

# **CURRICULUM POLICY**

# **Tram House School**

## Curriculum Policy

### Our Vision

Our vision is to ensure autistic children and young adults access an education which empowers a life full of choice, independence and opportunity.

### Our Values

- **Dedicated to delivering excellence**
- **Committed to Applied Behaviour Analysis**
- **Respectful**
- **Proud to challenge**

### Our Aims

We will do this through:

- Consistently high expectations and achievements for every individual.
- High quality, inspirational and innovative teaching and learning.
- A safe, secure, caring and enjoyable environment in which to work, learn, thrive and grow towards independence.
- Inspirational and accountable leadership at all levels.
- A personalised curriculum, fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- An ambitious drive to be the leading Autism education provider in the UK and beyond.

### Curriculum Statement

Tram House School curriculum has been developed to meet the needs of our pupils, aged 11-19 years old. It aligns to the Independent School Standards (ISS) curriculum areas and has communication and interaction at its core. The curriculum is personalised to each individual pupil and because of this is naturally broad and balanced. We want to focus on sustainable progress and skill acquisition, whilst ensuring that learning remains relevant and engaging.

### Curriculum Practice Should:

- Build positively on what pupils already know and what they can do.
- Include well-structured opportunities to learn skills in an intensive way, and then generalise these into natural environments, developing and extending learning.
- Be relevant, functional and interesting for the learner.
- Offer opportunities for the pupils to be creative and adventurous in their learning.
- Provide opportunities for firsthand experiences using a wide range of resources.

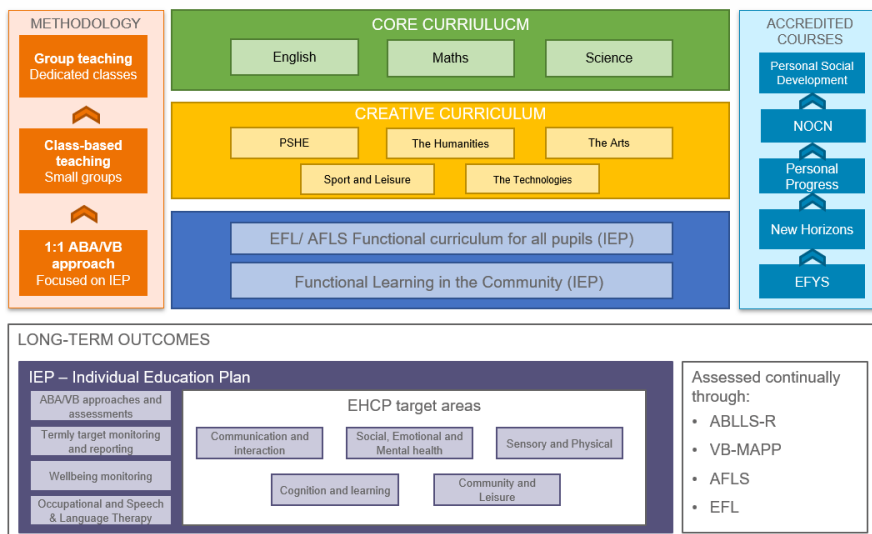
Our curriculum is aligned to the Independent School Standards curriculum areas and is mapped against our pupils' Individual Education Plan (IEP)'s.

Independent School Standards Curriculum areas	Linguistic	Mathematical	Scientific	Creative	Technological	Human and Social	Human and Social	Physical and Aesthetic
Our interpretation of that into our subject groups	English	Maths	Science	The Arts	The Technologies	The Humanities	PSHE	Sport and PE
Subjects that are in those subject groups	English	Maths	Science	Art, Music Drama	Design Technology, IT and Computing, Food Technology	Geography, History and Religious Education	PSHE	Sport and PE

