



Cherry Tree  
EDUCATION

# CHERRY TREE SCHOOL CURRICULUM INTENT POLICY

DATE AGREED / REVIEWED: SEPTEMBER 2017, FEBRUARY 2018,  
SEPTEMBER 2018, SEPTEMBER 2019, SEPTEMBER 2020

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: SEPTEMBER 2021

HEADTEACHER SIGNATURE:

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR SIGNATURE:

ALL STAFF MUST HAVE ACCESS TO THIS POLICY, AND SIGN  
TO CONFIRM THAT THEY HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND  
WILL ADHERE TO ITS CONTENTS.

# Cherry Tree Curriculum Intent Policy

## Introduction

Square pegs do not fit into round holes so why keep trying the same? For some children, the traditional classroom setting does not work and can create even further barriers to their learning. This can often become a revolving door which adds to the loss of crucial real education time for the pupil. Cherry Tree is a detached building in a quiet residential area and has a warm homely feel and can cater for up to 10 pupils. The rooms are spacious and comfortable, and pupils are encouraged to take ownership of their school. The property also has a large safe garden area with working spaces where various 'hands on' projects can be carried out e.g. gardening and upcycling. At Cherry Tree our aim is to provide an excellent education for all our pupils. Our commitment for an engaging and bespoke curriculum is rooted in a desire to bring out the best in all pupils and prepare them for success in life. For our English, maths and ICT curriculum we use the functional skills BKSB as a diagnostic tool to set levels and to assess on a bi-termly basis. Our data gathering takes a holistic approach by ensuring we capture the personal development steps pupils take and celebrate and reward their positive behaviour. Recognising positive change highlights and encourages their personal growth, self-esteem and individuality. Each student is encouraged to use BKSB regularly so that they take responsibility for their personal development, which helps prepare them for success in their NCFE functional skills examinations. For pupils who need an integrated plan to allow them time to settle into school life, a variety of environments can be accessed including classrooms without walls using the spacious outdoors of either the local beach or the Kent countryside. In our experience, pupils who have a history of sporadic education respond well when a variety of these learning environments are available. Through this flexible and adaptable approach, pupils have the time and space to discover their strengths and the way they learn best, which in turn creates the best possible environment 'fit' for the pupil to achieve their potential. We intend to ensure that our pupils are ready for the move to post 16 education or employment, with the ability to show resilience and the competence to interact with peers within society post 16 and beyond.

***'School can be changed from a negative experience to one in which he or she can achieve, and in which his or her self-esteem can be enhanced. These experiences increase resilience and hopefulness'***. Heather Geddes, *Attachment in the Classroom*, 2012.

## Personal and Social Development and Relationship and Sex Education Curriculum Intent

It is essential for pupils who present with attachment difficulties, trauma based mental health issues, high anxieties and specific learning difficulties to have the time and space to firstly feel safe, secondly engage in learning and thirdly enjoy the feeling of learning and change. At Cherry Tree we provide a range of visible and invisible opportunities of thoughtful and enriching experiences which helps pupils to understand themselves, others and the world around them. Our ethos underpins and highlights the importance of investing in personal development for the long-lasting impact on our pupils. The school is safe, calm and happy and stimulates and supports all pupil's learning. The PSD and RSE curriculum include areas of focus such as interpersonal communication skills, environmental awareness, healthy

living, managing relationships and staying safe. The PSD curriculum also encourages the pupils to translate their learning into an NCFE qualification. This allows the pupils to build up their knowledge and achievements in a way that is meaningful to them.

As well as access to regular counselling sessions, each pupil has a regular 1-1 and bi-termly Personal Development sessions where they are encouraged to talk through and discuss any issues they may be having and to also discuss and celebrate their achievements. Regular social opportunities are created e.g. after school clubs, trips and social events which enable and encourage pupils to widen their social skills and opportunities. Our school lunch times are also used as valuable learning opportunities where 'thought of the day' and 'fact of the day' are shared. This promotes and encourages pupils to think about others in need and other's achievements around the world. We also encourage all pupils to engage in 'question of the day' so that they can learn about their qualities, their opinions and their view of themselves and others. This activity has been so successful that the headteacher will be submitting the outcomes of this activity for publication.

### **English Curriculum Intent**

Our English curriculum is designed to provide all our pupils with the core knowledge, skills and an appreciation of English that will underpin their ability to access the whole curriculum and what their future world holds for them. We consider the individual interests, experiences and diverse backgrounds of our pupils in our planning to promote engagement. Our curriculum is differentiated for the individual student, whilst ensuring that each student is taught what is needed to achieve their full potential.

We teach functional skills English from Pre-entry level up to Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE). The curriculum focuses on spelling, punctuation, grammar, reading and speaking, listening and communication. Our aim is to ensure that all pupils are taught sentence structure including paragraphs, types of text, literary devices and to use resources such as a dictionary and a thesaurus as well as ICT programmes.

