

Curriculum Policy



In this policy:

- Our innovative curriculum, including therapies
- Teaching, learning and assessment
- English, literacy and handwriting, including how we support students with English as an additional language
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and students' Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)
- Impartial careers information, advice and guidance
- Assessment, marking & feedback

Reviewed by Governing Body: March 2023

Next Review Date: March 2024

This document outlines simply, efficiently and clearly the key things we do at Carew Academy to ensure that our students access an outstanding quality of education and make accelerated progress. All students at Carew Academy have an EHCP.

OUR CURRICULUM INTENT

Our Vision:

- To support our students to become Independent, Resilient, Ambitious and Caring individuals.

Our Aims:

At Carew Academy we strive to develop the full potential of everyone within our community.

We aim to:

- enable our students to achieve their full potential
- create a happy school where students and adults work hard and enjoy their school life in a secure and caring environment
- provide each child with access to the National Curriculum within a broad, balanced, differentiated and relevant curriculum
- emphasise the development of literacy and numeracy within the curriculum
- foster respect for the rights of individuals irrespective of their race, disability, gender, age or creed
- create a school community which supports all of its members
- develop students' ability to become independent learners and work cooperatively, preparing them for adult life
- develop students' ability to respect themselves and others
- raise students' self-esteem and self confidence

- **Carew Academy teaches all national curriculum subjects (with the exception of Modern Foreign Languages)** to students, including English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities (incorporating Geography, History and RE), Computing, Relationships and Sex Education (incorporating Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship) and Physical Education (PE) to all students, with option choices in many more subjects. The curriculum covers all subject areas, but the programme of study is suitably adapted to cater for our students.

- The curriculum design is **strongly differentiated to meet students' needs** and to incorporate the various therapies on offer, particularly Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy.

- The curriculum content is taught across three Pathways: **Skills for Life, Skills for Work and Skills for Further Education**. These ensure that the curriculum intent meets the needs of each student appropriately.

- Within the Skills for Life pathway, students study a range of subjects (including core subjects of English, Maths and Science, named as My Communication, Numeracy and World Studies respectively). All of which are designed to deliver a broad experiential curriculum that allows students to show what they can do. All subject curricula are designed to gain a breadth and depth of study. Lesson structure remains the same as the rest of the school, though with many more structured and regulatory breaks and sensory implementations taking place in each classroom to cater to the needs of the students and promote the best learning environment for them.

Wherever possible, students follow a topic based theme curriculum. This helps create a broad and connective learning approach within subjects and lessons that allows students to access new vocabulary in a cyclical reinforcement method; repetition of transferrable skills across the curriculum.

- **Our curriculum models enable students' learning to be developed sequentially over time, where learning builds from one year to another.** This ensures students are prepared for life after Carew.

- **Teachers have real flexibility to adapt their planning to meet the needs of the very complex and**

challenging students whom they know and understand well.

- **Our focus is facilitating quality opportunities for students to learn and make progress.** Teachers produce curriculum overviews which are carefully planned to build from one term to the next. Clear differentiation in meeting the needs of all individual students in the class is shown. These plans are available on the school's shared drive that all staff have access to. Students' learning is evaluated regularly and activities amended accordingly, so as to plan for real progression.
- **All parts of the school day, including break times, lunchtimes and assemblies are utilised to the full to deliver the curriculum, and to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, SMSC and British Values.**

When students join the school, they are placed on one of three Pathways: Skills for Further Education; Skills for Work and Skills for Life. These pathways determine the focus of the curriculum for students as they move through the school. Pathways are reviewed each year to ensure they remain appropriate for each student.

Key Stage 2

Carew Academy intends to offer a curriculum that builds on students' knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects. Students undertake the following subjects at key stage 2:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Art and Design
- Relationships Education
- Computing
- Food Studies (Design Technology)
- Humanities (History, Geography, RE)
- Performing Arts (Music, Dance, Drama)
- Physical Education
- Enrichment

Key Stage 3

The Key Stage 3 curriculum offer comprises a range of academic subjects. As students move into Year 8 they begin to choose options which develop their talents and areas of interest. These subjects comprise of:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Computing
- Food Studies (Design Technology)
- Humanities (History, Geography, RE)
- Physical Education
- Option Subjects

Key Stage 4

As students move into Year 10, they have a further opportunity to explore additional option subjects, alongside the core curriculum listed above. Students study a broad and balanced curriculum that leads to accreditations in: Maths, English, Science, RSE, Computing and at least one other options subject (e.g. Art, Music, Drama, PE). A number of students complete the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Key Stage 5

Students in the Sixth Form

follow a personalised curriculum, around their chosen Pathway. Students work towards a range of BTEC qualifications. We offer A-Levels in Art and Photography and further qualifications in Physical Education to cater to our students' many talents.

