

Options Autism



Curriculum Policy

**Policy Folder:
Curriculum**

Overton School Curriculum Policy

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1.0 Introduction and Purpose

The curriculum at Overton School is designed to provide every young person with a meaningful, ambitious and personalised education that reflects their individual strengths, needs, aspirations and potential.

As a specialist school supporting young people with autism and complex needs, we recognise that learners may require different approaches, environments, levels of support and rates of progression. Our curriculum is therefore designed to be flexible and responsive while maintaining high expectations for learning, personal development, independence and future opportunities.

The curriculum provides a structured framework for developing knowledge, skills, communication, confidence, self-regulation, independence and preparation for adulthood. It enables young people to make progress towards their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes, develop their individual potential and prepare for meaningful next steps.

Our curriculum is underpinned by the values of Options Autism and the commitment to ensuring that young people are safe, valued, included and supported to achieve positive outcomes.

Policy implementation

Deputy Headteacher, Samantha Clarke responsible for Quality of Education and curriculum leaders, are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively.

All staff are expected to understand their responsibilities within the curriculum and to contribute to its consistent delivery, review and improvement.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Assessment Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Quality Assurance Process
- SEND Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Preparation for Adulthood and Careers-related policies, where applicable

2.0 Aims of Our Curriculum

The curriculum at Overton School aims to ensure that every young person is supported to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and experiences needed to live as independently and meaningfully as possible.

Our curriculum aims to:

1. Promote individual progress and achievement through ambitious, personalised learning that reflects each young person's starting point, strengths, needs and aspirations.
2. Develop communication and interaction, enabling young people to express their wishes, feelings, needs and preferences in ways that are meaningful to them.
3. Build independence and self-determination, supporting young people to make choices, develop problem-solving skills and participate actively in their own learning and future planning.

4. Support emotional wellbeing and regulation, providing appropriate strategies, relationships and environments that enable learners to feel safe and ready to learn.
5. Develop knowledge, skills and understanding across a broad and balanced curriculum, adapted to the needs, age, aptitude and developmental stage of each learner.
6. Prepare young people for adulthood, including community participation, employability, relationships, health, wellbeing and independent living.
7. Provide meaningful personal development opportunities, including SMSC, values, citizenship, enrichment and experiences beyond the classroom.
8. Support progression and positive destinations, ensuring that accreditation, qualifications and next-step planning are aligned with individual aspirations and future opportunities.
9. Promote inclusion and participation, ensuring that barriers to learning are identified and reasonable adjustments and appropriate support are provided.
10. Maintain a culture of continuous improvement, using assessment, professional dialogue and quality assurance to strengthen curriculum delivery and outcomes.

The curriculum should support young people to develop as confident individuals, active members of their communities and learners who can continue to grow beyond their time at Overton.

3.0 Curriculum Principles and Entitlement

3.1 Our curriculum principles

The curriculum at Overton is guided by the following principles:

Personalised

Learning is adapted to each young person's individual profile, needs, strengths, interests and aspirations.

Ambitious

All learners are supported to make progress, with appropriate challenge and high expectations.

Inclusive and accessible

Teaching and learning is adapted to remove barriers and support participation.

Functional and transferable

Learners are given opportunities to practice and apply knowledge and skills across different settings.

Future-focused

Learning supports preparation for adulthood, independence and positive destinations.

3.2 Curriculum entitlement

Overton School provides a curriculum that is appropriate to each young person's age, aptitude, developmental stage and individual needs. It incorporates relevant curriculum areas and learning

experiences, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, social, physical, and creative development.

The curriculum is planned to meet applicable requirements for the school's type of provision and the individual entitlements set out in each learner's EHCP.

All young people should have access to:

- Meaningful learning opportunities across their curriculum pathway.
- Appropriate English, mathematics and communication development.
- Opportunities for physical development, health and wellbeing.
- Personal, social, moral and cultural development.
- Preparation for adulthood and future destinations.
- Community access, enrichment and wider experiences.
- Appropriate accreditation or recognition of achievement, where this supports their learning journey.

The provision of these opportunities are adapted to the learner's needs and delivered through an appropriate combination of subject teaching, personalised learning, therapeutic support, functional activities and wider experiences.

4.0 EHCP Outcomes and Personalised Learning

Every young person's curriculum must be informed by their individual needs and statutory EHCP outcomes, where applicable.

