



Policy No. 9

Curriculum Statement

References;

- **Education Act 1996**
- **Education Act 1997**
- **Standards and Framework Act 1998**
- **Education (National Curriculum) (Temporary Exceptions for Individual Children) (England)**
- **Regulations 2000**
- **Education Act 2003**
- **The National Curriculum in England Framework Document (DfE) 2014**
- **Recommendations of the Rockford Review Dec 2015**
- **Prevent Duty Departmental Advice V6**

Our Vision

Acorn School strives to provide a caring, learning environment in which all learners can develop academically, socially, emotionally and morally to their full potential and in which learners and staff feel safe, secure and valued.

We are committed to delivering an individual and personalised curriculum, which is based on thorough assessment of a student's needs and learning style alongside their strengths, interests and areas for development. Learners are provided with appropriate and challenging pathways to their learning.

We believe that learning at Acorn School should be engaging and motivating for our learners and we offer an environment where teachers can deliver a creative and innovative curriculum which takes into account the complex learning and behavioural needs of individual learners. The individual is at the heart of what we deliver and our flexible approach allows learners to have access to the full curriculum whilst also receiving a bespoke package that may include an alternative curriculum, therapeutic input or intensive 1:1 support.

Acorn School Aims

The school aims to provide a high quality of education which promotes learning for all our learners within a secure and purposeful environment which young people find stimulating, engaging and enjoyable.

To achieve this we aim to:

- Offer all learners access to the full National Curriculum.
- Ensure that all learners have access to a broad, balanced and appropriately differentiated curriculum.
- Deliver a curriculum that is designed to address the individual development, sensory, physical, personal, social, and emotional and communication needs of the student.
- To make learning an enjoyable experience which develops learners as fully rounded individuals and enables them to explore their talents and interests and achieve their potential
- To re-engage learners with learning and build their confidence and self- esteem so that they see themselves as successful learners
- To develop basic skills in communication, literacy, numeracy and decision making so that they can function in adult life
- To prepare them for the world of work and independent living and to take their place as active citizens in the UK
- Ensure that the importance of literacy and numeracy skills is promoted across the whole curriculum, especially communication and functional skills.
- Help learners to develop scientific skills such as enquiry and observation.
- Provide all learners with access to externally assessed qualifications at KS4.
- Encourage and support personal growth and self-reliance in a spirit of co-operation.
- To provide experiences that will help learners gain increased self-esteem and self-respect as well as respect for others and the environment.
- Develop student understanding of the local and larger community and help them to contribute to it.
- Develop learners understanding of relationships by providing positive role models.
- Help learners to become good citizens by teaching them about their world and helping them to understand the varied beliefs, values and abilities within it.
- Provide learners with learning which will enhance their life skills such as cookery, healthy eating, budgeting and functional skills.
- Encourage physical activity and outside interests.
- Prepare learners well for their next stage in life through work experience, college taster days and visits and careers advice.
- Promote spiritual, moral, cultural, social and physical development.

To provide that challenging and relevant curriculum we aim to;

- Develop effective learning skills for each student; recognising that we all learn in different ways, a range of strategies must seek to secure individual potential across all aspects of the curriculum
- Encourage each student to take full advantage of the opportunities provided to develop particular interests and abilities both within and beyond the timetabled school day.
- Provide opportunities for learners to “make good choices” and build self- esteem
- Develop an appropriate balance of academic and practical work to prepare young people for a rapidly changing and demanding world.
- Ensure that student progress is carefully monitored and assessed in order to achieve the highest standards of achievement and progress.
- Ensure that all learners who attend the Acorn school have Individual Education Plans (IEP’s) which cover the core subjects of English and Maths as well as SEAL (behaviour). These will provide strategies and targets for each individual. The IEP’s will be created by staff every 6-8 weeks and will be sent to parents/ carers and social workers. These will be monitored and reviewed regularly.

Curriculum

English

“Teachers should develop learners’ spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for learners, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. e provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects”

(DfE, 2014, p.10)

Literacy rationale

At Acorn School, we recognise that;

1. Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. By developing literacy skills in learners we are providing teachers with opportunities to make effective use of this powerful tool for learning, within and across the curriculum areas and subjects.
2. Competence and confidence in literacy, including competence in grammar, spelling and the spoken word, are essential for progress in all areas of the curriculum.

