

# Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy

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Embleton View

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## **Our Vision**

Embleton View strives to provide an outstanding provision through delivering a person-centred curriculum and therapeutic approach.

## **Our Ethos**

Supporting students in overcoming barriers to learning and life. We believe our School should nurture all individuals in their journey to achieve their full and unique potential. We are committed to developing a safe and stimulating learning environment that enables our students to become responsible citizens and lifelong learners. We welcome students from all backgrounds and value their different experiences, interests and strengths, which influence the way they learn and develop as people.

## **Our Curriculum**

Embleton View provides breadth and balance that reflect personal interests in our programmes, to motivate students who are disaffected to re-engage with education and to embrace the concept of learning.

We want to be sure our students are clear about what we are teaching and how this will benefit them both in the term and as they progress through their transition into adulthood. We need to be able to measure outcomes to be sure we are maximising success for all students; therefore, our planning, monitoring and evaluation is systematic, collaborative and linked to the Embleton View School Development Plan.

We want our students to acquire knowledge and learn new skills, but we realise that, in a community like Embleton View, there needs to be a therapeutic dimension to each day.

Students have support via their Learning Coaches (LC) in any learning environment and it is possible for them to take time out where necessary to calm and reassure them. Students have a Behaviour Intervention Plan and Risk Assessment, which outline individual considerations regarding strategies to deal with emotional escalation.

Therefore, this curriculum has been carefully designed to allow for time and opportunities to address students' often complex needs for the time that they are with us; also, to prepare them for adult life.

Above all, we believe in engendering in young people a love of and commitment to lifelong learning. Embleton View ensures that the curriculum gives all students experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education.

## **Areas of experience**

We strive to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that is personalised and reflects the students' needs and interests. The School gives experience in the following areas:

**Communication:** We aim to develop students' communication skills and increase their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing.

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As a School, we believe that creating a culture of reading is a vital tool in ensuring our students are given the best life chances. This enables them to build on their skills independently through a real curiosity and thirst for knowledge. The following principles are at the forefront of our approach to reading.

- Reading is challenging. We develop our understanding and command of the English language through our experience of and exposure to interesting and challenging texts.
- Reading is varied. Students are aware of a range of methods to decode text and access reading materials and their meaning.
- Reading is inspirational. We are enthused and stimulated by what we read and use the ideas and techniques that we have experienced when reading to inform our own written and spoken work across a wide range of study areas.
- Reading supports learning through the various transitional steps needed into adult life.

The differentiation of the teaching of reading means that the Learning & Development Coordinator (LDC) can better plan activities which allow students to access reading skills. It also allows the LDC to work with the students that need it the most at that time. Differentiation can be achieved in many ways, including varying the difficulty of the text the students are working on, the questions the LDC is asking them and the level of scaffolded support they are receiving.

Students need to be aware of the reading skills they are using in order to give them a greater understanding of what makes a well-rounded reader. Instead of having long winded wordy objectives they are broken down into 5 simple steps:

- Decode (word reading)
- Explain (explaining unfamiliar words and developing vocabulary)
- Retrieve (finding information in the text)
- Interpret (inference skills)
- Choice (the choices of the author and genre e.g.: fiction/non-fiction)

Increased writing instruction that focuses not merely on writing, but on writing strategies, planning, and organisation, can benefit students for the rest of their lives. Increased confidence with writing skills can help students to be more effective in communicating their understanding of core curriculum and learning standards, allowing students to better demonstrate their knowledge across the curriculum and to express their concerns and questions in a way to help further their personal understanding. At Embleton View we use explicit, interactive, scaffolded instruction in planning and composing strategies to support students to develop their writing skills.

**Mathematical:** This area helps students to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics is developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration, discussion and application to everyday situations.

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**Scientific:** This area is concerned with increasing students' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

**Technological:** Technological skills can include the use of ICT; developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products.

**Human and social:** This area is concerned with people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. The subjects of history and geography make a strong contribution to this area.

**Physical:** This area aims to develop students' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Students also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

**Aesthetic and creative:** This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creative aspects in all subjects, but some make a particularly strong contribution, including art and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical responses.

**Personal and Social Development:** This is delivered through a holistic approach which incorporates PSHEE, British Values, SMSC and RSE.