EHCP outcomes provide an important framework for identifying long-term aspirations and planning learning that supports progress towards these outcomes. Overton uses the following areas to inform curriculum planning, where relevant to the learner:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and Physical
- Independence and Preparation for Adulthood

The precise outcomes and needs of each young person must be taken from their current EHCP and associated planning documents.

4.1 Curriculum planning

EHCP outcomes should be translated into meaningful, measurable learning intentions and embedded within medium-term and daily planning.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that:

- Learning intentions are relevant to individual needs and curriculum goals.
- Learning is appropriately sequenced and builds on prior knowledge and skills.
- Planned adaptations and support are identified.
- Opportunities are provided for repetition, practice, application and generalisation.

- Progress and evidence are recorded proportionately and accurately.
- Assessment information is used to inform future planning.

Individual Education Plans and other personalised planning documents should support the connection between long-term outcomes, short-term targets, classroom learning and the development of independence.

Personalisation and learner voice

Young people should be supported to participate in decisions about their learning, where possible and appropriate. This includes making choices, expressing preferences, reflecting on progress and contributing to discussions about future aspirations.

Personalisation should maintain ambition while ensuring that learning is accessible and meaningful.

5.0 Curriculum Pathways and Implementation

Overton School provides two overarching curriculum pathways:

1. Equals Curriculum Pathway
2. Formal Curriculum Pathway

The pathways contain strands designed to support different learning approaches and progression routes. The pathway selected for each young person should reflect their current learning needs, strengths, attainment, aspirations and intended next steps.

Pathway placement is not intended to limit potential or create a fixed route. It should be reviewed regularly and adapted when evidence indicates that a different approach or level of challenge would better support the learner.

5.1 Curriculum pathway structure

Equals Curriculum Pathway

Informal, semi-formal and formal learning approaches

5.2 Equals Curriculum Pathway

The Equals Curriculum Pathway is designed to provide a flexible learning approach that supports young people who may benefit from informal, semi-formal or formal learning experiences.

It prioritises the development of communication, interaction, independence, regulation, functional skills, learning behaviours and the application of knowledge in meaningful contexts.

Corndon – Informal Strand

The Corndon Strand provides a personalised curriculum with a strong emphasis on communication, interaction, regulation, sensory development, physical wellbeing and independence.

Learning may be organised across integrated sessions rather than separate subject areas. Opportunities should include:

- Communication and social relations.
- Physical wellbeing and sensory exploration.
- Self-determination and self-regulation.
- Independence and functional life skills.
- Community access and meaningful experiences.
- Appropriate ASDAN programmes and AQA UAS.

The curriculum should be delivered through structured and natural learning opportunities, including routines, play, functional activities and community experiences.

Clee – Semi-Formal Strand

The Clee Strand provides a semi-formal approach that emphasises concrete learning experiences, communication, independence, problem-solving, play and leisure.

Learning should be meaningful, practical and appropriately challenging, with opportunities for learners to apply skills in real-life contexts.

Relevant areas may include:

- Communication and interaction.
- Independence.
- Play and leisure.
- Thinking and problem-solving.
- PSHE, relationships and sex education, citizenship and careers.
- ASDAN and other appropriate accredited or non-accredited learning.
- Community access and preparation for adulthood.

Callow – Formal Equals Strand

The Callow Strand follows a formal learning approach while retaining flexibility to respond to individual needs.

It includes subject-specific learning and adapted curriculum content, with opportunities to develop knowledge, reinforce learning, revisit key concepts and work towards personalised outcomes.

Learning may include:

- English and mathematics.
- Science.
- Art and design and technology.
- Physical education.
- Humanities and religious education.
- PSHE, relationships and sex education.
- Citizenship and careers.
- Preparation for adulthood and relevant ASDAN/ AQA UAS programmes.

5.3 Formal Curriculum Pathway

The Formal Curriculum Pathway provides personalised learning that incorporates relevant aspects of the National Curriculum and prepares learners for appropriate accredited qualifications and future destinations.

The pathway includes the Mortimer and Stretton strands. Placement and progression should be based on individual attainment, needs, aspirations and the qualifications or learning routes that are appropriate for each young person.

Mortimer Strand

The Mortimer Strand provides a bespoke curriculum that includes relevant aspects of the National Curriculum, with a focus on developing core knowledge, functional skills, independence and preparation for further learning or vocational opportunities.

