

Primary Curriculum Policy



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Primary Curriculum Policy - Engaging by design.

1. Aim of the policy

This policy aims to outline the Greater Horseshoe School Policy for the Primary Curriculum.

2. Overview

The Primary curriculum at the Greater Horseshoe School is designed to be engaging, child centred and holistic, within a safe and nurturing setting, with an emphasis on the great outdoors.

We offer a creative, differentiated and modified National Curriculum.

We know teaching and learning begins at each young person's own level and ability and leads to independence.

Reinforcement of learning is deemed as crucial and our programme is cyclic, progressive and highly individualised.

Our mission is: To praise, be positive, to have enjoyment and fun while we excel - every single day, rain or shine.

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3. Rationale

The Greater Horseshoe School offers robust education and support for young people, across the age groups, embracing a range of conditions, disabilities and complex support needs. The Greater Horseshoe School offers a curriculum which is accessible to young people who have missed periods of education, including significantly long periods, or who have failed to thrive in an educational setting. This may be due to a range of circumstances which result in young people becoming vulnerable, losing direction in their learning and losing hope. The Greater Horseshoe School provides nurturing and stimulation for those who may need a sympathetic transition period to engage again with their learning.

The Greater Horseshoe School we know that young people may become traumatised and anxious at times and exhibit a range of highly complex needs which may not be well matched in their current provision. Our aim is for our students to return to main stream settings once their self-esteem, motivation and academic achievement is re-established. The nurturing and positive environment maintained at the Greater Horseshoe School allows a flexible flightpath tailored to the needs of the individual learner. This is dynamic and the pace at which we work and the young person progresses is unique to each student. At all times we strive for our young people to be the best they can be.

Student growth is fundamental in all that we do. Some aspects of the curriculum may appeal to a young person more than another and our unique method of working accommodates the young person's interests and strengths - while gently widening their horizons and introducing new learning experiences at every opportunity.

Our Programme of Study is holistic and totally bespoke. This means that every education plan is individual and due to our rigorous cycle of reviewing and updating, is constantly being adapted to the specific requirements of the young person. This school fits around the needs of its students, rather than the student having to adapt themselves to the School.

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The Greater Horseshoe School prides itself on team work. The staff work together collaboratively to generate a timetable for the young person which is carefully tailored to their EHCP plan, Educational Psychologist's report, Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy or any diagnosed or identified areas for development. We take heed of the expert and professional advice available to us, but we are always mindful of the parental voice and the student voice. We make careful observations so that the emotional needs of the young people are addressed appropriately to circumstance and situation so that a calm atmosphere prevails in our lessons. All assessment information accessed by our School is used to shape a sequence of sessions which make up the young person's weekly timetable. Although structured with regular rest breaks enrichment activities are not stifled by time constraints – We ensure we make maximum use of our time to make the most of each day.

At the Greater Horseshoe School we follow a sequential placement process which generates a Transition Programme matched to each individual new student. Assessment and Transition may take place over days or weeks and may involve more than one timetable being drawn up as time in school for the young person increases. It may entail extensive multi agency work and outreach visits by a range of staff from the Greater Horseshoe School. We progress at the pace of the student not at a pace for the school's convenience. We work closely with parents and re-evaluate if the student appears anxious or worried and needs more time for adjustment. A diagrammatic representation of our rigorous referral process is included ***Appendix A.***

At the Greater Horseshoe School we utilise every teaching and learning window possible. We capture engagement and utilise the 'sparks of interest' we see in our learners to cultivate new ways of thinking, extend knowledge, build concepts and deepen understanding. We encourage active learning, where young people know what they are going to learn, why it is valued and are given the space to practice and embed their experiences. Talking therapy and discussion are vital to what we do, as our young people have the opportunity to advance their ability to communicate and understand their feelings, thus enabling the development of self-esteem. We encourage self-awareness in our pupil's and assist in an exploration of preferred learning styles. We use visual prompts widely, offer sensory experiences extensively, and

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incorporate auditory and kinesthetic preferences into lesson planning: By knowing our young people well, we can provide security and educational provision which is second to none.

The Primary Curriculum is imparted through a Primary Scheme of Work, adapted from the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Guidelines, exclusive to the Greater Horseshoe School. The Scheme of Work covers one academic year and there is an additional optional, 'Induction Unit' for students whom could benefit from a transition period. The Primary Scheme of Work uses a topic based approach, which utilises themes as a means of linking learning strands. For example, a local study of Bovey Tracey Church, as part of a Buildings topic, facilitates work on tessellation in Mathematics and the qualities of different Materials in Science. By distributing the curriculum subject units, to be covered, throughout the topics they are given a context. Core areas of study such as Reading Skills and Spelling may be taught in more formal sessions which are progressive and need regular reinforcement to ensure automaticity is achieved. However, the core skills taught will be applied and reinforced, within topic work. The topics are chosen to be appropriate for the season. The Summer topic for instance, being associated with growth; taking optimum advantage of the Chipley Mill Care Farm outdoor learning environment.

The Greater Horseshoe School works in partnership across both sites; that of the Greater Horseshoe School site and Chipley Mill Farm. All of our students can access both centres. We offer a very special environment of tranquility at Chipley Mill Farm which is predictable and encourages children and young people to join together to complete tasks, to learn how to solve problems they face, whilst providing care and nurture to animals and the land. As a working farm, Chipley Mill Farm activities are diverse and offer a range of services and team building opportunities including:

- Animal Care
- Horticulture learning and therapy
- Cooking and understanding healthy living
- Specific and day projects including bush craft, lambing and nature arts and craft.

Throughout the Enhanced Children's Services organisation a high staffing ratio boosts high expectations. Staff undergo enhanced DBS screening and are employed only if they meet

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exacting criteria to ensure the highest standards are consistently sustained. Adult role modelling of social skills, appropriate, social interaction and positive communication, especially when things do not go to plan, uphold values of tolerance, empathy and generosity of spirit. Kindness, caring and honesty are virtues integral to the Greater Horseshoe School high behaviour expectations. As staff are always on the lookout for young people 'being good' we appreciate being able to offer golden time and public praise to celebrate acts of kindness and tasks well done. By sharing achievements regularly with parents and stakeholders, we work together collaboratively with families to offer support and encouragement.

At the Greater Horseshoe School, we know that physical wellbeing and comfort are fundamental. We advocate regular physical exercise, fresh air and a healthy balanced diet. The layout of our premises means that there are ample opportunities for fitness enhancement. We know that exercise has multiple benefits therefore active periods are planned throughout the week. We hope that this healthy approach will be carried forward into later life and the Primary Curriculum we follow is intended to place our young people on a path which will encompass qualities which prepare them well for adulthood, working life, being a good citizen and making a contribution to the community.

4. Useful information

This policy should be read in conjunction with our related policies/documents such as:

- Curriculum Policy
- Planning, Assessment, Recording, Celebration Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Equality Act Policy
- Appendix A "The Greater Horseshoe School Primary Curriculum Scheme of Work"

5. Equality Impact Statement

All relevant persons are required to comply with this policy and must demonstrate sensitivity and competence in relation to diversity in race, faith, age, gender, disability and sexual orientation. If you, or any other groups, believe you are disadvantaged by this policy please

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contact the Group Director for Education and Learning. Enhanced Children's Services will then actively respond to the enquiry.

This policy is written by Lukasz Miecznikowski

Date: 1st of May 2020

Signed 

This policy is quality assured by Jason Goddard, Group Director for Education and Learning.

Signed: 

Date: 1st of June 2020

The policy is quality assured by Governor: