

Curriculum Policy

ISP Whitstable



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Curriculum Ethos and aims:

The core intent of ISP Whitstable and our curriculum is to help all pupils reach their potential and believe that they can achieve, be kind, make positive relationships, communicate well and grow as individuals. As a school that adopts a therapeutic approach, our mission is to provide each pupil with a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-discipline and engagement, inspires learning and encourages aspiration and achievement.

ISP Whitstable seeks to adopt a fresh and dynamic curriculum implementation to address the needs of vulnerable children, irrespective of the difficulties presented, in order to maximise their future life chances. We aim to provide our pupils with opportunities to engage in a full and enriching curriculum whilst taking into account their emotional and academic developmental needs so that pupils have the same opportunity for experiences as others their age.

We aim to foster an environment where pupils feel safe and develop a secure sense of belonging. The majority of our pupils have experienced disruption in their schooling and have complex needs that have a significant impact on their cognitive development and their social, emotional and communication development. We aim to support pupils in a family school environment and support pupils to achieve the best they can in order to maximise their life chances and to ensure that they can be as independent as possible, participating in society and being as healthy as possible in adult life.

Cultural curriculum:

ISP Whitstable has a knowledge engaged, broad, balanced curriculum which is created around each individual pupil, taking account of their starting point to ensure that their academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are addressed in a way that captures and motivates them to learn. Building trust, self-confidence, resilience and belonging are key to our approach. Our end point is clear. We promote preparation for, and appreciation of, life in modern Britain, equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. We believe all children should be provided with an education where they can thrive, no matter what their background or the challenges presented.

Curriculum planning and assessment:

ISP Whitstable has high expectations of what can be achieved by our pupils and we strive to bridge the gaps between pupils' current attainment, their cognitive levels, and their long-term potential.

Obtaining accurate baselines can be challenging for pupils who have had disrupted education and early life experiences. We seek to engage pupils so that this baseline can be found. The way this is done is often via diverse methods such as mentoring and engagement outside of the typical class environment. We believe that it is important to understand the pupil in order that the curriculum is well matched, planned and sequenced

so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before, including pre-existing knowledge, and we can then build towards the curriculum defined end points. We believe that one of the contributing factors to disadvantaged pupil underachievement is that the curriculum and methodology is often seen as a process that the pupil needs to adapt to. We take a different stance and we take the pupil and adapt the curriculum and methodology around them rather than expecting the pupil to simply adapt.

Our curriculum is supported by rigorous planning and it is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards, and what pupils will need to know and be able to do at those end points. We work to securing each pupils EHCP target. These targets are set within a multi-agency forum and detail the objectives required to have been achieved by the end of the key stage they are working in. We work to this end point. We continually build, develop and adapt pupil individual provision plans to outline how we will achieve the targets. Assessments are ongoing but we formally report on progress to parents/carers twice a year.

The curriculum captures all the essential elements of the National Curriculum as well as ensuring pupils Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) targets are met. We are compliant with the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the schedule of the Education (ISS) Regulations 2014 and an evaluation of judgements as detailed in the Independent School Inspection handbook which was updated in September 2019.

Class groups and curriculum content are not categorised simply by year group. Groups are categorised by learning styles, sensory needs and class grouping is completed considering the advice of the SEN Team and if necessary, consultation from other key professionals working with the pupil. Although pupils may not always be placed in chronological year groupings, teaching implementation aims to expose pupils to curriculum content that peers their age experience but at a level appropriate to their understanding.

Developing valuable life skills and skills to develop independence can be very difficult for children and young people who have attachment and/or educational learning difficulties. Specific time is dedicated for pupils to develop these skills in a safe and nurturing environment.

Curriculum and literacy:

We have an emphasis on the basics of reading, English, 'spelling, punctuation, and grammar' (SPAG), and teaching functional literacy. A strategy on many EHCP plans is one of pupils requiring 'over learning.' We embed this into the curriculum. Barriers to learning are identified in order to implement tailor made programmes with appropriate coverage, content, structure, and sequencing, to unlock the potential of all our pupils.