Potential learning and accreditation may include:

- English and mathematics.
- Science and computing/IT.
- Employability and professional development.
- Creative arts and vocational areas.
- PSHE, relationships and sex education, citizenship and careers.
- ASDAN programmes and other appropriate qualifications.
- Work experience, community access and enrichment.

Qualification choices should be based on the learner's current attainment, learning needs, aspirations and intended destination. Qualifications should recognise meaningful achievement and not become the sole driver of curriculum design.

Stretton Strand

The Stretton Strand provides a bespoke formal curriculum incorporating relevant National Curriculum content and appropriate preparation for GCSE, Functional Skills, Open Awards or other suitable qualifications.

The curriculum should support learners to develop their academic, functional and vocational knowledge and skills, while continuing to address independence, communication, personal development and preparation for adulthood.

The range of subjects and qualifications offered should reflect the current needs and aspirations of individual learners. Decisions about qualification entry must be based on suitability, readiness, access arrangements and the requirements of the relevant awarding body.

5.4 Teaching and Learning Approaches

Teaching and learning at Overton should be informed by the individual profile of each learner and supported by evidence-informed approaches appropriate to their needs.

Staff should ensure that learning:

- Is purposeful and linked to clear learning intentions.
- Builds on prior knowledge and experience.
- Is appropriately scaffolded and differentiated or adapted.
- Includes opportunities for active participation and communication.
- Provides sufficient repetition, rehearsal and retrieval.
- Supports learners to generalise skills across people, environments and activities.
- Promotes independence and avoids unnecessary adult dependency.
- Uses appropriate sensory, visual, practical and experiential approaches.
- Includes opportunities for reflection, choice and learner voice.

Adult support should be proportionate to need. Staff should consider whether their intervention promotes independence, supports the learner to think and communicate, and provides useful information to inform future teaching.

5.5 The Wider Curriculum and Natural Learning Opportunities

The curriculum includes both planned subject or curriculum sessions and learning that takes place through the wider school day.

Routines such as transitions, lunchtimes, snack times, leisure, personal care where relevant, community access and practical activities may provide important opportunities for learning and development.

These opportunities should be purposeful, planned where appropriate and linked to individual learning intentions. They should not replace access to a broad and balanced curriculum but should complement formal and personalised teaching.

Overton School provides appropriate opportunities for:

- Forest school and outdoor learning.
- Community access and functional activities.
- Swimming and physical wellbeing.
- Shopping, library and café experiences.
- Horse riding and other relevant activities.
- Work experience and volunteering, where appropriate.
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award or other recognised programmes.
- Wider personal development.

The availability and suitability of these opportunities should be reviewed regularly, considering learner needs, risk management, staffing, accessibility and intended learning outcomes.

6.0 Curriculum Impact, Assessment and Quality Assurance

6.1 Curriculum impact

The impact of the curriculum is evaluated through the progress that young people make in relation to their individual learning intentions, EHCP outcomes, curriculum expectations and future aspirations.

Impact should not be measured solely through completed work, attendance at activities or the achievement of qualifications. Staff should consider the knowledge, skills, understanding, independence and confidence that learners develop, and whether learning is transferred into new situations.

Evidence of impact may include:

- Progress towards individual learning outcomes.
- Development of knowledge and skills.
- Improved communication and participation.
- Increased independence and self-management.
- Application and generalisation of learning.
- Achievement of relevant qualifications.
- Learner voice and engagement.
- Progress towards preparation for adulthood outcomes.
- Feedback from families, professionals and relevant placement providers.

6.2 Assessment through SOLAR

SOLAR is used to support the assessment and monitoring of progress across the curriculum pathways, in line with the school's assessment framework.

Teachers are responsible for making accurate and informed judgements about learning and progress, using appropriate evidence and professional knowledge of the young person.

Assessment should:

1. Identify what the learner knows, understands and can do.
2. Provide information about current attainment and next steps.
3. Inform future planning and appropriate intervention.
4. Capture progress towards relevant curriculum and individual outcomes.
5. Support communication between staff and relevant professionals.
6. Provide reliable evidence for reporting and review.

Assessment expectations

Teachers should ensure that:

- Assessment judgements are based on relevant evidence.
- Learning outcomes are understood before evidence is collected.
- Assessment information is updated within agreed timescales.
- Progress information is used to inform teaching.
- Any concerns about progress are identified and acted upon.
- Evidence is accurate, accessible and appropriate to the learner.

