



# **CURRICULUM POLICY**



June 2023

## Applicable Documents

When reading this document, please be aware of the following related documents.

- [AD1] The National Curriculum in England DfE (December 2014). Key stages 3 and 4 framework document
- [AD2] The National Curriculum in England DfE Key stages 1 and 2 framework document September (2013), May (2015)
- [AD3] Education Act 2002  
HMSO (2002). TSO, London

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

| Abbreviation or Acronym | Description  |
|-------------------------|--|
| AD                      | Applicable Document                                |
| DfE                     | Department for Education                           |
| HMSO                    | Her Majesty's Stationery Office                    |
| IEP                     | Individual Education Plan                          |
| KS                      | Key Stage  |
| LA                      | Local (Education) Authority                        |
| NC                      | National Curriculum                                |
| PEP                     | Personal Education Plan                            |
| PSHCE                   | Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education |
| RD                      | Reference Document                                 |
| SEND                    | Special Education Needs and Disability             |
| SMT                     | Senior Management Team                             |
| TSO                     | The Stationery Office                              |

## The Curriculum at The Serendipity School

### Intent

The aims of the school's curriculum are as follows:

1. Provide opportunities for students to develop essential key skills (particularly literacy and numeracy) which will allow them to function successfully in everyday life, make a positive contribution in the workplace and engage successfully with future learning opportunities.
2. Offer students a full and rounded learning experience which provides them with the opportunity to develop a range of subject skills as well as broadening their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
3. Foster students' creativity, their cultural awareness and develop their sense of place in the world.
4. Promote fundamental British values and encourage the development of an understanding of positive citizenship.
5. Provide opportunities for students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
6. Provide opportunities for students to develop their social, interpersonal and communication skills and develop their ability to work positively with others.
7. Develop students' resilience, independence and self-reliance.
8. Promote an understanding of all aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including an appreciation of healthy relationships.
9. Develop students' learning capacity and empower them to embrace a commitment to lifelong learning.
10. Ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn, make progress and gain recognised qualifications at a level commensurate with their ability, aptitudes and ambitions.
11. Prepare students for the next phase in their life, including transition to further education and work.
12. Promote high standards in all learning and teaching.

These aims are realised through all aspects of the school's curriculum. This includes subject based lessons, extended activities which may be linked to particular subjects(s) or based upon wider themes and the student's involvement in and exposure to the schools overarching culture and ethos.

The curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop the essential key skills of literacy, numeracy and oracy. The curriculum will also allow students to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in scientific, technological, human, social, physical, creative and aesthetic aspects of learning.

In addition to the subjects and skills described above, the school will provide personal, social and health education in line with the school's aims and ethos. Religious education is also provided for all students as part of the programme of Humanities. In addition, PSHCE is considered as a core subject for our students.

Students also receive appropriate careers guidance and support with transition to the next phase of their education.

## **Implementation**

Each aspect of the curriculum has its own rationale to explain its role in realising the wider curriculum intent of the school. The National Curriculum forms the basis for forming the individual curriculum pathway for each student and deciding the content of what will be taught in each subject. These are developed further into subject curriculum maps and schemes of work.

The school also recognises that, due to the personal histories and experiences of our students, they will each have personal needs with regard to their academic, personal, social and emotional education that may be different from her peers. A key principle is therefore that, as far as possible, each student can follow a personalised curriculum which meets these individual needs. At the start of each academic year the key achievement priorities for each student are identified, these then inform the curriculum for each student. However, the onus remains on The Serendipity School to ensure that each student's curriculum remains broad, balanced and relevant, leading, wherever possible, to nationally recognised qualifications. Development of positive attitudes to learning will lead to success and achievement. Education is a life-long process and developing the key skills for all our students will enable students to continue to access learning opportunities.