### **Considerations and Flexibility**

The delivery of this curriculum must acknowledge other considerations, most of which are due to the profile of our students and their circumstances. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum catering for students with very individual needs, therefore some subject areas are covered through cross-curricula projects.

### **Subjects and qualifications available**

1. English (Entry Level 1 - Level 2)
2. Mathematics (Entry Level 2 - Level 2)
3. GCSE Maths
4. GCSE English
5. Digital Skills (Entry Level 2 - Level 2)
6. NCFE Preparing to Learn (Level 1 – Level 2)
7. NCFE Level 1 Award in Exploring Occupational Studies
8. Workskills (Entry Level 3 - Level 2)

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9. NCFE Level 1 CV Writing
10. NCFE Level 1 – Level 2 in Volunteering
11. NOCN Level 1 Award/Certificate in Horticulture
12. NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Cookery
13. NOCN Level 1 Award in Joinery
14. ASDAN Bronze and Silver
15. ASDAN Short Course in Creative Arts
16. ASDAN Short Course in History
17. ASDAN Short Course in Geography
18. NCFE Level 1 Certificate in PE
19. PSD - BTEC Pre-Vocational Study Awards and Certificates (Entry Level 2 – Level 2)
20. Duke of Edinburgh
21. PSHEE and SMSC

Embleton View incorporates British Values, Safeguarding and the PREVENT agenda within core subject areas highlighted above. **For more details on how our School promotes SMSC and prevent extremism, please see our: 'SMSC' and Prevent Policies**

Our students have a range of Social, Emotional and Mental Health problems (SEMH), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other forms of SEN. Students often arrive distressed with experience of trauma and can be subject to sudden changes of placement due to circumstances outside their (and our) control. Embleton View has the capacity to be adaptable and flexible.

We work as a team within Embleton View to ensure effective communication is established and maintained. Timetables may have to be adapted to deal with issues when they arise as a matter of urgency and emergency meetings may have to take precedence over organised activities.

Time and effort are made to include all staff in training and planning to ensure consistency of ethos and approaches. Staff are made aware that documents must be suitable for a wider audience within the system and may be used to make decisions regarding the future placements of a student in years to come.

### **The Structure of the Curriculum**

We offer subject-specific teaching towards qualifications and implement a cross-curricular approach utilising several awarding organisations. We deliver Unit Awards in other core subjects as it allows us to deliver a broad, balanced and differentiated programme which also provides short-term or long-term accreditation. This reflects the need for our students to quickly become successful students and gives us the flexibility for short-term placements when required.

Some students may not be able to cope with a full day of classroom-based learning and therefore follow a bespoke programme designed to meet their needs. These students benefit from extension

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and alternative activities to supplement their sessions, which are provided by the staff team. Our aim is always to work towards a full-time curriculum.

Structure and consistency are vital; there are opportunities built into the timetable where students may have a choice from a selection of agreed activities, or for our range of provided therapies, or individual learning time with an LDC. This balance is constantly monitored and reviewed to ensure we are responding appropriately to needs as they arise or change. A further advantage to the way that our curriculum is structured is that there are clear opportunities to link learning objectives to the long-term and annual learning objectives from each student's EHCP.

Embleton View utilises partnerships with fellow providers to provide diverse learning and enrichment opportunities. This allows students to build their confidence, broaden their knowledge within different environments and build new relationships.

### **Courses and Programmes**

The awarding organisations provide a structured, varied and differentiated programme of work which complements the National Curriculum, providing accreditation and links for cross-curricular work which can be delivered by LDCs with the support of LCs. Units can be delivered in sequence, to fit with other topic/project work or student-chosen areas of interest, or as one-off stand-alone units to meet a specific individual need.

Structured programmes have been chosen which are complemented with a wide range of resources and activities. Staff are collaborative in the planning process and evaluation of training, and to identify and introduce any courses or adaptations which can meet an identified need or personal interest for students (and which is linked to Embleton View's School Development Plan.)

### **Attainment**

Embleton View has a clear procedure in place for measuring how we have raised attainment. Students complete a baseline assessment in their first six weeks once enrolled at Embleton View. This time is used to identify appropriate targets for the students for the forthcoming academic year as they may have missed a substantial amount of school time before coming to Embleton View. We incorporate information collated from an Educational Psychologist's assessment to gain a clear picture of the student's skills, understanding and learning profile.

This allows us to adjust levels of support needed, identify learning strategies and implement appropriate accreditation for the student in a personalised way.