THERAPY AND SUPPORT

The range of therapies we offer, include:

- Speech & Language Therapy (SaLT)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Drama Therapy
- Canine Assisted Learning
- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Lego Therapy
- Emotional Literacy Support (ELSA)

In addition to those listed above, Carew Academy is working towards becoming a **Therapeutic School**; a whole school approach aimed at improving behaviour, social, emotional and academic outcomes, staff skillset, staff wellbeing, and children's mental health.

Who can access therapy?

All of our students may benefit from having some form of therapy. SaLT and OT provision will be specified on students EHCPs. Other therapy is accessed following a request from staff, parents or students.

The support can be accessed on a day-to-day basis or through more regular one-to-one or group sessions. Our range of therapies is not entirely dependent on spoken language. For example, sessions in which art, play, drama and movement are a primary means of communication, can be helpful to students who find it difficult to express their thoughts, emotions and feelings verbally.

How can therapy help?

Students who have endured (and continue to endure) adverse childhood experiences and/or associated mental health difficulties will likely have high stress levels and low self-esteem.

Therapy works to:

- provide students with an opportunity to express and reflect on their thoughts, feelings and experiences in a safe environment
- allow students to build a positive therapeutic relationship with the therapist, which raises self-esteem and can alter negative attachment strategies
- enhance students' emotional well-being and encourage creative problem solving
- improve self-esteem, confidence and self-worth
- help to develop students' emotional vocabulary, encouraging and enabling them to identify and name their emotions
- help to develop effective strategies for students to manage their behaviour and their ability to self-regulate their emotions
- help to remove barriers to learning and facilitate better engagement with the curriculum.

Who can benefit from therapy?

Students who may benefit, include those:

- who have experienced adverse childhood experiences and/or high levels of stress
- who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- with social communication difficulties
- who experience low self-esteem and fear of failure

- who are struggling with life events, such as grief and loss, changes within the family or home, illness
- who have suffered abuse, bullying or other trauma

Confidentiality

Typically, therapists ensure that all sessions are kept confidential in order to maintain trust within the therapeutic relationship and to create a space that feels safe to explore sensitive and meaningful aspects of the student's life.

A therapist may break confidentiality if they become concerned about a safeguarding risk. The decision to break confidentiality is subject to the professional judgement of the therapist but will always be made with the best interests of the student in mind and with full consideration given to the full context within which the disclosure was made and the foreseeable risks surrounding the concern. Where possible, the therapist will seek consent from the student before making an external disclosure or reporting a concern, unless there is an immediate risk of harm.

Sharing of Information

Therapists keep records securely and confidentially. Records are kept in order to ensure that actions are conducted in a timely manner and that an ongoing chronology is maintained. Information about students' progress in therapy sessions (in terms of their social and emotional wellbeing and development) is provided to the leadership team on a regular basis.

Supporting Families

Carew Academy helps families in a targeted and supportive way. Senior staff meet parents/carers when their child joins our school to gain a picture of family life, the needs of the student and how we can best support them. We are able to offer parents emotional and practical advice to support their child's journey at Carew. We are also able to act as a strong link between the family, health and social care, we have a dedicated Family Lead who can support with a range of issues.

Home Visits

Home visits are part of our practice, with their core aims being to:

- gain greater insight into the student's home environment in order to understand the whole child. This is **non-judgemental** and arranged purely to better meet our students' needs
- reduce anxiety and increase attendance
- build positive relationships with the family
- offer time to the family in their own environment to show a greater sense of support.

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Students learn in many different ways. Many of our students have particularly complex needs. This often manifests itself in poor behaviour and becomes a barrier to them making progress. Some students arrive with a history of poor attendance, placement gaps and a multitude of exclusions, and have therefore missed significant periods of education. As a result of this, they often arrive with very low self-esteem and consider themselves a failure.

Our job as staff is therefore a significant challenge but one that is faced with enthusiasm and energy. We achieve this in a number of ways:

- **We teach using precise learning objectives and differentiated success criteria** for each lesson
- **We facilitate learning using a wide range of activities** and strategies developed from in-depth knowledge of our students
- **We check for prior understanding and use plenaries to check that our students have fully understood the learning objective**
- **We plan and teach in reference to our assessment milestones, curriculum plans and individual students' learning**
- **We ensure that the best possible environment for learning** by developing a positive atmosphere in which students feel safe and that they belong, enjoy learning and being challenged, trust that they can take risks with their learning and know that they can and will succeed
- **We ensure that teaching builds on previous learning through a learning sequence** and that constant praise, engaging learning tasks and positive use of our behaviour system keeps students motivated
- **We ensure that learning tasks are varied and tailored to individuals**, and include investigation and problem-solving tasks, use of ICT, debates, role-plays, design and making activities, critical thinking tasks and time for reflection. Students work in a variety of ways – in groups, pairs, with the whole class or independently, depending on the task and the individual
- **We encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning**, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn, and to reflect on how they learn best – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult.
- **Teachers deploy support staff effectively**, tailoring what they do to the learning activity and students' needs. Sometimes, they work with individual students, sometimes with small groups, and sometimes they 'float' to support whole-class learning. Whilst they may be used to help a student to calm down or take time out, their focus is primarily one of supporting learning