3. Being literate is central to an individual's development and well-being in our society. It increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life and lays the foundations for lifelong learning.
4. Literacy skills are essential in the developing of critical and creative thinking and competence in speaking and listening, reading and writing underpin important personal, inter-personal and team-working skills.
5. The teaching of, and whole-school approach to literacy across the curriculum, is key to the raising of standards in the school.
6. All teachers are teachers of literacy and that in their subject teaching they have a responsibility in the promoting and teaching of language and literacy development.
7. Language is the main medium we use for teaching, learning and developing thinking, so it is at the heart of teaching and learning.
8. This policy is an integral part of the whole curriculum and that its content and approach is adopted consistently and systematically across the curriculum.

Whole-school literacy mission statement:

At Acorn School we aim to develop the knowledge, understanding and ability of our learners, to their full potential, by providing them with opportunities to develop the requirements of literacy within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of oracy, reading and writing across the curriculum.

We aim to help Learners to:

- Read and write with confidence, enjoyment, fluency and understanding – orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor, evaluate and correct;
- Read for meaning.
- Develop an increasing working knowledge of Standard English;
- Have an interest in words and their meanings, developing a growing working vocabulary in spoken and written forms;
- Develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical thinking
- Be able to communicate effectively;
- Understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the task or situation;
- Grow in confidence as they develop their literacy skills;

- Have a suitable technical vocabulary to explain their thinking, articulate responses and communicate effectively;
- Use writing as a tool for thought.
- Enable all learners to gain access to all aspects of the curriculum.
- Have the opportunity to achieve recognised qualifications in English Language and/or English Literature, such as GCSE's, Functional Skills or Entry Level Certificates.

Targets for oracy, reading and writing

To ensure the raising of standards in literacy, Acorn School is committed to the attainment of the following literacy targets:

Oracy

All learners should;

- a) Value speaking and listening as essential means of communication and learning.
- b) Understand the rules and expectations governing speaking and listening across a range of contexts.
- c) Use talk to develop and clarify ideas;
- d) Learn to listen and carry out instructions.
- e) Be encouraged to ask questions as well as answer them.
- f) Be encouraged to explore and develop ideas with others, through paired and group discussion.
- g) Identifying the main points to arise from a discussion;
- h) Be encouraged to express ideas, feelings and opinions confidently, and to treat other learners' ideas, feelings and opinions with respect.
- i) Be supported in speaking through universal frames for speech.
- j) Learn the difference between standard and non-standard forms of expression.
- k) Choose appropriate forms and registers to suit particular purposes and audiences.
- l) Take part in structured paired, group and individual activities in which speaking and listening are essential components.

Reading

All learners should;

- a) Be encouraged and supported to become fluent and confident readers
- b) Be supported and taught secure reading strategies for coping with reading a range of texts, including non-fiction media and ICT.
- c) Be given the opportunity to listen to texts read aloud.

- d) Be able to read with understanding, exploring ideas through inference and deduction.
- e) Be aware of the language of reading – decoding, comprehension, location, deduction, inference, skimming, scanning, predicting, visualising, empathising, questioning and reading backwards and forwards - to support the reading process.
- f) Be able to read and follow written instructions.
- g) Be encouraged to read for pleasure and all learners are expected to have a private reading book in school to support this expectation.
- h) Have access to a range of books and reading materials that are up-to-date, relevant and balanced in content.
- i) Foster and encourage the enjoyment of reading and its role in developing critical thinking and empathy;
- j) Learn to be critical readers, questioning what they read in books and in the media.
- k) Be encouraged to analyse and evaluate texts in both their English curriculum lessons and as part of home reading.

Writing

All learners should;

- a) Use writing to plan and draft.
- b) Be encouraged to proof-read and organise their written work.
- c) Use legible and clear handwriting to support the presentation of work.
- d) Structure their writing appropriately, using sentences, paragraphs and headings effectively.
- e) Make connections between learners' reading and writing, so that learners have clear models for their writing;
- f) Encourage oracy/reading to prepare for writing, as well as writing frames to scaffold appropriately;
- g) Have ready access to dictionaries, thesauri and departmental vocabulary lists and be encouraged to use them.
- h) Learn to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- i) Be encouraged to control writing through use and application of effective punctuation including: capital letters, full stops, commas, exclamation, speech and question marks.
- j) Be encouraged to use spelling rules to support effective writing.
- k) Be provided with helpful models of particular kinds of writing.
- l) Be encouraged to discuss and reflect on their writing.
- m) Be entitled to have their writing treated with respect and interest.
- n) Learn to compose text on the computer screen, where appropriate.