## Teaching and Learning

At Tram House, we are experts in autism education. The specialist curriculum and approach we use in our services ensures sustained outcomes and success beyond the age of 25, setting autistic children and young adults up for a life full of choice, independence and opportunity. Our teaching strategies are underpinned by Behaviour Analysis and guided by the science of Applied Behaviour Analysis and Verbal Behaviour. This forms part of our interdisciplinary (IDT) approach with Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Teachers, to ensure a well-rounded, balanced curriculum for each of our learners that is focussed on their individual preferences and needs

Our teaching model is made up of three layers, based on the foundation of the EHCP. The diagram below depicts our teaching model:



## Individual Education Plans

All pupils have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The targets on the IEP are taken from the Essentials for Living (EFL) Curriculum and are directly related to the EHCP outcomes for each pupil. English, Mathematics, PSHE and Science targets are additionally derived from our core curriculum, which has been developed internally to fulfil all criteria set within the respective National curriculums. These curricula use targets from “Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Program’ (VB MAPP) and Essentials for Living (EFL) assessment tools, the national curriculum as well as additional assessment tools; the assessment of basic language and learning (ABLLS-R) and assessment of functional living skills (AFLS).

Emphasis is on functional communication, independence and self-help skills. IEPs are discussed termly with parents/carers, and progress against targets are reviewed and reported on termly, as well as in each pupil’s Annual Review and in annual reports.

Targets set on IEPs are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound). The targets for IEPs are updated termly, however, the pupil’s curriculum will not be limited to only these targets. Reporting on pupil progress to the Governing Body and external agencies is completed through the IEPs. Reporting progress is related to the percentage of target completion against each EHCP area. We also report on the percentage of completion of targets that are mapped against our curriculum subject groups.

## Communication

We place a strong emphasis on the developing and enhancing of the pupils’ communication skills. Our young people are encouraged to use their preferred method of communication, and where possible we encourage vocal, verbal communication. Individual programmes are aimed at: teaching them to express their needs; to interact socially; to develop listener responding ; develop the ability to identify people, places, and objects; answer questions and have well developed conversational skills. Children and young people who are unable to express their needs vocally are taught to communicate using sign language (Makaton) or use another augmentative communication system, such as PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), an iPad or other interactive device. Tram House School support staff on Makaton training courses and we are a signing community. Parents are given information, training and materials to enable them to use the same communication system in a functional way at home.

## What is AAC?

AAC stands for ‘Alternative and Augmentative Communication’. AAC refers to the methods by which an individual can replace (‘alternative’) or supplement (‘augment’) spoken communication. AAC may also be used to support a pupil’s understanding, by providing the pupil with a more permanent visual representation of language.

AAC encompasses a variety of communication methods and can be further broken down into unaided and aided communication.

## Unaided communication

Unaided communication refers to the use of no additional equipment. This includes:

- Body language- e.g. facial expression, gesture, posture
- Sign languages – e.g. Makaton, British Sign Language
- Gestural strategies – e.g. pointing, leading others to items/ locations

## Aided communication

Aided communication refers to the use of additional resources. This includes:

- Symbols – low-tech systems e.g. communication books, PECS, Choice Boards etc
- Photos – low-tech systems e.g. communication books, PECS, Choice Boards etc
- Objects – e.g. Objects of Reference (using a cup to request a drink), Attention Buttons
- Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs) – high tech devices, for example; iPads with Communication Apps such as ProLoQuo2Go, Predictable and GridPlayer, as well as GoTalks, eye-gaze devices, attention buttons (vocal programmed) amongst others.

## AAC Use at BeyondAutism

BeyondAutism is committed to accepting all forms of communication and viewing these equally. Pupils at BeyondAutism have a range of AAC methods available including:

- Symbols (Widgit is BeyondAutism's preferred symbol set)
- PECS
- Photographs/ Pictures
- Objects of Reference
- Communication Books
- Makaton/ Adapted Sign
- Single message devices – e.g. Big Mack buttons
- Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA)/Speech Generated Device (SGD) e.g. iPad with a Communication App.

