



North Hill House School



Curriculum Local Procedure June 2025

Children's Services: Curriculum

Local Procedure Title	Curriculum
Service	North Hill House School
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Local Procedure Author(s)	Lisa Conley Michael Pearce Adam Smith Leigh Murray Catherine Townsend Lauren Adams Jessica George
Local Procedure Ratification	Checked and approved by: Lisa Conley and Michael Pearce

1. Context

North Hill House School is a specialist provision for students aged six to nineteen years. Our provision is based in Frome, Somerset. We have 61 students across the age range of 4-19 and all students have a diagnosis of ASC and hold an EHCP.

We are an accepting, calm, empowering community where every student is recognised for their individual strengths. Our vision is to empower the futures of our students; giving them the strategies for learning for life beyond school. We are exceptionally proud of the achievements of all our students.

It is our responsibility to provide students with the best quality education, focussing on the importance of emotional safety to enable students to access academic learning, with personal development and preparation for Adulthood alongside.

To give our students the best opportunities, we believe our curriculum should offer a broad, balanced ambitious approach which identifies the strengths and meets the individual needs of all our students. The curriculum, alongside specialist teaching approaches, aims to identify where each student is in their learning journey, and provides opportunities for success and progression through a well thought out spiral curriculum which focusses on progress and achievement regardless of starting point.

2. North Hill House School aims

- To work with students who experience particular and diverse challenges in communication, trauma, sensory difficulties, socialisation, and anxiety levels.
- To work alongside these students in developing their knowledge and understanding of their autism, and to promote a lifelong love of learning
- To create an environment where students often with a previous history of failure, are encouraged to develop to their full academic and social potential.

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- To have emotionally available adults who can give our students the opportunity for success and to develop their self-esteem.
- To create an atmosphere based on mutual respect and provide a secure and stimulating environment where students can enjoy their strengths and grow in confidence, understanding, knowledge and skills.
- To develop each student's confidence and independence through a structured programme of personal development so that the young person may leave with the necessary skills and strategies to become a contributing member of society.
- To work closely with parents, thereby establishing a successful partnership between home and school.
- To recognise effort and positive gains, not merely measurable attainments.
- To use a trauma informed approach in our practice

3. Mission Statement

To create a safe and secure environment in which student develop strategies to reach their full potential academically, socially and spiritually. Our committed team of caring, experienced staff endeavour to provide unconditional high regard and turn a cycle of failure into a culture of success.

Values:

Ownership – Teamwork – Thoughtfulness – Excellence - Resilience - Safety



4. Intent

North Hill House School is passionate about delivering a high-quality, creative and personalised curriculum that meets the needs of all students ensuring they are successful in their lives. This is achieved by offering a broad and balanced curriculum, tailored to the needs of each individual student. The curriculum is complemented by a personal

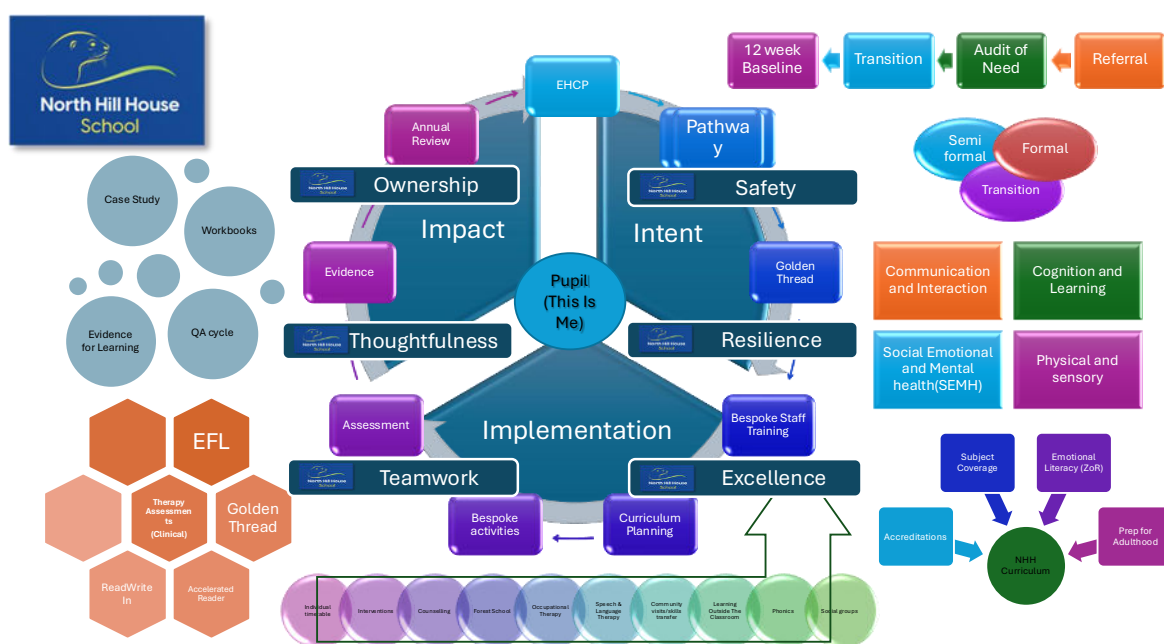
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development programme which helps our students develop the skills they need to be successful adults.