Maths

Numeracy rationale

Mathematics teaches us how to make sense of the world around us through developing a person's ability to calculate, to reason and to solve problems. It enables learners to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in both number and space in their everyday lives. Through their growing knowledge and understanding, learners learn to appreciate the contribution made by many people to the development and application of mathematics.

The aims of mathematics are to:

- promote enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning through practical activity, exploration and discussion
- develop logical thinking and reasoning skills through a natural curiosity and investigative approach
- promote confidence and competence so that learners feel positive and proud of their achievements
- develop a thorough knowledge and understanding of numbers and the number system
- develop the ability to solve problems through decision-making and reasoning in a range of contexts
- develop a practical understanding of the ways in which information is gathered and presented
- explore features of shape and space, and develop measuring skills in a range of contexts
- understand the importance of mathematical skills in everyday life

The school uses a variety of teaching and learning styles in mathematics lessons, taking into account the learning needs of individual learners. Our principal aim is to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of guided teaching. Learners are taught in differentiated groups and individually.

During these lessons we encourage learners to ask as well as answer mathematical questions. They have the opportunity to use a wide range of resources such as number lines, number squares, digit cards and small apparatus to support their work. Learners and teachers use ICT in mathematics lessons where it will enhance their learning, and to assist with modelling ideas and methods. Wherever possible, we encourage the learners to use and apply their learning in everyday situations.

When our Learners work in groups there are learners of differing mathematical ability. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all learners by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the student. Throughout lessons a range of strategies are used to ensure appropriate levelled learning. Learners are asked to undertake independent work but other strategies are also utilized. In some lessons group work is undertaken, and in other lessons, learners are organised to work in pairs on open-ended problems or games. We use classroom assistants to support some learners and to ensure that work is matched to the needs of individuals.

Learners are set a weekly homework task in order to strengthen their learning in mathematics. This task directly links with the current unit of learning and is differentiated for each student/ group.

Mathematics curriculum planning

Mathematics is a core subject in the National Curriculum and the school's planning is in line with this. Learners are baseline assessed when they start the school and an individual program is followed which will target any weaknesses or gaps in that Learners mathematical knowledge.

It is the class teacher who completes the weekly plans for the teaching of mathematics. These weekly plans list the specific learning objectives for each lesson and give details of how the lessons are to be taught. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader can discuss these on an informal basis.

The Contribution of mathematics to teaching in other curriculum areas is detailed below.

Mathematics contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. For example, we encourage learners to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. The learners are encouraged explain and present their work to employees or other Learners during plenary sessions. Learners encounter mathematical vocabulary, graphs and charts when using non-fiction texts.

During science lessons, Learners are able to use and apply their data handling skills when creating tables and graphs of scientific measurements. Discussion of data also highlights the importance of clear recording of information. Learners are also able to use a wide range of measuring devices in a real-life context. Learners are required to read the scales on thermometers, measuring cylinders, weighing scales and a variety of other instruments.

Learners use and apply mathematics in a variety of ways when solving problems using ICT.

Learners use it to produce graphs and tables when explaining their results or when creating repeating patterns, such as tessellations. When working on control, learners use standard and non-standard measures for distance and angle. They use simulations to identify patterns and relationships.

Mathematics contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. The work that learners do outside their normal lessons encourages independent study and helps them to become increasingly responsible for their own learning. The planned activities that Learners do within the classroom encourage them to work together and respect each other's views. We present Learners with real-life situations in their work on the spending of money.

The teaching of mathematics supports the social development of our learners through the way we expect them to work with each other in lessons. When we can, we group Learners so that they work together, and we give them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

Science

Science Rational

At Acorn we recognise the broader contextualised world view of the growing significance of scientific advancement with our learners' lives and society in general. We have responded to this aspect by developing a broad and accessible programme of study that can be made bespoke to our pupil's additional SEMH needs. At Acorn we have been able to embed the significant changes made in 2014 to the national science Curriculum Framework. Learners are encouraged to engage in scientific learning through practical experiments, digital simulation, interactive opportunities, experiential situations as well as traditional classroom pedagogy.

