

Policy/Procedure	POLICY		
Type	Operational – Curriculum Policy		
Applies to project(s)	Watermelon Independent Schools	Policy No	OP/10
Created by(owner)	Z Jonah		
Status	Released		
Date	16/07/2024		
Next review date:	July 2025		

Version	Description	Date issued	Reason	Approved by
1.0	New policy	1.09.2021	New school	ZJ

Change History:

Related policies:

Policy Ref No.	Policy Name	Policy Ref No.	Policy Name
S/01	Child Protection and Safeguarding	OP/17	RSE
OP/04	Assessment for Learning	OP/28	SEND
OP/09	Complaints Policy and Procedure	S/02	E-Safety
OP/16	PSHE	OP/03	Anti-bullying
OP/14	Equal Opportunities	OP/15	Educational Visits
OP/13	Equality and Diversity	OP/07	Careers Education and Guidance
HS/06	Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing	OP/05	Attendance
OP/31	Teaching and Learning		

Curriculum Policy

Contents

1. Statement and vision
2. Aims and objectives
3. Intended outcomes
4. A creative curriculum
5. Key stages
6. Key stage 3
7. Key stage 4
8. Leadership and management
9. Inclusion and intervention

Appendix

- 1 Programme of Study (Post-16) – an example pathway

1. Statement and vision

- 1.1 At Watermelon Independent Schools we believe, with the right support, all children can achieve more than they ever thought possible. We strive to achieve a safe, nurturing and aspirational learning environment where children can grow and flourish. Our three core aims are to:
- i. build pupils' resilience, wellbeing and positive mental health
 - ii. maximise academic and personal achievement and potential
 - iii. contribute to the development of confident, secure, well-adjusted and skilled young people who will make a positive contribution to society and live as independent a life as possible
- 1.2 We are committed to the following principles:
- i. to respect and value all individual pupils and staff
 - ii. to provide the highest standards of care and education
 - iii. to ensure safety, security and opportunities for success
 - iv. to foster pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development
- 1.3 Watermelon Independent Schools provides a safe, calm and aspirational learning environment for young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and difficulties associated with autism spectrum disorder. Pupils join Watermelon Independent Schools at a variety of ages with a wide range of learning experiences. Our students have experienced difficulties of some kind that have left them emotionally vulnerable within mainstream schools; many are disengaged from learning. Typically, pupils have extremely uneven learning profiles, sometimes with highly developed abilities in one area and deficits in another.
- 1.4 Initial baseline assessments in English and Maths, coupled with a social and emotional assessment using the Boxall Profile, along with pupils' background reports, provide a sound insight into each young person's individual needs and abilities. An individual education plan and a personalised curriculum programme ensure that timetables are designed to fit the needs of each individual student.
- 1.4 Whilst our pupils have previously struggled to access a traditional formal curriculum in a mainstream setting, our creative and holistic approach to curriculum design, brought about through a deep understanding of pedagogy and practice, and empathy, is designed to facilitate the social, emotional and intellectual growth of all our students.
- 1.5 We offer a broad, balanced and rich secondary school curriculum; one that is highly personalised and closely tailored to each individual pupils' levels of ability, interests and aspirations. Our curriculum consists of three cores strands: academic, social and emotional, and is delivered by well qualified and experienced practitioners. Integrated therapeutic support is offered, as necessary, and a combination of on and off-site learning is delivered, as appropriate, for each individual pupil.
- 1.6 We recognise the importance of building learning power and work hard to build students' confidence, self-esteem, independent study habits and, most importantly, resilience; developing and supporting a culture of learning for life which enables pupils to recognise and respond positively to opportunities for personal and social growth.

1.7 Each subject area delivers the national curriculum programmes of study and ensures that they are personalised, and accessible to all pupils within the school. Our personalised learning programmes are tailored to each pupil and supported by high quality learning resources.

2. Aim and objectives of the curriculum

2.1 The overarching aim of Watermelon Independent Schools's curriculum is to ensure young people have access to a broad, balanced and rich curriculum personalised to their individual needs. Thus, all subjects will:

- i. be overseen by a member of SLT with responsibility for curriculum development thus ensuring high quality teaching and learning
- ii. have detailed schemes of work
- iii. have effective assessment and monitoring procedures
- iv. have an annual curriculum review.

2.2 Our overall curriculum objectives are to:

- i. address the specific needs, learning and emotional difficulties of individual pupils as described in either their individual education plan or EHCPs by providing teaching and learning opportunities at an appropriate level
- ii. provide a broad, balanced and rich curriculum for all pupils which is relevant and appropriate to the world in which we live
- iii. enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- iv. provide a curriculum that engages and motivates students
- v. provide a curriculum that offers continuity and progression in each subject area and across each key stage
- vi. provide access to an adapted, and personalised, national curriculum
- vii. promote the development of inclusive learning opportunities for all, ensuring equal access to learning, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- viii. offer accredited courses which are appropriate to ability levels and individual aspirations
- ix. create a positive learning environment where pupils can work safely
- x. allow students to reach their full potential and achieve both academic, and personal, success
- xi. engage students' interests in personal development and encourage a love for learning
- xii. give students opportunities to develop their key skills.
- xiii. promote numeracy and literacy across the curriculum
- xiv. provide the opportunity for students to widen and develop their ICT skills
- xv. promote students' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development
- xvi. develop knowledge and understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- xvii. promote an understanding of issues such as drugs, sex education and the importance of a healthy lifestyle
- xviii. to develop the role of citizenship within the curriculum and the wider context of the school
- xix. provide opportunities to celebrate and recognise achievement and success
- xx. develop students as flexible and independent learners

- xxi. build confidence, self-esteem, independence, equipping pupils for further / higher education and employment
- xxii. provide careers advice and guidance
- xxiii. prepare students emotionally, socially and intellectually for adulthood.