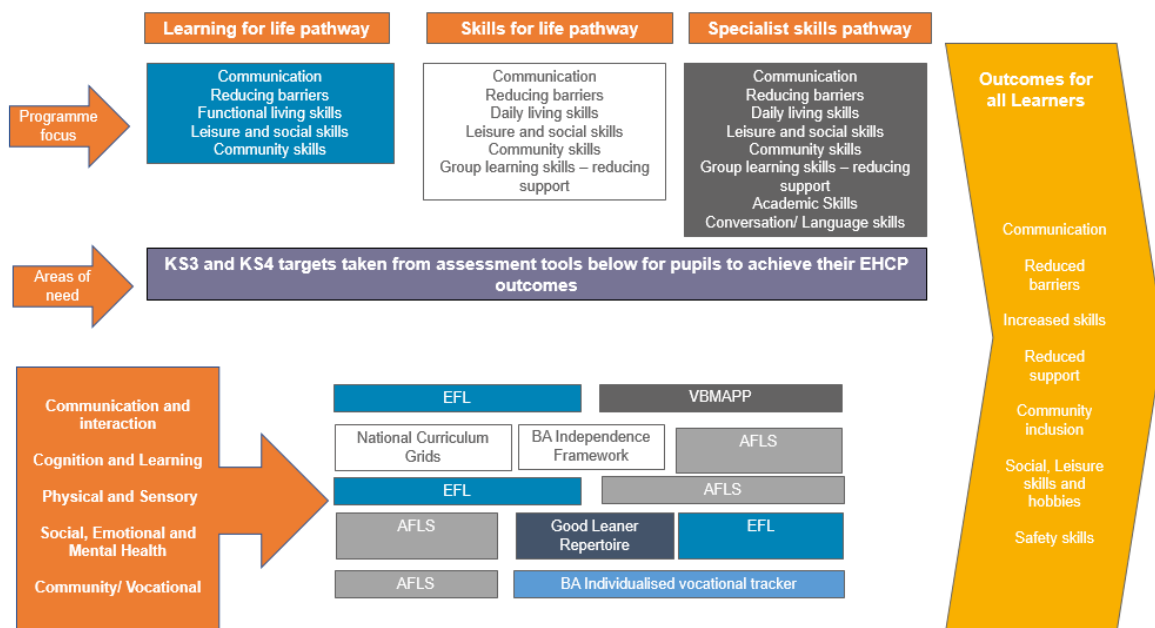
At BeyondAutism, we expect the student's AAC device to be:

- Used by the learner as independently as possible
- Accessible to the student at all times throughout the school day in **all** appropriate and feasible situations.
- Used by the adult working with the student. This is called 'Aided Language Stimulation'.
- Charged (if applicable), complete and accessible.