Provision, which is based on developing strong positive relationships, identifies the needs of each individual student to develop communication, independence and social skills that will equip them as adults. The school believes that working within communities and fully utilising all aspects of learning both inside and outside of the classroom are central to supporting well-being and preparation for adulthood. The curriculum is reflective of student need, regardless of cognitive level, and seeks to build progress in a bespoke manner. It is not limited by an age-specific approach, but instead pathways are shaped by needs identified within EHCPs, including as appropriate, access to a range of qualifications and accreditations. The curriculum at North Hill House School is designed to develop transferable skills that equip students for life beyond school.

The school provides 25 hours of full-time supervised education for students of compulsory school age (in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996).

5. Implementation Framework and Design



The diagram above represents the structure of the curriculum across North Hill House School. The curriculum is designed in two pathways – formal and semi-formal. Students can transition between these pathways, should the need arise during their time at North Hill House

6. Primary

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At North Hill House School, our primary curriculum is thoughtfully designed to offer an engaging and inclusive educational experience for every student. We follow a subject based curriculum that allows for focused content and linear progression for each topic into secondary provision

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the varied needs of our students. Understanding that children have unique learning styles, we employ differentiated teaching approaches. While some classes follow a structured, formal curriculum in line with the National Curriculum, others take a semi-formal path. This semi-formal approach is tailored to the personal development needs of our learners within it, whilst also incorporating essential academic elements such as phonics, early reading, writing, maths, and scientific exploration. Our adaptable approach ensures that every child benefits from a learning environment that is not only supportive and nurturing but also sufficiently ambitious to stimulate their intellectual growth.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement and development, we anticipate a gradual increase in formal learning as children transition into and progress through the school. This progression is carefully planned and monitored to ensure that each child receives an education that not only meets their current needs but also prepares them for future academic challenges and aspirations.

7. Reading

Reading is celebrated North Hill House. Students are individually supported and challenged to develop a passion for reading and see it as way to access subjects of special interest and worlds beyond their own. Through reading, we aim to ignite their curiosity and a greater understanding of themselves and how to interact in an ever more demanding and complex society. Our ambition is for all students to be reading at or above their chronological age by the end of key stage 3 to ensure that they can access their key stage 4 curriculum with confidence. To build a reading culture where students read for pleasure, we ensure that they have access to a rich and varied range of literature across the curriculum and within our school library which is at the heart of our school. There are timetabled sessions in the library and teachers across the curriculum can book to teach lessons there. We believe that reading and developing vocabulary is the responsibility of all staff. Opportunities for reading are identified in schemes of learning across the curriculum. To encourage the habit of regular reading, students throughout the school read for at least 15 minutes a day in our Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time. Tutors ensure that all their tutees are reading an Accelerated Reader book, and that each student completes the specific quiz for each book they read. With Accelerated Reader, students are given personalized goals to help them stay on track and to encourage progress with their reading. The quizzes monitor comprehension, help extend vocabulary and develop literacy skills. The reading age of our students is checked three times a year and those students who make less progress than expected are provided with intervention opportunities to help them improve. In areas of the schools, where students may have experienced trauma around learning to read in previous settings, the focus is on encouraging an enjoyment of reading and celebrating engagement. Students are challenged to build their reading stamina in small increments. Alongside the opportunity to explore a range of texts in timetabled English lessons, students engage with Accelerated Reader. Where necessary, targeted reading interventions are

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offered to those students who would benefit from them to help secure improvement in their reading skills.