Our curriculum intends to fill the English gaps that pupils have been unable to do in previous schools, often due to long periods of disrupted education. We aim to do this by teaching fundamental skills using a mix of phonic programmes and spellings to support reading and writing levels. All pupils read on a weekly basis independently and to a staff member. When pupils join Cherry Tree their reading age is assessed every 2 terms ensuring we keep on top of their individual needs and progress made. Pupils also take part in weekly spelling tests that are taken from high frequency spelling lists and a more challenging keyword vocabulary to allow our pupils to be stretched. This allows our pupils to focus on areas that require development. Pupils are prepared for spelling and reading assessments and encouraged to take ownership of their own learning by practicing at home and taking part in self-directed learning tasks.

Our pupils are taught using bespoke resources to allow the individual learning style to be considered for each individual. With this in mind, we use resources and activities that are unique and engaging including active learning such as role play and interactive educational games, as well as a diverse range of embedding literary using methods which are visual, audio and kinaesthetic in style to both engage, stretch and challenge.

### **Maths Curriculum Intent**

The maths curriculum delivered by Cherry Tree is designed to recognise children's prior learning, fill in learning gaps and provide first-hand learning experiences which allow the pupils to develop interpersonal skills and build confidence with numbers and problem solving.

It is designed to allow pupils to gain knowledge of mathematical concepts, terminology, notation, facts, generalisations, methods and techniques following the Maths functional skills curriculum. Pupils learn to increase their skill base by engaging in communication, teamwork, presentation, and problem solving.

Our maths curriculum also supports and encourages pupils to develop their number skills and interpret mathematical information presented in a variety of forms using visual, kinaesthetic and audio teaching methods suitable for their individual levels. We follow the NCFE Functional Skills route from Pre-entry level up to Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) and all pupils engage in bi-termly formal assessments to ensure progress is being made and monitored.

We aim to encourage students to be confident to tackle daily problem-solving skills, promote mathematical thinking and to transfer these skills into everyday life and eventually into the world of work or further education.

### **ICT Curriculum Intent**

Cherry Tree's ICT curriculum is structured to enable pupils to achieve their full potential with computers ensuring it is carried out in the safest way possible. This is achieved in an environment that allows the pupils to focus on the task in hand and expand on any previous computer experience that they may already possess. Pupils will be taught to use technology, such as PC's and iPads, to achieve a specific objective that will suits their individual requirements.

Pupils are formally assessed bi-termly to track their progress, which also highlights areas they need to focus on from Entry Level 1 up to Level 2 (GCSE equivalent). Topics that the pupils cover in the ICT curriculum includes: Computer Basics, Use of the Internet, Images, Communication and Health, Safety and Security. This is implemented through sessions that cater for each pupil's level and delivered in a way that uses real life situations so pupils can make sense of their learning. Pupils are given controlled freedom to pick themes for various projects so that there is an established interest from the beginning of the task. This motivates the pupil which in turn helps them to enjoy and take ownership of their learning.

Pupils are encouraged to use their knowledge from other core subjects to assist them in ICT in a positive and constructive way. Pupils also develop touch typing techniques as advised by our Education Psychologist. Through ICT and or DT, Pupils learn new and exciting areas of technology incorporating Animation and Game Coding to highlight the broadness of Computers and how it can be implemented in different ways. We aim to ensure that ICT is engaging, fun and imparts knowledge in a way that helps the children progress with their futures for further education and employment.

### **Science Curriculum Intent**

Our Entry Level Certificate in Science specification provides flexibility which equips our students with the foundations of Science topics. The curriculum focuses on Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Our aim is to ensure that all students are taught the fundamental components of animal and human biology including, health, chemistry and imaginative practical investigations, physics and to explore how things work and to engage in independent projects. We use resources and equipment such as textbooks, encyclopaedias, and practical equipment which students learn to use safely and appropriately.

All students are taught scientific keyword vocabulary that equips them with core information to develop their expertise in Science and encourages them to prepare for keyword class-based assessments.

## **Humanities Curriculum Intent**

it can often be difficult to understand the relevance of the humanity subjects. At Cherry Tree we carried out pupil evaluations to address these difficulties. Pupils feedback what they felt was important for them to learn about. As a result of this we have changed our humanities curriculum intent to the following:

For pupils who need time to make sense of their own world, humanities can present various difficulties for them to make sense of how these subjects affect their daily lives. To improve this area of our curriculum we carried out pupil evaluations and asked what is important to them. As a result of this, the humanities curriculum intent has been changed to the following:

## **Geography Curriculum Intent**

The geography curriculum encompasses climate change and how the world the pupils live in is changing. It looks at how this can and does impact on many areas in their lives including: immigration, wildlife habitats and oceans. The curriculum will also research key figures in the field of climate change including Greta Thunberg, David Attenborough and Chris Packham. The pupils will study scientific documentaries by these key figures and use these as a starting point for research and discussion regarding how the world currently looks, how it is changing and what can be done and is being done to reverse climate change. Our aim is for geography to increase our pupil's curiosity about the world we live in and where in that world we live. We aim to equip pupils with the knowledge about diverse places, people, resources, natural and human environments. Our intention is to help pupils investigate and question the interaction between human and physical geography, and to understand the man made and natural processes that impact our planet.