- **We ensure our classrooms are attractive learning environments.** We change displays regularly so that the classroom reflects the subject themes and current topics being studied by the students. All students have the opportunity to display their work. We believe that a stimulating yet calm environment sets the climate for learning, and that an organised classroom promotes focus and independent use of resources, which results in high-quality learning
- **Leaders monitor the quality of education** through learning walks, lesson observations, workbook scrutiny, student progress meetings, student, teacher and parent interviews and feedback to staff with constructive developmental targets
- **We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in helping students learn** which is why we provide weekly updates, set targets together at the start of the year and review overall progress through a detailed Annual Review.
- **We support students with English as an additional language (EAL)** offering focused vocabulary support. In addition, we ensure that our classrooms are vocabulary rich and that classroom displays reflect and support the current learning topics in order to reinforce new vocabulary.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment at Carew Academy is underpinned by our AEIOU of Teaching Essentials:

- **Active Support**
- **Effective Challenge**
- **Independence**
- **Objectives Differentiated**
- **Useful Marking and Feedback**

ENGLISH: LITERACY, READING AND WRITING

Raising students' literacy levels is of fundamental importance to us. It is up to us to facilitate their accelerated progress in their phonics, reading and writing despite the multiple challenges they face.

With this in mind:

- **Students are supported by the Accelerated Reader programme,** all students complete a baseline assessment, and then complete short quizzes after each book to check their level of comprehension.
- **Students have access to a variety of engaging fiction and non-fiction texts** in their classrooms or from the library. Every classroom has a dedicated reading section. The teaching of writing encompasses a wide range of genres, both fiction and non-fiction, which prepare students for later life (for example writing reports, recounts and letters).
- **Achievement in reading and writing is celebrated**

- **Reading is given a high profile** across all subjects, and cross-curricular opportunities to develop reading skills are planned throughout the week. Strong links are made between reading and subjects such as science and humanities.
- **Students who have a diagnosis of dyslexia** are supported through targeted literacy support using resources specifically designed for them. Their progress is closely monitored and interventions put in place.
- **Teachers plan regular guided writing** opportunities, which enable them to demonstrate word, sentence and text level skills with small groups of students or one-to-one.
- **Students in Years 10 and 11 will work towards GCSE English, Functional Skills or Entry Level Awards** at a level they are capable of.

MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

Students arrive with us displaying varying degrees of competency in mathematics, many with large gaps in their knowledge of basic concepts due to disrupted periods of schooling. Often, students have missed out on the early learning experiences necessary to cement key mathematical skills and concepts.

With this in mind, we provide:

- **Five mathematics or numeracy lessons each week** which focus on **mastery** of concepts but take into account each student's unique starting points.
- **High quality, practical resources** which help mathematics to 'come alive' for our students. Teachers strive to present each new skill within a practical context that has relevance for our students. For example, measuring may be taught through the medium of cooking and food technology or probability may be taught in the context of a favourite football team's predicted performance.
- **Displays in classrooms** which support and scaffold students' knowledge of mathematics concepts. Mathematics prompts on learning walls in classes reflect the current mathematics unit being taught. Other displays in classes (such as multiplication tables) help to immerse students in a number rich environment.
- **Regular problem-solving activities** are planned in order to provide students with the opportunity to apply their mathematics skills in different contexts, and begin to develop abilities for higher order thinking
- **Students in Years 10 and 11 will work towards GCSE Mathematics, Functional Skills or Entry Level Awards** at a level they are capable of.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (SMSC)

Developing our students' social skills and teaching them about healthy living, preparing them for life in modern Britain and enabling them to make positive life choices is of considerable importance.

Students have a number of "RSE", Relationships and Sex Education lessons each week, alongside Tutor Times and Assemblies.

We aim to develop all students':

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT (S)

- ability to be **reflective** about themselves
- use of **imagination** and **creativity** in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences

MORAL DEVELOPMENT (M)

- understanding of **right and wrong**
- respect for the **rule of law** in modern Britain
- understanding of the **consequences** of their behaviour and actions

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (S)

- use of a range of **social skills** in different contexts
- willingness to participate, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- understanding of, and engagement with, the fundamental British values of democracy, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (C)

- understanding and appreciation of the **range of different cultures** within the school, the Local Area, the United Kingdom and overseas
- knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system
- positive participation to **artistic, sporting** and **cultural** opportunities
- improving understanding of and showing respect for **different faiths and cultural diversity**.