Within the first eight weeks of admission, students undertake assessment procedures to determine their attainment in literacy and numeracy, their current learning capacity and their potential for future achievement. The results of these assessments are used to determine the student's curriculum, particularly the range of subjects included, provision for additional support in literacy and numeracy and the provision to meet social, emotional and mental health needs needs. For Children Looked After by the local authority, these outcomes are discussed at an initial Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting, held soon after admission to The Serendipity School and alongside information from the EHCP allowing for Personal Progress Targets (PPT) to be set.

The curriculum is kept under constant review and further amendments to its structure are made as necessary, to ensure the, needs of the student continue to be addressed.

## Teaching Organisation

The curriculum is organised to ensure that students are taught by a variety of teachers. Emphasis will be placed on ensuring that students receive access to specialist teaching wherever possible. Where students are not taught by subject specialists, The Serendipity School will ensure that the class teachers have the appropriate level of subject knowledge to be able to deliver the curriculum to a high standard. If necessary, subject specialist support for the teacher will be arranged, either from within or externally to the school.

## Equal Opportunities

The Serendipity School supports the rights of all students and staff to equal access and opportunities regardless of age, culture, religion, received gender, social lifestyles, ability, disability or sexuality. The achievement of all students is highly valued. In accordance with the statutory requirements the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all students as far as is reasonably practicable. The school has an Accessibility Plan which is available to parents and carers on request.

## Special Educational and Disability Needs (SEND)

The Serendipity School has a SEND policy for students with or without a Statement of Special Educational Need or EHCP. The Serendipity School will determine the appropriate curriculum in consultation with the parent/carer.

## Curriculum Plan

The content of the curriculum is guided by the National Curriculum, taking into account adjustments to meet the individual needs of each student. This usually includes English, maths and science and a range of other subjects and experiences which will allow students to enjoy an engaging, enriching and challenging experience which remains broad and balanced.

The Serendipity School currently offers the following curriculum subjects:

| <b>Subject</b>   |
|--|
| English  |
| Mathematics  |
| Science  |
| Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) |
| Physical Education (PE)                                    |
| Expressive Arts (art and music)                            |

|                                   |                        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| ICT                               |                        |
| Humanities<br>Religious Education | } Geography<br>History |
| Food Studies                      |                        |

Most students also participate in the school's '**Discovery**' programme which is a personalised experience aimed at enriching and broadening the cultural and personal understanding of young people who may come to us with limited experiences outside of their immediate home environment.

The Serendipity School has also developed partnerships with a number of organisations who can provide a range of non-school based learning opportunities, for example in outdoor activities such as climbing and fishing. These can form a part of the curriculum experience for those students for who this may have a positive impact on their engagement or their self-esteem and confidence.

## Pathways to Qualifications

Each student's engagement, attainment and progress are continually assessed and monitored as they progress through the school. At an appropriate time from the summer term of Year 9 onwards this information is used to identify the appropriate suite of external qualifications each student will work towards for the end of Year 11. This results in the determination of a personalised qualification pathway for each student, care being taken to ensure their curriculum remains broad and balanced.

The intention is to provide each student with the opportunity to achieve nationally recognised qualifications at a level commensurate with their ability in as many subjects as possible, including English, maths and science. This 'core offer' for all students will also consist of PE, PSHCE and a personal development / life skills programme accredited through the ASDAN route. The curriculum for most students will also include a range of other subjects in line with their needs, interests, aptitudes and their post 16 aspirations. The curriculum for most students will also include some work experience as either a short term placement, an extended programme or both. From Year 10, some students may also spend some of their time each week at a college following an agreed course from their 14-16 programme. The aim of this approach to the curriculum is to enable students to move onto further learning and be in a position to make choices about their future.

As student work through their qualification pathway, whenever possible, they will have the opportunity to 'bank' milestone qualifications along the way in order to ensure any student who leaves the school before the end of Year 11 will have gained some qualifications.

The pathway routes outlined below form a basis upon which to start to plan the curriculum for each student. All staff, parents/careers and the young person themselves are able to contribute to this planning process. The pathways are not applied rigidly and no individual student is

expected to fit entirely within one pathway. Personalisation and flexibility remain the key principles which underpin our approach to planning the curriculum for each student.