6.3 Moderation and standardisation

Moderation and standardisation are essential components of curriculum quality assurance.

Regular moderation enables staff to discuss evidence, compare judgements and develop shared expectations. It should support consistency and professional learning rather than being treated solely as a compliance activity.

Moderation should:

- Include relevant samples of learner evidence.
- Use agreed criteria, assessment frameworks or qualification requirements.
- Encourage professional dialogue.
- Identify inconsistencies or areas of uncertainty.
- Inform improvements to teaching, planning and assessment.
- Lead to clear actions where required.

Standardisation should be undertaken regularly across the academic year and should include opportunities for staff to agree expectations, review exemplars and develop confidence in making consistent judgements.

6.4 Curriculum quality assurance

The curriculum is monitored through the school's planned quality assurance cycle. This may include:

- Learning visits and observations.
- Planning and curriculum reviews.
- Work scrutiny.
- Assessment and moderation reviews.
- Learner voice.
- Staff and parent/carer feedback, where appropriate.
- Review of qualification pathways and evidence.
- Analysis of progress and wider outcomes.
- Evaluation of personal development and experiences.

Quality assurance cycle

Plan → Teach → Assess → Moderate → Analyse → Improve

1. Plan

Identify learning intentions and adaptations

2. Teach and Support

Deliver purposeful, accessible learning

3. Assess

Gather evidence and identify next steps

4. Moderate

Review and align judgements

5. Analyse

Identify progress, gaps and priorities

6. Improve

Take action and evaluate impact

6.5 Intervention and additional support

Where assessment and quality assurance identify that a young person is not making expected progress towards their individual outcomes, appropriate action should be taken.

The response may include:

- Review of learning intentions and curriculum expectations.
- Adaptation of teaching and learning strategies.
- Additional support or targeted intervention.
- Review of communication, sensory or regulation needs.
- Collaboration with the SENCO and relevant professionals.
- Discussion with families and other stakeholders, where appropriate.
- Review of the learner's pathway or planned provision.

Interventions should have clear objectives and be monitored to determine whether they are contributing to improved outcomes.

7.0 Preparation for Adulthood and Post-16 Provision

7.1 Preparation for adulthood

Preparation for adulthood is a central component of the Overton curriculum and should be developed progressively throughout a young person's education.

Learning should support each young person to build the skills, confidence, knowledge and experiences needed for their future.

Relevant areas include:

- Independent living and self-care.
- Communication and relationships.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Community participation and citizenship.
- Employability and work-related learning.
- Travel and access to services, where appropriate.
- Leisure, recreation and social opportunities.
- Self-advocacy and decision-making.

The focus and level of support must be personalised to the learner's needs, aspirations and intended destination.

7.2 Post-16 provision

Post-16 provision at Overton is designed to support young people to continue developing their individual potential and prepare for their next stage of life.

Young people may continue within the curriculum pathway and strand that best meets their needs, with appropriate review and adaptation as they progress.

The Post-16 curriculum may include:

- Core academic and functional learning.
- Vocational learning and qualifications.
- Independence and preparation for adulthood.
- PSHE, relationships and sex education.
- Careers and employability.
- Work experience and volunteering.
- Community access and wider experiences.
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award or other suitable programmes.
- Personal development.

Where appropriate and achievable, learners should be supported to access relevant further education, training providers, employment-related opportunities, placements and community activities.

Progression and destination planning

The school should work with the young person, family, Local Authority and relevant professionals to support transition planning and preparation for next steps.

Curriculum planning should reflect the learner's aspirations and the skills and knowledge required for their intended destination. Progress towards future goals should be reviewed regularly and used to inform the learner's individual plan.

8.0 Personal Development and Wider Experiences

Personal development is an integral part of the curriculum at Overton. It supports young people to develop as individuals, build confidence, understand their place in the community and prepare for adulthood.

All young people should have opportunities to participate in a personalised range of activities that complement their core curriculum and support wider development.

These may include:

- Forest school and outdoor learning.
- Horse riding and swimming.
- Cooking, gardening and practical activities.
- Community participation and volunteering.
- Work experience and employability activities.
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- ASDAN and other suitable programmes.

- Enrichment and structured leisure activities.
- Citizenship, SMSC and values-based experiences.

8.1 SMSC and values

Overton uses its SMSC and Values Map to support the planning and development of meaningful experiences across the curriculum.

Planning should ensure that young people have opportunities to develop:

- Respectful relationships and social understanding.
- Awareness of their own values and those of others.
- Participation in the wider community.
- Understanding of responsibility, choice and citizenship.
- Opportunities for reflection and personal growth.

The school should review the breadth and progression of these opportunities to ensure that personal development is embedded across the curriculum rather than relying solely on isolated activities or awareness days.

8.2 Overton Experiences

The Overton Experiences framework supports the planning of essential experiences that young people should have opportunities to access during their time at the school.

Experiences should be planned with consideration of:

- Individual interests and aspirations.
- Accessibility and reasonable adjustments.
- Personal safety and risk management.
- Opportunities for independence and choice.
- The development of transferable skills.
- Reflection and evaluation of impact.

The emphasis should be on what young people learn and gain from experiences, rather than participation alone.

9.0 SEND and Accessibility

Overton School is a specialist provision supporting young people with autism and a range of complex needs.

The curriculum is designed to be accessible, personalised and responsive to individual learning profiles. It should reflect the needs identified through EHCPs, assessment, professional advice and ongoing observation.

Staff should work collaboratively to identify and reduce barriers to learning and participation. This may include appropriate adaptations to:

- Communication and language.
- Sensory environments.

- Teaching methods and resources.
- Learning tasks and assessment.
- Timetables and transitions.
- Staffing and adult support.
- Physical access and participation.

The curriculum promotes inclusion and participation while maintaining appropriate challenge and expectations.

10.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Effective curriculum delivery is a shared responsibility.

Head of School – Nicola Chokkuea

- Strategic oversight of curriculum quality, implementation and impact.

Deputy Headteacher / Quality of Education Lead – Samantha Clarke

- Curriculum leadership, quality assurance, monitoring and improvement planning.

Curriculum Leads - Kate Underhill, Joel Amps, Richeard Lort

- Development of curriculum content, support for staff and review of implementation.

Teachers

Planning, teaching, assessment, adaptation and monitoring of learning.

Teaching Assistants

Supporting learning, promoting independence, implementing planned strategies and sharing relevant observations with teachers.

SENCO – Kate Underhill

Supporting the identification of needs, appropriate provision and collaboration with relevant professionals.

All staff

Maintaining high expectations, supporting inclusion, safeguarding learners and contributing to curriculum improvement.

11.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the school's quality assurance processes.

Monitoring should consider:

1. Whether the curriculum is being implemented consistently.
2. Whether teaching and learning are appropriately adapted and ambitious.
3. Whether pupils are making progress towards their individual outcomes.
4. Whether assessment and moderation are accurate and useful.
5. Whether personal development and preparation for adulthood are meaningfully embedded.
6. Whether qualification pathways and destinations are appropriate.
7. Whether quality assurance findings lead to measurable improvement.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the policy owner and relevant leadership staff, or sooner where changes in legislation, regulatory expectations, organisational requirements or curriculum practice make this necessary.

12.0 Appendices

Appendix A: Curriculum Pathways and Strands |

Pathway	Strand	Learning Style	Curriculum	Assessment	Personalised Learning Intentions
<u>Equals</u>	Corndon	Informal	Equals	SOLAR	Yes
	Clee	Semi-formal	Equals	SOLAR	Yes
	Callow	Formal	Equals	SOLAR	Yes
<u>Formal</u>	Mortimer	Formal	Personalised NC Functional Skills/Open Awards	SOLAR Accredited Qualification	Yes
	Stretton	Formal	Personalised NC Functional Skills/ Open Awards/ GCSE	SOLAR Accredited Qualification	Yes

Appendix B: Pathway Review and Decision-Making

A pathway review should consider the following:

- Current attainment and progress.
- EHCP outcomes and individual needs.
- Communication, sensory and regulation needs.
- Learning preferences and effective teaching approaches.
- Independence and preparation for adulthood.
- Learner voice and aspirations.
- Family and professional input, where appropriate.

- Future curriculum and qualification opportunities.

A change in pathway should be considered through appropriate professional discussion and documented planning processes. Pathway decisions should be reviewed regularly and should not unnecessarily restrict a young person's future opportunities.



**Outcomes
First
Group.**

Acorn Education
Momenta Connect
Options Autism