We do the following:

- **Formally teach a Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) scheme of work to all our students** which aims to:
 - help students develop an understanding of the different types of relationships, including family relationships
 - help students to develop skills in forming and maintaining relationships with others, including their peers
 - teach students about the changes to their body that occur during puberty
 - introduce students to reproduction.
- **Formally teach e-safety to students of all ages across the school, according to age and**

ability.

- **Formally and informally teach through RSE lessons, Tutor Times and Assemblies:**
 - the development of social skills, including managing anger and emotions, building relationships, dealing with conflict and making positive choices, including online as part of e-safety education
 - the development of anti-discriminatory understanding including knowledge and understanding of bullying, cyber-bullying, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and religious tolerance
 - preparation for life in modern Britain and knowledge of fundamental British values, including cultural diversity, mutual respect, the rule of law, democracy, right & wrong, consequences and the range of faiths, religions and values in Britain and London
 - providing opportunities for reflection, thinking, discussion and formal argument
 - helping our community, supporting charity and helping others
 - personal health and how to stay healthy with specific focus on nutrition and exercise
 - the development of the understanding of risk and keeping safe in everyday life
 - an understanding of the world of business and consumers through enterprise projects and fundraising for projects and/or charities.

In addition, our curriculum also ensures that students have the opportunity to:

- **learn about public institutions and services in England** (for example, the Royal family, Government, National Health Service, fire service and the police)
- **develop an understanding of the importance of tolerance and equality** while challenging prejudice and discrimination. We teach specific lessons which promote tolerance of different family structures and recognise that whilst not everyone's families are the same, they should all be respected and valued as part of an inclusive school community. We also have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion steering group that works hard to promote the diversity across our school community.

Our provision supports the development of students' skills in the following ways:

- we provide all students with access to **relevant therapies** with trained members of the staff team and external **therapists**, to meet varying personal, social & health needs
- we provide students with a **varied curriculum** that draws on the expertise of visitors to support their personal, social and health education, and **enrichment activities** which develop and broaden students' interests and talents

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER RIGHTS

Lessons will be taught to students in line with British Values which also promote equal opportunities and an understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights.

Assembly topics will be carefully chosen to ensure students understand the facts about sexuality and gender identity, and understand the damage and prejudice that stereotypes can cause. The school is an accredited Stonewall Champion.

IMPARTIAL CAREERS INFORMATION, ADVICE & GUIDANCE

Carew Academy works hard to offer high quality Careers Advice and Guidance to all students. We are working towards the Gatsby benchmarks to give our students the information, advice and guidance they need to make informed choices about their future. We hold a Careers Week each year, alongside opportunities for Work Experience, we offer encounters with employees and further education. Upper School students also have careers interviews that provide personal guidance.

In addition, our careers approach promotes and develops the confidence and skills that will benefit students in their future careers. We place a focus on developing interview skills, so that our students can “show what they can do” outside the security of the school environment.

ASSESSMENT, MARKING AND FEEDBACK

We use Classroom Monitor and Practical Mark Books to show the progress of students in national curriculum subjects, alongside short term EHCP Targets that are agreed in consultation with parents to support students EHCP Outcomes.

Students complete baseline assessments when they start at the school and their progress is monitored termly. We track progress across a range of measures to give a holistic view of progress, which considers our ABC of Success (Attend, Behave and Challenge yourself).

BASELINING

- Students often arrive with limited or no assessment data, which is often unreliable.
- We assess students’ knowledge during their first weeks with us in order to baseline their level of skill in English and mathematics.
- We immediately begin gathering evidence of work across the curriculum in order to track the student’s progress and to develop them as a person.

MARKING STUDENTS’ WORK

Marking and feedback is the *dialogue* that takes place between teacher and learner, in order to ensure that learning objectives are met and that students are secure in their knowledge. This may take a number of forms, including a written dialogue for more able students.

Students’ work is marked according to Marking and Feedback Policy.

We mark students’ work and offer feedback in order to:

- show that we value the students’ work, and encourage them to value it too
- help students learn. If students’ work is well matched to their abilities, then errors that need to be corrected will not be so numerous as to affect their self-esteem

- promote self-and-peer assessment
- provide students with specific information of the extent to which they have met the lesson objective and success criteria/or the individual targets set for them
- provide a basis both for summative and formative assessment
- provide the ongoing assessment that should inform future lesson planning.

We ensure that:

- comments are appropriate to the age and ability of the student and the type of lesson
- comments focus on the development of their learning
- there is a measure of how well the student achieved the lesson objective
- there is a measure of how much support the student needed
- students are regularly praised for their work through the Merits system
- teaching assistants are permitted to participate in marking and giving feedback
- marking is bespoke to the subject being taught and specialists' professionalism takes priority

POLICY REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the leadership team annually.