## **History Curriculum Intent**

The history curriculum focuses on exploring the historical timeline in the UK and include famous people and how they lived through history. This will include Saxons, Vikings, Medieval Britain, Tudors, Stuarts and Victorians. The curriculum is designed to link history to the present day and investigate how it has shaped our society. Our aim is to encourage pupils to be curious about history and to gain new knowledge and understanding about the past. We aim to help pupils develop research skills and to be able to develop a stronger sense of chronology and be able to link events of the past to their lives today.

## **RE Curriculum Intent**

The RE curriculum is focused on the British religious calendar of festivals, celebrations and important dates for various religions. Pupils will explore what the dates are for, what happens during these times, who are they important to and what it means for Britain. We aim to help pupils understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change and the diversity of societies between different groups. Our curriculum will promote and inspire pupils to accept people's differences and

beliefs and understand that there are many faiths and beliefs that make up Britain today.

### **Music Intent**

At Cherry Tree our aim is for pupils to gain an understanding of what music is through listening, singing, playing, evaluating and composing across a wide variety of styles and musical genres. Our objective is to develop a curiosity for the subject, as well as an understanding and acceptance of the validity and importance of all types of music. We are committed to ensuring children understand the value and importance of music in the wider community and understand the importance of music in keeping good mental health and well-being. We fully promote pupils to be able to use their musical skills, knowledge, and experiences to involve themselves in music, in a variety of different contexts. Cherry Tree will build on any previous knowledge and skills to ensure pupils progress and develop their musical skills. Although all pupils are encouraged to participate, the music curriculum at Cherry Tree is optional and through this we will enable pupils to:

- Develop a thorough understanding of music, through performing, composing and listening
- Develop self-confidence through performance, both through lessons and extra-curriculum events
- Encourage creativity through composition skills
- Encourage personal development through and sharing compositions
- Understand how music can support the development of life skills, such as confidence, self-awareness, perseverance and discipline and provide a holistic experience that they can take beyond their musical studies
- Develop their cross-curricular skills of problem solving, perseverance, diligence, time management, organisation and responsibility
- Gain a sense of achievement through performance and qualifications where appropriate

### **Art, Craft and Design Intent**

The intent of Art, craft and design lessons at Cherry Tree is for our pupils to develop a wide range of skills, develop confidence and be able to express their creative and artistic independence using a variety of resources and materials. Various creative projects will allow pupils to become independent problem solvers and gain the confidence to tackle anything new. Having time to be creative and artistic is imperative for Cherry Tree to enable pupils to develop good mental health and cultivate an ability to enjoy, explore and contribute to a creative world. Having experiences in the world of art, craft and design enables pupils to reflect critically on their own work and that of others. Although Cherry Tree offers an NCFE art and craft qualification, the emphasis is for pupils to engage in a subject that they can find aesthetically pleasing, which helps them to explore their senses. Pupils at Cherry Tree often have attachment and trauma difficulties and sometimes art, craft and design can enable them to express themselves without the need for words.

### **Physical Education Intent**

At Cherry Tree all pupils will benefit from the PE curriculum, whether through enhancing existing skills, learning new skills, or being introduced to new sports and environments. It is our intent to ensure all pupils understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle

and to equip them with the tools to do so through PSD and PE. Pupil's will learn and understand how to take care of themselves both physically and mentally in order to be healthy and successful adults. Beyond merely a subject, we believe that participation in sporting activity is a key element in developing the pupil's whole well-being.

### **Meeting Individual Needs**

To ensure the individual needs of Cherry Tree pupils are met we will:

- provide for individual needs; responding to age, aptitude and additional educational needs
- provide access, at an appropriate level, to a relevant curriculum
- promote learning and personal growth and development within the context of the extremely complex lives the pupils have so far experienced
- meet the needs of young people, promoting care and respect and expecting high standards in all aspects of school life which continues into their home life
- prepare pupils for their adult and working life both with skills and knowledge but most importantly with their personal development and independence skills

The focus on meeting individual needs is based on the context of each pupil's entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum set within developing positive relationships and improving behaviour.

If a pupil develops the skills needed to be able to return to a larger more mainstream school, Cherry Tree will work closely with the pupil and their parent or carer to ensure they are fully supported for this to happen.

**This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and or the  
Management Committee**