Aims and Objectives:

The Science curriculum is based on the 2014 National Curriculum Framework for KS1-4. At Acorn school we subscribe to the belief that a high-quality science education provides the foundations for understanding the world through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. Science has changed our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity, and all learners should be taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. Through building up a body of key foundational knowledge and concepts, learners should be encouraged to recognise the power of rational explanation and develop a sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena. They should be encouraged to

understand how science can be used to explain what is occurring, predict how things will behave, and analyse causes.

The further aims of science are to:

Develop **scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding** through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics

Develop understanding of the **nature, processes and methods of science** through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them

Ensure learners are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the **uses and implications** of science, today and for the future.

(The National Curriculum in England Framework Document Dfe, 2014,)

The key stage 3 approaches are:

Working scientifically

Through the content across all three disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics learners should be taught to:

Scientific attitudes

1. Pay attention to objectivity and concern for accuracy, precision, repeatability and reproducibility
2. Understand that scientific methods and theories develop as earlier explanations are modified to take account of new evidence and ideas, together with the importance of publishing results and peer review
3. Evaluate risks.

Experimental skills and investigations

1. Ask questions and develop a line of enquiry based on observations of the real world, alongside prior knowledge and experience
2. Make predictions using scientific knowledge and understanding
3. Select, plan and carry out the most appropriate types of scientific enquiries to test predictions, including identifying independent, dependent and control variables, where appropriate
4. Use appropriate techniques, apparatus, and materials during fieldwork and laboratory work, paying attention to health and safety

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Reviewed Aug 2017 V2.03 (JP/AH)

5. Make and record observations and measurements using a range of methods for different investigations; and evaluate the reliability of methods and suggest possible improvements
6. Apply sampling techniques.

Analysis and evaluation

1. Apply mathematical concepts and calculate results
2. Present observations and data using appropriate methods, including tables and graphs
3. Interpret observations and data, including identifying patterns and using observations, measurements and data to draw conclusions
4. Present reasoned explanations, including explaining data in relation to predictions and hypotheses
5. Evaluate data, showing awareness of potential sources of random and systematic error
6. Identify further questions arising from their results.

Measurement

1. Understand the use of SI units and the naming of chemical compounds.
2. Use and derive simple equations and carry out appropriate calculations.
3. Undertake basic data analysis including simple statistical techniques.

Key stage 4 approaches to working scientifically

The key stage 3 approaches provide a pathway to the following abbreviated KS4 approaches:

The development of scientific thinking,

Experimental skills and strategies,

Analysis and evaluation,

Vocabulary, units, symbols and nomenclature

Science Curriculum Structure and Subject Content

The Science curriculum is based on the 2014 National Curriculum Framework for KS1-4. Once learners have a baseline indicator for subject knowledge and scientific approaches they join Acorn schools academic progress flightpath.

Key stage 3/4 subject content and flightpaths

Due the additional SEMH needs of the learners at Acorn School the science Curriculum has 3 time based approaches. The Key stage 3 programme of study has a 2 year and 3 year modular approach. Additionally in line with current year 9 GCSE national key stage transition preparation practice a modular entry level qualification is offered. It is offered as independent standalone qualification or as a pathway to GCSE study in Key stage 4. As with other subjects Acorn's Science curriculum and the areas of working scientifically, scientific attitudes, experimental skills and investigations, analysis and investigation relies on reciprocal relationships with the entire Acorn curriculum.

The science curriculum plans for and offers learners opportunities to apply and develop learning from other subjects. For Example, mathematical and literary learning is applied in the planning, predicting and observations made during experiments. Other examples include using formula and substitution when making calculations and oracy targets when discussing observations.

The Science curriculum subject content consists of all or part of the following.

Biology: Cells and organisms, The skeletal and muscular systems, Nutrition and digestion, Gas exchange systems, Reproduction, Health, Photosynthesis, Cellular respiration, Relationships in an ecosystem, Inheritance, chromosomes, DNA and genes.

Chemistry: Atoms, elements and compounds, Pure and impure substances, Chemical reactions, Energetics, Chemical reactions, The periodic table, Materials, Earth and atmosphere.

Physics: Energy, Energy changes and transfers, Changes in systems, Motion and forces, Pressure in fluids, Balanced forces, Waves, Light waves, Electricity and electromagnetism, Particle model, Energy in matter, Space physics.

Computing

“ICT used to focus purely on computer literacy – teaching learners, over and over again, how to word-process, how to work a spreadsheet, how to use programs already creaking into obsolescence; about as much use as teaching children to send a telex or travel in a zeppelin.

Our new curriculum teaches children computer science, information technology and digital literacy: teaching them how to code, and how to create their own programs; not just how to work a computer, but how a computer works and how to make it work for you.” Michael Gove

The new ICT curriculum equips learners to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems.

The core of computing is computer science, in which children are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. Building on this knowledge and understanding learners are equipped to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content.

“ Computing also ensures that children become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.’

(The National Curriculum in England Framework Document (DfE) 2014).

Aims

The national curriculum for computing aims to ensure that all learners:

- can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, logic, algorithms and data representation
- can analyse problems in computational terms, and have repeated practical experience of writing computer programs in order to solve such problems
- can evaluate and apply information technology, including new and unfamiliar technologies, analytically to solve problems.
- Are responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology.

Accreditation.

Learners are able to work towards Functional Skills qualifications in ICT as well as GCSE's.

ICT Support for Literacy and Numeracy

Information and communication technology is used to actively support learning across the curriculum.

All classrooms are equipped with computers, laptop and/ or interactive whiteboards. Learners also have access to E Readers and Tablets.

Humanities

Geography, History and Religious Education are taught at Acorn School through discreet lessons as well as cross curricular approaches. We aim to ensure that learners develop their understanding of the geographical, historical and social aspects for their wider environment and also learn about local and national heritage and culture.

Through engaging schemes of work which include many opportunities to experience new environments and discover local heritage learners are able to become more aware of other times, places, cultures, religions and races.

There are various pathways available to learners, including AQA units, Entry Level Certificates and GCSE's.

Art and Design.

All learners have the option to study art and design; in fact, we encourage learners to use art as a way of expressing themselves and also to take time out to reflect. Learners can achieve recognition for their work through AQA unit awards, Entry Level Certificates and ultimately GCSE.

Physical Education

The Physical Education curriculum has a greater focus upon team games and participation across a wide variety of sporting activities. Learners will work towards accreditation through the ASDAN Development Programmes and Sports and Fitness award at an appropriate level.

Experiences of life outside school and the care environment are a very important part of the education we offer and we maintain links with outside agencies such as careers advisors, colleges: police and youth services in order to widen the curriculum and provide motivation.

Acorn School believes that it is important that Student's efforts and achievements are recognised and celebrated. All teachers and support staff, along with Student's carers, are encouraged to recognise each Student's achievements and there is a wide range of rewards that are used which help maintain motivation and boost self-esteem.

Music

An interest in music can be supported in many ways at Acorn School from the provision of education around the structure of music to listening, performing and composing.

Where a student has a particular interest in learning a specific instrument Acorn School will endeavour to seek appropriate tuition.

Learners can travel to local music studios in order to develop their skills in the composition of electronic music as well as having access to music composition software on site.

PSHE and Life Skills

PSHE is taught in both discreet lessons as well as through our outdoor and experiential learning programmes. All learners are given opportunities to develop their life skills as part of their weekly timetable. The ASDAN Short Course in PSHE forms the basis for the curriculum and this covers areas which learners often need significant support with such as sex and relationships, emotional health and well-being and risk taking behaviours.

ASDAN

ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) provides a range of courses for all abilities covering preparation for life and work, enrichment subjects, PSHE and Citizenship. Each course is designed to develop learners' personal, transferable and employability skills through an engaging and challenging curriculum of activities, leading to a certificate of achievement.

Our learners often have, or have had problems associated with conventional schooling and need a scheme of work that is not merely beneficial to their future lives but also achievable and rewarding.

The ASDAN Bronze and Silver Personal Development Awards are certificated at regular intervals throughout the programme. This offers an incentive to learners and encourages achievement. A nationally recognised evaluation and moderation network means that work is standardised to a recognised level.

ASDAN Short Courses are flexible, portfolio-based programmes designed to accredit activity and skills development across a range of topics and curriculum areas. Short Courses are multi-level, the

focus on completing challenges and skills development according to individual ability, rather than attainment at a specific level.