3. Intended outcomes

3.1 The programme of study should result in:

- i. improved communication skills
- ii. improved literacy and numeracy skills
- iii. greater levels of independence
- iv. life skills enabling students to function more appropriately in the community
- v. accreditation demonstrating the levels to which pupils have studied
- vi. relevant experiences to inform decisions about future careers
- vii. a positive attitude towards their past, present and future learning
- viii. increased confidence to move to the world of work, vocational or higher education
- ix. sufficient key skills and self-esteem to approach new situations confidently.

4 The Curriculum Model

- 4.1 At Watermelon Independent Schools we seek to offer pupils a rich, and inspiring, educational experience with creative collaboration underpinning our curriculum. Watermelon Independent Schools is developing strong links with external providers, local community groups, businesses and professional associations to help pupils reengage with, and foster, a love of lifelong learning.
- 4.3 The curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils develop skills to be successful in modern day life and work environments. Pupils given the opportunity to develop adequate life and careers skills such as flexibility, teamwork, negotiation, independent thinking, self-review and social skills.
- 4.4 Pupils follow personalised pathways with 'wrap around' work and life skills delivered as part of the school's PSHE and careers education programme. The content is delivered through individual weekly lessons, assemblies.
- 4.5 Relationships and sex education is an integral part of PSHE and is taught in line with DfE guidance, tailored to meet students' needs and ages. The school has a well-structured programme and schemes of work setting out how PSHE is taught to meet the particular needs of its students.
- 4.6 Reading is an important part of the school curriculum and is promoted across all aspect of school life.
- 4.7 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, and in particular, knowledge and understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faith and beliefs is embedded across the curriculum and delivered explicitly through assemblies and weekly PSHE lessons.

4.8 In addition to academic subjects studied, there will be a wide range of enrichment and work-related learning experiences, designed to prepare students for further study and for life beyond formal education.

5 Key Stages

5.1 Pupils are given access to each curriculum area which is adapted to the meet individual abilities and needs.

6 Key Stage 3

6.1 Classes are mostly organised by age/ability. Pupils are provided with access to a wide range of national curriculum subjects alongside therapeutic interventions and enrichment activities.

6.2 Key stage three pupils have the opportunity to follow these curriculum areas:

Art & Design	Mathematics
English	Music
English Literature	Physical Education
Geography	PSHE & RSE
History	Science
ICT	

7 Key Stage 4

7.1 Class groups are organised by age/ability. At Key Stage 4, we aim to offer a varied and tailored curriculum.

7.2 Currently, Key Stage 4 pupils have the opportunity of studying:

Mandatory Subjects	Optional
English	
Maths	Art & Design
Sciences	Geography
Physical Education	
PSHE & RSE	
The Prince's Trust Achieve Programme	
History	
ICT	

7.3 As a school we regularly review the KS4 qualifications that we offer to ensure that we have an accessible curriculum for the pupils at Watermelon Independent Schools. We try to respond to the

interests and aspirations of our students and therefore, budget and staffing permitting, will consider alternative courses.

8. Leadership and management of the curriculum

- 8.1 The head teacher has overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the curriculum.
- 8.2 We are required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, and although we do not have to teach the national curriculum, we offer most of the national curriculum, personalised according to need.
- 8.3 Subject leaders undertake an annual evaluation of their subject area including an evaluation of progress and achievement data. They are responsible for reviewing their subject relevance for all students at least annually. Subject planning and work scrutiny take place as part of the overall school audit process. Subject teachers have the opportunity for peer evaluation through regular staff meetings focused on the curriculum. Teachers will also be formally observed regularly to ensure the quality of teaching is monitored and continually improved.

9. Inclusion and Intervention

- 9.1 The needs of the pupils educated at Watermelon Independent Schools are varied and often complex. Successful inclusion relies on a good understanding of, and absolute respect for, the needs of the individual. Wherever possible, the school gives all individuals the same access and opportunities as every other pupil (see also the SEND policy.)
- 9.2 Each department sets suitable learning challenges, responds to pupils' needs and seeks to overcome all potential barriers to learning. This is supported by:
 - i. Individual education plans
 - ii. Individual behaviour plans
 - iii. Intervention programmes
 - iv. Therapeutic support and other assessments from a range of professionals.

10. Safeguarding children

- a. All elements of the school curriculum are underpinned by the need to enable pupils to feel safe and adopt safe practices. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) supports staff in delivering specific safeguarding issues within the curriculum, including how to keep safe, e-safety, anti-bullying, anti-radicalisation, FGM and a wide range of awareness raising topics.
- b. Throughout the curriculum we encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British Values.