8. Phonics

At North Hill House, children build their phonics knowledge using the 'Read, Write, Inc' scheme, which supports learning of the 44 phonemes along with associated letters, digraphs, and trigraphs. This scheme follows phonic phases that gradually build up sound and letter recognition. Once a base of letters is established, teachers introduce blending and segmenting letter sounds using 'green' words, which increase in complexity as more letter sounds are taught. Additionally, children learn 'red words' - high-frequency words from the National Curriculum that are taught as whole words due to their irregular pronunciation. As children grow in confidence, book bag books are introduced at the appropriate level to develop reading skills. There are typically five phases in phonics, and children transition to reading books as they progress through these phases. Upon completing phonics, children become free readers and can use Accelerated Reader to assess their ability and age-appropriate reading level as they continue their reading journey. Our phonics scheme is carried on into the secondary phase within school, where we also utilise Read Write Inc's 'Fresh Start' intervention scheme for older students who need support with their phonics.

9. Formal Curriculum

The Formal Curriculum consists of National Curriculum subjects, alongside personal development, Learning Outside the Classroom and Therapeutic interventions. The Formal curriculum is for students who may have a range of needs, but who are cognitively able to access many aspects of a more formal curriculum framework. Our curriculum is taught through high quality, evidence informed teaching practices, focusing on students mastering content through effective Explicit Instruction, retrieval practice and mastery through effective scaffolding and practise. Subjects taught underpin the OTTERS values through explicit references; practical subjects are designed to support fine and gross motor skills as well as providing students with opportunities to develop skills for independent living and work beyond school. All subjects are designed to develop our students' abilities to communicate effectively, and to learn about other communities, countries and cultures, an important part of British Values for North Hill House School.

The formal curriculum at North Hill House goes beyond the academic and focuses on developing skills for life. Students at North Hill House will have the opportunity to practice and rehearse these skills in different contexts. Everything we do is there to support every child and young person towards an independent as possible adulthood. We recognise that for each student, this will present different challenges and opportunities, therefore thorough preparation and practise is essential in every subject area as well as ad hoc learning opportunities. We pride ourselves on the responsive and adaptive curriculum we offer every student at North Hill House.

8. Semi-Formal Curriculum

Our semi-formal curriculum is designed to meet the needs of students who are not yet able to fully access our formal curriculum, and focusses on a personalised approach, valuing the process as much as the achievement and offering flexibility to be responsive to the needs of the individual student and/or class.

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The semi-formal curriculum also involves high quality, evidence informed teaching practices, alongside personalised Therapeutic approaches. It is a curriculum that recognises the importance of emotional safety and focusses on students' individual strengths and capabilities, whilst still being broad, balanced and ambitious. Academic subjects within the Semi-Formal Curriculum dovetails into our formal curriculum, allowing ease of transition for our learners into a more formal learning pathway, when they are ready and able.

9. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

The RSE curriculum is designed to support our students to better understand themselves, the world around them, the working world and offers guidance in managing different relationships that they might encounter. Each topic covered across the RSE curriculum is planned and adapted to best meet the needs of the students and has the flexibility to offer tailored learning to focus on current affairs, personal circumstances that occur throughout the year.

Across the year, all students will focus on the same overarching topic area for a term, with the content differentiated per year group and age suitability within certain topics. The three areas within the RSE curriculum are Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World.

Primary students will spend time learning about different relationships, how to build positive friendships and support available around relationships.

For students in Year 6 and above, students will have sessions within the relationship theme around sexual education. This will be tailored to the age and understanding of each group.

10. Accredited Learning Curriculum

As students progress through our school, we want to ensure that all our learners, are offered the maximum opportunities for success, and for many this is via the national system of accreditation. An example of courses we offer at North Hill House include, but are not limited to:

GCSE	BTEC (at levels 1 and 2)	Advanced Level	BTEC (level 3)	Entry Level
English Language English Literature Maths Combined Science History Art Photography	Home Cooking ICT Sport Functional skills (– English and Maths) Digital Skills Construction Forestry	Maths	Art Protective Services ICT ESports	Science Functional skills (– English and Maths) Art

11. Post 16

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The North Hill House Post 16 curriculum is matched to need and student interest. It also ensures links with different provisions and community work wherever possible.

Our Post 16 curriculum aims to:

- provide equal life chances as a student moves into adulthood
- provide a holistic learning experience
- Be highly personalised - challenging learning
- Build upon prior learning and planned next steps
- Deepen learning over time

The curriculum is based on the four Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes outlined by the Department for Education; Employment, Health, Independent living, and Community Participation.

Each young person follows a personalised learning programme, which is built up of a range of qualifications, vocational learning, work experience opportunities and therapeutic/sensory input.