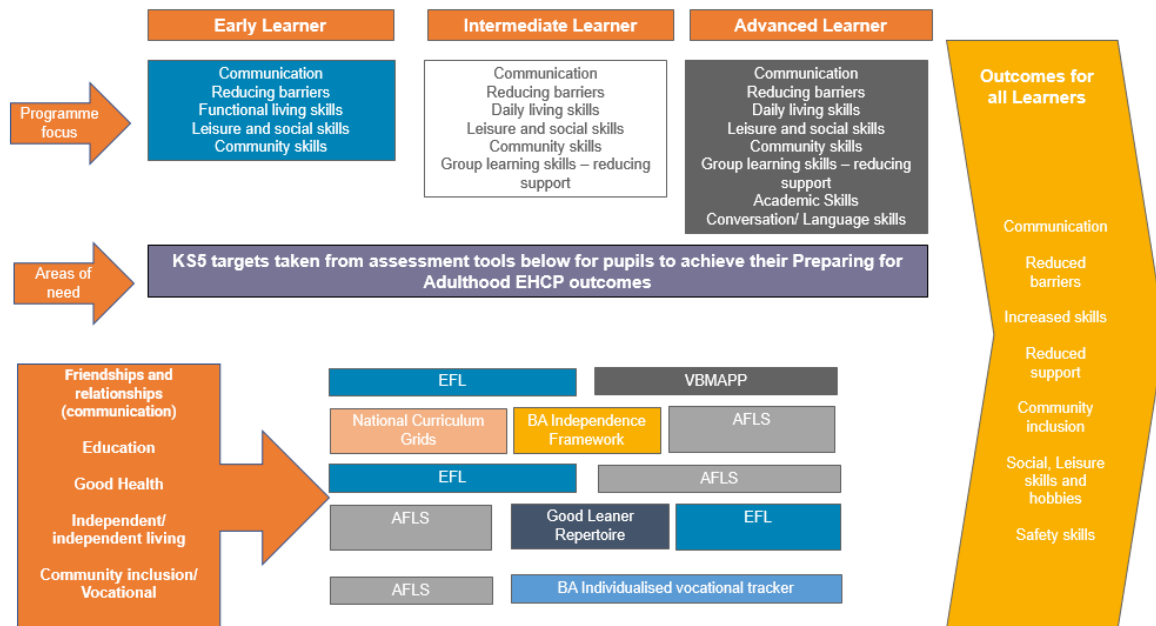
- In sound working order. Any technical issues need to be reported to the SaLT or OT and if appropriate given to Site Managers to fix as soon as possible and **within one working day** of any issues being noted.
- Readily available to the learner at all times
- Backed up electronically & replaceable (e.g. Choice boards etc should have a saved soft copy, high-tech app profiles should be saved to Dropbox with an equivalent low-tech method available as back up if the iPad/ app should break)
- Never withheld or removed in any circumstance without consultation with the Speech and Language Therapist
- Used in the home environment, if appropriate and possible

## Assessment and Curriculum

At Tram House School we have created the following assessment pathways model for Key Stages 3 and 4:

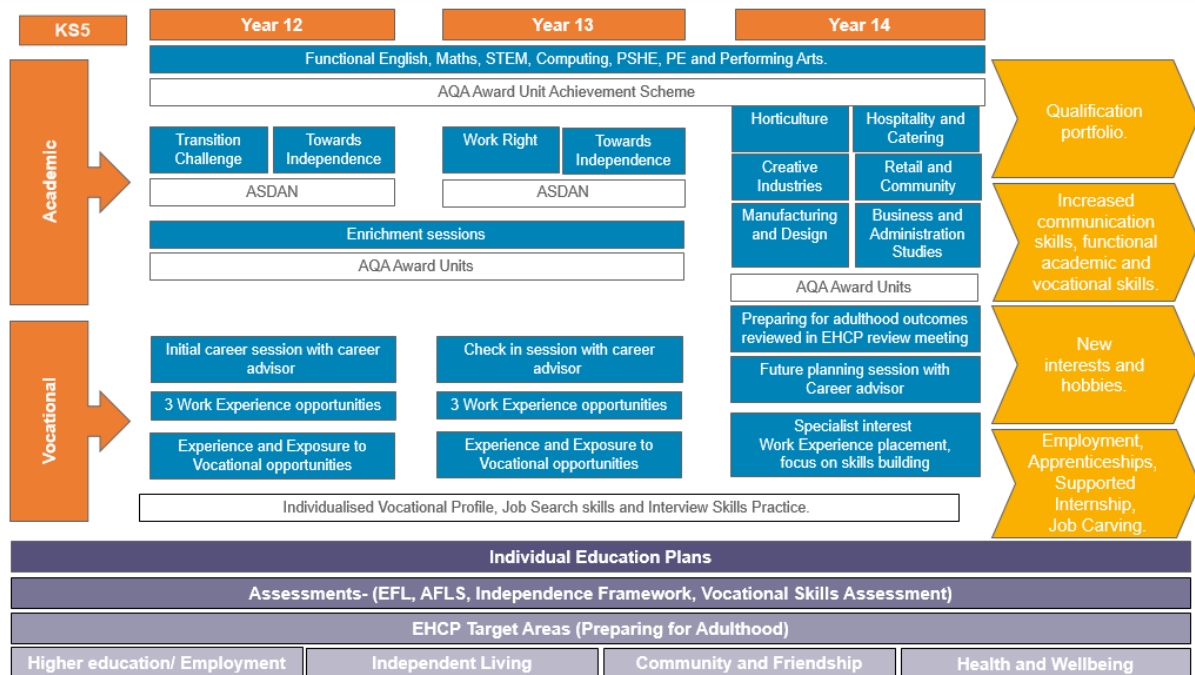


The following assessment pathways model for Key Stage 5:



Pupils in the Sixth Form continue to access the ASDAN programmes, with an emphasis on community participation. From September 2020 Sixth Form pupils have also been working towards AQA Award Unit certificates in both vocational and academic areas. The curriculum in the Sixth Form is taught both within school and out in community settings. These include work experience placements, local restaurants and supermarkets, the library, leisure centres and gyms. By the time pupils are in their final year at Tram House School, they will be working towards accreditation that is meaningful for them and will increase their employability skills for their futures. Please see the curriculum model for Sixth Form, which commenced in September 2020:





Pupils in Tram House School are able to access group teaching in English, Maths, Science, Computing and PSHE as well through the subject groups. The full range of school subjects, including the Humanities, Religious Education, Music and Art, is covered through topic or themed weeks and reinforced through weekly assemblies. Skills are taught both explicitly (for example, in group teaching) and implicitly through natural environment teaching. If a child is not currently at a stage to access group work (for example in Computing), then they will have individual targets on their IEP, which will be taught individually by the pupil's Tutor. They will also be taught the skills needed for them to access group teaching in the future. The skill of being independent and able to learn within a small group is also emphasised through the use of group work. An internal assessment tool called the Independence Framework has been created which is a hierarchy of skills that an individual needs to acquire in order to be able to learn and work independently, based on all of the previously mentioned assessment tools.

The curriculum will promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of pupils, preparing them with realistic outcomes for adult life, and enabling them to make a unique contribution to their community (Please see the SMSC Policy).

### Schemes of work

At Tram House School, Schemes of Work show how the targets are translated into a practical plan, including themes / topics or units of study.

### Resources

There are a wide range of teaching aids and resources to support learning in all subject areas in school. We also make good use of our community resources and facilities to ensure that



are pupils are included, engaged, motivated to learn, and are able to practice their skills in a functional way. Our school location means we have access to world-class museums, galleries, parks and landmarks that will develop the children's' understanding of the world around them.

## Equal Opportunities

Tram House School are committed to the following:

- Opposing all forms of discrimination – individual and institutional, direct and indirect.
- Challenging all forms of discrimination about different groups in society.
- Translating good equal opportunities principles into all our policies and practice.
- Maintaining and developing an inclusive culture where every individual feels valued and aspires to succeed.

## Fundamental British Values

At Tram House School, we aim to ensure that our school ethos, curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning reflect and promote British values as defined by the Government in the 2011 Prevent Strategy;

The five British Values are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

We recognise the multicultural, multi-faith nature of the United Kingdom and understand the crucial role that schools play in promoting these values. We pride ourselves on our inclusivity and we teach all pupils to understand, appreciate, and respect diversity so that they may effectively relate to others. By ensuring that we actively promote and reinforce British Values, Tram House School will help to prepare pupils for the diverse and dynamic community in which they will live and work.

## Related Policies

Teaching and Learning Policy  
Assessment, Reporting and Moderation Policy  
Sixth Form Curriculum Policy.

Last reviewed: May 2022

Date of next review: May 2024

Review group: FGB

## Appendix 1

Subject summary for Curriculum mapping

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Subject summary descriptions				Art	Design Technology	Geography	PSHE	
				Music	IT and Computing	History	SRE	
				Drama	Food Technology	Religious Education	SMSC	