Considered assessment takes place in all subjects. All staff are aware that, in order to judge the pace and progression of learning, regular and frequent checks on a student's knowledge, understanding and skills are required. Given the profile of our students and to ensure person-centred practice, we adjust our approach to assessment to avoid undue stress or conflict.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Learning & Development Coordinators' planning:

Embleton View follows a 'plan, do, review' process. It is important that all staff have a planning structure in place. This ensures students have a structured pattern of the day, week and term. Schemes of Work are available for all subjects for the term ahead and LDCs have daily learning  
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objectives with supporting evaluations. This allows us to keep clear links with our aims and to keep consistent records to use in evaluation. Evaluation notes are particularly important for helping us identify our future training needs or in picking up areas of concern which can be discussed in our regular meetings or through supervision, for example, where teaching strategies are successful or not, or for identifying emerging behaviour issues.

Within our small School, we have staff who teach several areas of the curriculum. Collaborative and productive planning and liaison takes place to minimise unnecessary repetition or to prevent the teaching content appearing irrelevant or unstructured to the students. This also ensures that the skills and knowledge of subject specialists are shared across the team.

Schemes of Work show planning for the projected term based on the Units of Work or adapted National Curriculum programmes of study for English and Maths. Policies and Schemes of Work are reviewed and updated at the end of each term to reflect student need.

LDCs develop the sessions for subjects for which they are responsible. They are supported by the Headteacher and Head of Education to ensure all sessions have clear direction and objectives that contribute to students' outcomes, thus maximising all learning opportunities.

LDCs' person-centred approach to planning is embedded in all teaching and learning documentation. This demonstrates that all teaching and learning documentation is specifically matched to students' learning needs and preferred style of learning. Good general teaching practice dictates that a variety of styles should be adopted and that sessions should contain opportunities for frequent changes of focus or for students to engage in practical work wherever possible in the expectation that our students may not be able to sustain long periods of concentration on a given task.

Emotional output which can result in disruptive or challenging behaviour may be the result of inadequate planning, therefore LDCs use planning to anticipate predictable problem areas and have plans to avoid them. There is an element of risk assessment acknowledged in the process which takes into account the potential for disruption if students:

- Feel that they do not know what they are doing
- Feel that they cannot achieve work given
- Are self-conscious about questioning

The need for a high staff/student ratio at Embleton View is in recognition of the specific needs of our students and the importance of flexibility within or outside of the formal learning environment.

### **Students' Learning Experiences**

Embleton View provides a secure and stable environment for our students in which they feel safe, have a sense of belonging and develop positive, trusting relationships with adults. Embleton View is an environment to re-engage students in learning.

We provide students with the support, knowledge and skills they will need to move forward towards gaining confidence, developing communication skills, social inclusion and personal growth.

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Embleton View provides comfortable learning environments which have all resources needed to learn, but which feel less formal than a traditional school environment where students have previously struggled.

Great emphasis is placed on celebrating students' work, both within the learning environment and through presentation to key stakeholders within a personal achievement folder. We encourage students to improve presentation by using computers and various design mediums. Key words in subject areas are also clearly on display to aid vocabulary development.

Our intention is to enrich every student's school experience and to help them to become educated and active citizens in their community, by creating an environment where they are encouraged to succeed and be the very best they can be.

Cultural capital is about preparing students with the essential knowledge, attitudes, aspirations and skills for what comes next. The exploration of new skills and experiences helps to nurture and develop a wide range of 'behaviours for learning' including resilience, curiosity and creativity. Through this journey, students develop new forms of cultural capital that make a positive difference to individual mindsets, which consequently shapes their future.

Through our curriculum, students are exposed to enrichment opportunities which allow them to experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live. Our cultural capital journey focuses on the following enrichment opportunities, which are:

- Experiencing our local and wider community – places of interest, the world of work and entertainment
- Health and Wellbeing – developing a more positive outlook on life and embracing a healthier lifestyle
- Rise to the challenges – developing resilience and a 'can do' attitude
- Expressing yourself – through writing, art and creativity
- Awe and wonder – being open to new experiences beyond their immediate neighbourhood and friendship group.

### **Meeting Students' Needs**

- Tasks and activities are planned with reference to student needs and interests. The challenge is to re-engage students who are disaffected and insecure towards education. Therefore we have to choose approaches and resources within curriculum areas which will appeal to students and encourage them to persevere with studies even when it becomes challenging.
- To achieve this, we have a robust admissions process allowing us to collect as much information about each student as possible, giving us time to get to know them in more detail through staged entry into the School.
- Our students need a structured and consistent environment, but within that there must be recognised and planned opportunities for students to have some choices within sessions and to take increased responsibility for their own learning.

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- Regular, systematic monitoring and recording allow us to build on the student's original profile and to act accordingly to address emerging and changing learning needs.

**A strong sense of community is established at the learning environment through:**

- A clear primary focus on our students and on understanding and meeting their needs, which is evident in the design and decoration of the School sites, the curriculum and the approach of our staff towards students.
- A strong staff team, who are carefully selected, and who receive regular supervision and training, which has an emphasis on team building and mutual support.
- Staff look for opportunities to praise and celebrate students' efforts and achievements in work and emotional regulation in the most appropriate manner for each student. We communicate and share efforts and accomplishments with parents/carers.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to foster a positive, approachable and calm atmosphere in the School sites at all times. Staff are trained in therapeutic approaches.

**Thrive Approach**

The Thrive Approach draws on insights from neuroscience, attachment theory and child development to provide a powerful way of working with students that supports optimal social and emotional development. In addition, the approach equips the School team to work in a targeted way with students who may have struggled with difficult or traumatic life events, to help them re-engage with life and learning. We embed the Thrive Approach within our teaching and learning practice utilising arts, outdoor education, and our personal and social development curriculum areas.

**Accommodation and Facilities**

The School sites are well maintained, of a good quality and attractively and appropriately furnished. They are decorated in a relaxed but inspiring manner. We encourage students to take ownership of their environment, fostering respect and responsibility towards it.

The buildings provide a small, nurturing and comfortable environment, with relevant learning resources available.

Health and safety issues are identified and addressed by the Headteacher, Pastoral and Operational Lead and Director of Operations.

**Organisation and use of resources and space**

The staff team work together to plan how best to use resources and space within planning meetings in addition to the planned timetable, schemes of work and session plans. We are aware of the need for flexibility and our School sites and resources allow for changes to arrangements to support individual or group learning opportunities, which may be necessary throughout the school day.

Our high staff to student ratio facilitates flexibility and all staff make full use of all available space and resources where necessary.

Textbooks, stationery, ICT resources and other equipment are clearly displayed and available.

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The Headteacher is responsible for maintaining a supply of resources and LDCs are responsible for displaying and updating students' work in an attractive, inspiring manner.

### **Staffing**

Given the necessary constraints inherent in running a small independent special school, we are committed to ensuring that there are sufficient staff to deliver an appropriate curriculum for all students.

Our links with social care professionals and other agencies also provide routes for specialist support where appropriate.

All staff receive regular supervision sessions, both formally and informally. These, along with yearly performance appraisals, contribute to the identification of individual training needs. In addition to this, all staff receive a comprehensive statutory training package. Staff identify and negotiate areas of interest for further professional development through supervision, in addition to statutory training.

Staff are encouraged to seek support and guidance from the management team at any time.

The wellbeing of staff is a priority at Embleton View, as outlined through our Staff Wellbeing Policy which is embedded across the School and continually monitored and reviewed. This ensures that staff are happy, healthy and able to perform well at work.

### **Effectiveness and deployment of staff**

A strong team ethos is considered a vital component of a successful school and to this end the core staff team work closely together.

A regular cycle of shared planning, meeting, discussion, training and evaluation ensures that there is effective teamwork amongst all staff.

Professional development opportunities are recognised and negotiated with all staff through the performance management cycle, which is managed by the Headteacher in consultation with the Board of Directors of Embleton View.

All staff (and students) are encouraged to share skills, interests and resources to make school as positive an experience as possible.

### **Self-evaluation**

Embleton View is committed to a process of continual self-evaluation using the Self Evaluation Framework for Independent Schools (Ofsted) and by working in partnership with all relevant stakeholders.

We actively gather the views of all staff. We also collate the views of students and parents/carers and external stakeholders about the quality of service provided by Embleton View.

The School has developed a model of self-evaluation which is in place to support us in our collection of valuable data. This provides a clear and workable framework to allow the Board of Directors and Senior Management of Embleton View to identify areas for development and areas of strength.

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Using the information gathered, a Self-Assessment Report and School Development Plan are produced.

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