We develop employability skills through vocational learning experiences within the local community, dedicated work experience and supported internships where appropriate.

Due to the makeup and small numbers at Post 16 provision is developed to meet individual student needs.

The learning journey that all students undertake ensures that, with careful support, they are all able to achieve accreditation. This, for many, will be the stepping-stone to an FE college course.

Whatever the award, or pathway, we celebrate all achievements within our school, and do not lose sight of the amazing journey of change that we have undertaken with each and every one of our unique students.

12. Work Experience and Careers

In line with working towards meeting the eight Gatsby Benchmarks for career education in schools, careers are embedded across the curriculum, with a direct focus placed through the PSHE/RSE curriculum. To work towards meeting Gatsby Benchmark 4, 'linking curriculum learning to careers', different career routes/prospects are discussed in relation to the different subjects included in our curriculum offer.

Across secondary and sixth form, students will have access to workplace visits and speakers across the years to gain effective experience of the working environment and help support informed choices for future pathways. For year 10 students and above, work placements will be offered and organised at varying points of the year and organised around a student's interest or future career aspiration.

To support students in making informed decisions about post-16 and post-18 routes, there will be frequent times across the year where students will be offered a 1:1 career guidance meeting with a career adviser. The aims of this meeting will be to understand what the options are available to them; understand the routes they can take to secure a desired career and support around applications for potential jobs or courses.

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13. Therapy

In our school environment, we prioritize the holistic development and well-being of our students by incorporating the specialized roles of an onsite occupational therapist, a speech and language therapist, and a counsellor.

The occupational therapist focuses on supporting student's fine and gross motor skills as well as assessing and supporting their sensory needs, facilitating them with necessary tools for everyday tasks and enhancing their participation in school activities.

The speech and language therapist addresses communication challenges, aiding students in developing effective speech and language skills crucial for academic success and social interactions.

The counsellor provides emotional and psychological support, helping students navigate personal challenges and promoting mental health.

We have access to an educational psychologist if an EHCP states that input is required, or staff have assessed that additional expertise may be beneficial to provide best support for a young person.

The therapy team provide 1-1 and group sessions specifically tailored to address the individualized goals outlined in each student's Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), ensuring targeted and personalized support that fosters their academic and personal growth.

Additionally, to accommodate varying needs, our school offers movement breaks to all young people as a standard provision, supporting their physical and mental well-being. Environmental audits are routinely carried out across the school to ensure the sensory environments of classrooms and corridors are best suited for our young people and manage potential overstimulation.

14. Roles and responsibilities

The Regional Director board (Chair of Governors)

The Regional Directors will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Head Teacher to account for its implementation.

The Regional Directors will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets.
- Enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the curriculum and other statutory requirements.
- All courses provided for students that lead to qualifications, such as BTEC and Entry Level certificates, are approved by the secretary of state.
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- It fulfils its role in processes to dis-apply students from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals.

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Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those areas which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the vision/mission statement/values of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board.
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets to make informed decisions.
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs placed at North Hill House and the EHCP targets identified inform teaching and learning approaches.

Other staff

Teaching staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this procedure.

The SLT will have specific oversight of Teaching and Learning and the Curriculum.

15. Monitoring arrangements

Operations Directors monitor coverage of curriculum areas and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- School visits
- Governance reports completed in conjunction with Head teacher.
- Curriculum reports and presentations
- Head Teacher reports

Curriculum leaders monitor the way their area is taught throughout the school by:

- Meetings with teachers, supporting planning, observing practice, student evidence checks and support.

This procedure will be reviewed annually by Senior Leadership Team. At every review, the procedure will be made available to the Regional Directors board for ratification.

Contents Checklist (Local Services may add additional items – this is a core list)			
Rationale underpinning the curriculum – Intent, Implementation, Impact	Ü	Post-16 as a separate section if this is applicable	Ü
Reference the ISS	Ü	The role of subject coordinators if this is applicable and how the curriculum is monitored	Ü

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Reference qualifications and outcomes supported by the curriculum	Ü	Reference to the process of how the curriculum is and will be reviewed	Ü
Reference relationships and sex education and how this is taught	Ü	Reference the teaching of reading	Ü
Opportunities for work related learning, independent CIAG and reference to the Gatsby Benchmark	Ü		

Local Procedure Review History:

Date Reviewed	Reviewer	Summary of revisions
June 25	Michael Pearce	Updated NHH Narrative PowerPoint slide
June 25	Lisa Conley	Redrafted semi-formal offer