The CoPE (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness) at Level 1 and 2 is a nationally recognised qualification equivalent to GCSE specifically for Key Stage 4 learners. The qualifications offer imaginative ways of accrediting learners' activities. They promote a range of personal qualities, abilities and achievements of young people, as well as introducing them to new activities and challenges.

Foodwise

Learners have the opportunity to cook each week as part of the Design and Technology Curriculum and the ASDAN Foodwise course.

The FoodWise Short Course comprises seven modules:

- Healthy Eating
- Basic Food Safety
- Food Preparation and Presentation
- Cooking on a Budget
- Entertaining
- The Food Industry
- Practical Cooking Skills

Outdoor and Experiential Learning.

To help engage all learners in both Key Stages, practical elements of the curriculum are encouraged, such as Art, Design and Technology, PE and Cookery. The school also encourages Learners to become involved in outdoor learning projects that use our natural environment. We offer gardening projects which link closely to many areas of the curriculum including science, Design and Technology and speaking and listening skills as well as activities such as shelter making, natural craft and woodwork. Outdoor and sporting activities, ranging from horse riding to assault courses, are also offered which assist in developing self-confidence and increasing self-image.

The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of the Learners at Acorn School is at the heart of the school environment and is evident in the teaching of RE/ Cultural Studies, Social Skills, PSHE (including Sex and relationship education), Citizenship and out wide range of extracurricular enrichment activities.

Each Student's emotional and social needs, their need to learn about themselves and their own feelings, relationships and how their behaviour affects others is considered when planning.

Our Outdoor and Experiential learning programme and access to off site and extra-curricular activities will give learners the opportunity to explore and learn beyond the classroom. This will allow them to, build their life skills and develop a wide variety of activity specific skills and knowledge. Through the Outdoor learning curriculum and the access to group activities, we aim to provide children with a wide variety of positive experiences that will not only help to build their self-esteem and social skills but also provide them with memories they can cherish for the rest of their lives.

Our outdoor learning and experiential learning programme encourages personal growth by supporting learners in challenging and unfamiliar activities, environments and situations. Learners have the opportunity to work towards building their personal development in terms of courage, leadership, teamwork and raising self-esteem.

Key Stage 3

All Key Stage 3 learners have access to the whole National Curriculum and the school seeks to support learners who are able to return to mainstream education. This is supported by an intensive focus on literacy, numeracy and science. Learners often have gaps in their knowledge which need to be addressed and they work towards individual AQA awards to encourage progress and celebrate success in these areas. During Year 9, in preparation for completing GCSE courses, Learners follow Entry Level and/or Functional Skills accredited courses in Maths, English, Science, History and Geography as well as ASDAN programmes and short courses.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 Learners have access to the National curriculum and are offered the opportunity to take part in courses of study leading to examination entry at a range of levels. These courses include GCSE's, Functional Skills courses, Entry Level Certificates, ASDAN certificates such as the Personal Development Programmes, Certificate of Personal Effectiveness and short courses. Learners are also given opportunities to access college courses and work related learning.

Learners are involved in the planning of their personalised curriculum with the options of work experience, interviews with Careers South West and College taster days.

Approaches to curriculum planning, teaching and learning and progress monitoring

Upon learners' arrival at Acorn School, a 'pathway' or 'flight path' will be determined that the student should be placed on for the next academic year. This decision will be based on the student's age, information regarding prior levels of learning and progress, initial assessment data and Educational Psychologist reports. The learning descriptors for each stage act as a learning ladder throughout a student's school-life towards a projected GCSE grade. The baseline assessment is used to create a personal educational plan. The flightpath provides a plan for subject progress and also identifies areas of missed subject knowledge and content.

Daily lessons are planned and delivered in a variety of methods. In addition to specific lessons planned and delivered by the subject teacher, a significant proportion of learning takes place across the entire curriculum at Acorn School. This is done in a cross curricular and experiential approach. This approach represents a core aspect of the Acorn School learning experience. Cross curricular approaches.

Progress Monitoring

Learner progress is monitored during the lessons and at appropriate modular/termly/ yearly intervals. All teachers assess their learners in relation to a range of assessment objectives and 'can do' statements for each subject at every stage. This allows them to know what their learners can do and what they need to achieve next.