
 - French
 - German
 - Spanish
 - Psychology
 - Sociology
 - Politics
 - History
 - Geography
 - Art History

2. Enrichment- wider personal development opportunities

The curriculum provides many enriching creative learning contexts. Other wider opportunities are provided such as whole school projects linked to citizenship;

- Remembrance Day, Enterprise Week and Thanksgiving.
- We develop links to events as they arise, such as the Olympics and National celebrations.
- We use external coaches/ professionals or internal program to enrich our curriculum. These include links to sports, arts, science and driving lessons for students where appropriate.
- We have off timetable days which are carefully planned such as World Book Day, Arts or Science days.
- Personal development is taught through tutor time, assemblies, PSHE lessons, student leadership, careers.
- We teach British Values through lessons and educational visits.

3. Impact

The aspiration for all students who attend the Wemms Education Centre is that they achieve their potential in all aspects of their development. All students who attend the Wemms Education Centre have high anxiety. Many students have additional needs such as Autism, ADHD, PDA, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and some physical impairment e.g. Dyspraxia or Hyper-mobility. We work in a determined way to ensure that all students can achieve the most they can.

The outcome of the curriculum is highly individual. All achievement and progress is celebrated. Progress for our students can be demonstrated by:

- Students making progress towards/achieving their intended outcomes set with parents/carers for 12 months within the EHCP annual meetings. These outcomes are informed by any relevant professionals working with the students.
- Students making progress towards outcomes when reviewed in 6 month review meetings with parents/carers.
- Students making progress/achieving in the curriculum planned by teachers. Progress and achievement in all subjects are within reports to parents in either EHCP (annual review) report or annual Curriculum report and Academic Review days.
- Achieving external accreditation for secondary aged students e.g. the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
- Working towards and achieving GCSE and A level qualifications.
- For those who do not wish to follow an academic path, provision is made to access Apprenticeships, or study a subject of interest at college e.g. cooking as a career.
- Using existing skills in a wider range of contexts.
- Supported transition within, in and out of the setting.

4. Curriculum Aims

Our curriculum aims/intends to:

- At the least, meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- Provide a broad and balanced education for all students that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment.
- Enable students to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations.
- To promote social and communication skills often lacking in SEND students.
- To provide individual and personal strategies that are helpful in ameliorating the effects of anxiety and discomfort in unfamiliar situations.
- Support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Support students' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active.
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning.
- Ensure equal access to learning for all students, with high expectations for every student and appropriate levels of challenge and support.
- Have a high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all students.
- Equip students with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- To promote new experiences and expand understanding, courage and self-determination in order to cope with life.
- To promote personal growth, self belief and confidence.
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Aims specific to secondary schools include:

- Providing subject choices that support students' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals.
- Providing a broad curriculum prioritising a strong academic core of subjects, such as those offered in the EBacc.
- Developing students' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment.
- To encourage understanding of the value of transferable skills in employment.

5. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#).

It also 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 set out in the Department for Education's Governance.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Trustees

The Board of Trustees will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

The Trustees will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets. The Academic Working Party meets regularly and reports to the Trustees. The Working Party has a remit to develop the academic framework, to consider the data capture process, to assess and record progress and to facilitate departmental planning, allowing the setting of clear targets with measurable outcomes. The new Report Tracker is being trialled now, which will allow students who are struggling to be identified and offered support through appropriate strategies such as the Homework Club.
- Enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the requirements of the funding agreement and to ensure that all subjects have sufficient allocated time to allow the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met. Some subjects, e.g. PSHE may require greater provision due to the needs of SEND students.
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, in accordance with SEND provision.
- All courses provided for students below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the Secretary of State.
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- The school fully participates actively with the Trustees in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum. A report on the Academic Progress and planning for the school will be delivered to the Trustees on the 13th December 2023 and any recommendations will be brought to the Trustees for their consideration and action.
- Students from year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, which is appropriately resourced. The School subscribes to the UNIFROG careers platform as a source of advice and information which is well regarded by students for the breadth of information and ease of use. The Wemms Education Centre visits career fairs at Epsom Racecourse and Surrey University each year, taking students from year 10 upwards with an individual mentor to support them.
- Speakers come in from independent organisations through Assemblies, workshops and activity days.
- Vocational courses on carpentry and plastering have been attended by some of the older students; some leavers have attended animal husbandry courses.
- The Academic Working Party is investigating expanding the options for students who do not wish to follow an academic pathway, particularly but not exclusively, in apprenticeships.

6.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met.
- That SOW appropriate to the teaching of the National Curriculum are in place and are used effectively to create a coherent delivery, commensurate with the requirements of the National Curriculum strategy.

- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Board of Trustees.
- That the school manages correctly requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate.
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.
- The Board of Trustees is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- The Board of Trustees is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions.
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs.
- That the school is complying with its funding agreement with LEAs and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, Maths, Science, Humanities and Modern Foreign Languages as well as PSHE, PE, Music, Art, Drama and Life Skills.

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

- The academic provision of the school is separated into subject faculties, overseen by a Head of Department. Their responsibility is to ensure the smooth operation of the department, co-ordinate schemes of work, share good practice, create and implement the department action plan, oversee progress and appropriate record keeping, implement action to help failing students, line manage staff and mentor new or training staff.

7. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all students. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able students.
- Students with low prior attainment.
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Students with SEN.
- Students with English as an additional language (EAL). As of September 2023, the school has no students for whom English is a second language. However, the school is mindful of the likelihood of this changing.

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of students whose first language is not English, should the need arise. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help students to develop their English, and to support students to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

Monitoring takes place discreetly as most of the students find the concept of testing induces anxiety. Small quizzes, individual questions, paragraphs delivered at the end of a lesson over

consecutive days (rather than a complete essay) are more effective than offering a 'test'. Records are kept by individual teachers and fed into departmental spreadsheets, stored on-line.

- SENCO provide specialist testing e.g. YARC and DASH tests, amongst others, that allow an overall picture of ability at a point in time. This starting point allows for planning for development, individual targets to be decided and progress to be recorded. The Academic Working Party have developed a data capture system, at present entitled the Report Tracker which records progress and development and is being trialled now. This will be presented to the Trustees on the 13th December 2023 and will be modified if appropriate, further to the findings of the Working Party and the endorsement of the Trustees.
- Each department provides an appropriate Learning Ladder, a half termly record of progress for each individual child, kept in their books but also on Sharepoint.
- SMT individually follow a Learning Walk each week. This is a successful way to monitor best practice but also allows SMT to see and celebrate other departments achievements and to gain an overall knowledge of the school progress. This has been an uplifting and enjoyable addition to the monitoring process and will continue. The students enjoy the process of celebrating their achievements and the staff enjoy seeing what is happening in the school.
- Book checks occur half termly, supervised by the Heads of Departments. Reports are made to the Board of Trustees at Trustee meetings. Heads of Departments also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.
- Academic Review Days allow parents to meet teachers and discuss their child's progress. These take place at least once a year after school. This is under review at present.
- Reports are currently sent home termly. However, a working party is in the process of reviewing present practice.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Principal and the Board of Trustees. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full Board of Trustees. The results will be shared by the staff and available on Sharepoint.