## Qualifications Pathways - Core Subjects

|  | Pathway A<br>Entry Level   | Pathway B<br>Level 1   | Pathway C<br>Level 2   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Indicative levels of achievement (End Year 9)</b> | Up to Level 2a   | Level 3c – 5c  | Level 5b+  |
| <b>English<br/>Mathematics</b>                       | <p>Course of study over Years 9 to11 leading to Entry Level 1, 2 or 3.</p> <p>Exams to be taken when ready over the three years working towards a target of at least Entry Level 2 by the end of Year 11.</p> <p>If Entry level complete, possible extension to Functional Skills Level 1.</p> | <p>Programme of study over Years 9 to11 developing the knowledge and understanding to achieve Functional Skills Level 1 by end of Year 11.</p> <p>If complete earlier, extension to GCSE. (Individual target for each student according to potential, prior attainment and rate of progress.)</p> <p><b>Milestones</b><br/>Entry Level exam (13) taken when appropriate during Year 9 or 10.</p> | <p>Programme of study over Years 9 to11 developing the knowledge and understanding to achieve GCSE by end of Year 11. (Individual target for each student according to potential, prior attainment and rate of progress.)</p> <p><b>Milestones</b><br/>Entry Level exam (1-3) taken when appropriate during Year 9</p> <p>Functional Skills Level 1 or 2 examination may also be taken in Year 10 or 11.</p> |

# The Serendipity School

|                             |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Science</b>              | <p>Course of study over Years 9 – 10 leading to Entry Level 1, 2 or 3.</p> <p>Exams to be taken when ready over the two years working towards a target of at least Entry Level 2 by the end of Year 10.</p> <p>In Year 11, students will have the choice to follow a science enrichment programme or have time allocated to</p> | <p>Course of study over Years 9 – 10 leading to Entry Level 1, 2 or 3.</p> <p>Exams to be taken when ready over the two years working towards a target of at least Entry Level 3 by the end of Year 10.</p> <p>In Year 11, students will have the choice to follow a science enrichment programme, have time allocated to</p> | <p>Programme of study over Years 9 to 11 developing the knowledge and understanding to achieve GCSE double science.</p> <p><b>Milestones</b> Complete requirements for Entry Level qualification along the way, completing in Year 9 or 10.</p> |
|                             | other subjects / college.   | other subjects / college or possible extension to work towards GCSE Combined Science or one of the separate sciences.   |   |
|                             | <b>Pathway A<br/>Entry Level</b>  | <b>Pathway B Level<br/>1</b>  | <b>Pathway C Level<br/>2</b>  |
| <b>Personal Development</b> | Follow ASDAN Personal Development Programme in Years 9 to 11. Working towards completion of at least Silver award by the end of Year 11.  | Follow ASDAN Personal Development Programme in Years 9 to 11. Working towards completion of at least Gold award by the end of Year 11.  | Follow ASDAN Personal Development Programme in Years 9 to 11. Working towards completion of at least Gold award by the end of Year 11.  |
| <b>PSHCE</b>                | Not accredited  |   |   |
| <b>Physical Education</b>   | ASDAN Short Course  | ASDAN Short Course  | ASDAN Short Course  |



## Qualifications Pathways - Other Subjects

|                        | Pathway A<br>Entry Level  | Pathway B<br>Level 1   | Pathway C<br>Level 2   |
|------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Art or Textiles</b> | Short Course or Unit Award  | Short Course/Unit Award or Entry Level Certificate                   | GCSE   |
| <b>ICT</b>             | Entry Level Certificate   | Functional Skills Level 1  | Functional Skills Level 1 and/or Level 2   |
| <b>Food Studies</b>    | Short Course  | Short Course and / or BTEC   |  |
| <b>Humanities</b>      | Short Course and/ or Entry Level Certificate (History and/or Geography) | Short Course (RE) Entry Level Certificate (History and/or Geography) | Short Course (RE) Entry Level Certificate (History and/or Geography) or GCSE (History) |

### Post 16 Students

Post 16 students will follow a personalised curriculum broadly based on one of the above pathways. The exact nature of their curriculum will be dependent upon prior attainment, particularly in the core subjects, and the individual aptitudes of each student. English and maths will remain part of the programme of study for these students, the intention being to raise each student's achievement in these subjects as close to Level 2 as possible.

In addition to the school based curriculum, Year 12 and 13 students will usually spend some of their time at college following a course suited to their individual needs and possible destinations on leaving The Serendipity School. The exact content of this course and the time spent at college will be personalised according to the needs of each student. In order to facilitate this The Serendipity School maintains partnerships with a range of post 16 providers to ensure there is a range of the course of study available. The school takes responsibility for ensuring that there is coherence between the curriculum followed in school and at college and that courses of study support and complement each other.

### Time Allocations

The school day and the curriculum is organised to provide students with an engaging, enjoyable and varied daily learning experience. Lessons lengths are designed to find the balance between the ability of students to remain focussed in one particular subject while ensuring teachers have sufficient time to complete worthwhile learning activities.

Time is allocated to lessons according to the depth and range of ideas to be covered and the requirements of qualification which students are working towards. There is an emphasis on the core subjects, with all students receiving a daily input in both maths and English. In addition, 20 minutes at the start of each day when we Drop Everything and Read (DEAR); an initiative devoted to developing students' reading skills. Additional literacy support, if needed is provided by Lexia Core 5 programme which is supplemented by further literacy intervention programmes.

## **Religious Education (RE)**

Religious Education is available to all students through the Humanities programme. A parent/carer has the right to withdraw their child from religious education by making a written request to the school.

## **Relationships and Sex Education (SRE)**

The school provides sex education in the basic curriculum for all students. The curriculum is guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. A full statement of the school's sex education policy is available to parents/carers.

In accordance with the law, the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all students, but a parent/carer may withdraw their child from any other part of the sex education provided without giving reasons.

## **Physical Education**

Physical aspects of the curriculum provide an important opportunity to develop self-esteem, encourage co-operation with others and develop an understanding of healthy lifestyles. All students have PE as part of their curriculum. A diverse range of activities is offered to the students, including outdoor education activities and a selection of more traditional PE activities alongside opportunities to participate in engaging off site activities, making use of the facilities of local providers.

## **Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)**

Speech and Language Therapy includes direct work from a Speech and Language Therapist once a week. The therapist assesses students referred for difficulties in their speech and/or language skills. The students receive intervention either via a 1:1 session, group work and/or advice to staff. In addition, the therapist targets social and communication skills.

## **Psychological Services to the School**

Attachment and trauma, child development, behavioural and systemic theories currently underpin the whole school ethos.

Staff work to provide the best possible environment for learning to take place whilst taking into account individual needs. This involves consistency, predictability and routine and this is achieved through team work. Team work and team issues are regularly addressed through reflective space and considered within the context of working with trauma and complex systems.

Where appropriate The Serendipity School will work alongside other professional bodies to deliver services to meet the social, emotional and mental health needs of all students. Close working with CAMHS, SALT, and Occupational Therapists is essential in ensuring there is team around a child, committed to supporting all of the child's needs and preparing them for life beyond The Serendipity School.

## **Health and Safety**

Health and Safety issues are fully described in TSCL's Health and Safety Policy. All subject leaders have a responsibility to ensure that the curriculum and procedures pay due attention to Health and Safety issues.

## **Enrichment**

We encourage enrichment for all throughout the schools' curriculum provision through a variety of resources and experiences. For example theatre visits, residential trips, team building activities, fundraising activities, sport participation and competition, visitors and outside speakers coming to the school and community visits (for example, life skills, library skills).

## **Monitoring and Review**

In order to ensure that it reflects current best practice, this policy will be reviewed every year by the Senior Management Team.