Reading is an integral part of the school community and pupils are encouraged to explore their own curiosities in relation to texts through access to a wide and diverse school library. Many of our books support our Accelerated reader assessment tool, which allows pupils to celebrate their understanding of what they have read, as well as track their own progression. Pupil's progress is tracked from each individuals' starting point and the emphasis is placed on recognising steps of progress and not expected reading ages, although our intent is to enable pupils to close the gaps through a supportive and embedded approach to literacy. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a problem-solving mindset and in doing

so, build resilience and independence. Alongside this our curriculum includes additional reading + phonics teaching.

We use a variety of high-quality reading schemes that adhere to the colour book banding system. This allows pupils to be flexible in their approach -reading a variety genre across different publishers. It also provides us with an accurate tracking system and assessment tool for measuring impact. It enables the evaluation of pupils' knowledge and skills against those expectations for each colour band and National Curriculum standards. The texts we use provide opportunities for speaking, listening, and writing and connect closely to pupils' phonics knowledge. Our systems, methods and resources facilitate reciprocal links between reading and writing and ensure all pupils have every opportunity to gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read for meaning and the skills to communicate, giving them the foundations for future learning and better outcomes in life.

Nurture curriculum:

We encourage pupils in our Nurture based classes to become independent thinkers allowing them freedom to explore, create and think critically and actively learn. Where possible they will be encouraged to challenge themselves to build their confidence and resilience, given the opportunity to develop the capacity to surprise themselves and others and to become confident and self-assured. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning.

We have realistic, yet challenging expectations and plan opportunities to extend their knowledge, experiences, and interests, motivating and supporting every pupil to reach their individual potential. All planning is based on each individual pupil to ensure their goals are realistic and achievable. Adult led and child-initiated activities are equally important; adults interact sensitively, encouraging perseverance and practice, reinforcing that we all learn at a different pace and can all learn when things go wrong.

Our environment and delivery of our curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning;

1. Playing and exploring – pupils will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. Active learning – pupils will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties to allow them the opportunity to enjoy their achievements.
3. Creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support pupils to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Curriculum and outcomes:

The curriculum is built around the pupil and consequently we will adapt the curriculum around pupils so that they have the option to complete various qualifications in subjects which engage and assist them in the next stages of their education.

Curriculum enrichment:

PE is taught on and off site using ISP School Teynham facilities. Swimming is also offered and national swimming awards can be obtained. ISP School Whitstable also works in partnership with Creed Outdoor Learning to provide pupils with enriching, alternative outdoor experiences. ISP School Whitstable and ISP school Teynham will work collaboratively to ensure that the pupils at ISP School Whitstable benefit from both the outdoor space and the expertise of the staff at Teynham. The pupils will have weekly opportunities to visit the farm animals, engage in outdoor PE using our vast amount of space and they will also benefit from our staff expertise, who will deliver Spanish and Art lessons. Outdoor learning will take place throughout the year at ISP Whitstable, having Whitstable beach at such close proximity will bring an additional layer of cultural enrichment.

Our 'Prevent' work promotes and ensures that all pupils are aware of the fundamental British values of democracy and mutual respect for, and tolerance of, those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith. We use the resources provided by CEOP and our pupils are encouraged to demonstrate positive peer interactions in line with our school reward system.

We comply with the Department for Education (DfE) (2019) statutory guidance on relationships education, relationships, and sex education (RSE) and health education. Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way.

Our guiding principles to delivering relationship and sex education is that the content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law. We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and we seek to build on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We seek to deliver outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of our pupils. We work flexibly to shape the curriculum content and delivery according to the needs of the pupils.

We enrich the school-based curriculum by broadening pupils' experiences within the local community and beyond through visits, trips and inviting outside speakers into the school. We create a culture of respect for difference.

Curriculum schemes and resources:

Teachers have access to a range of schemes of work which enable lessons to be planned and adapted around the needs of the pupils. Schemes of work and resources include:

- Hamilton Trust Schemes of work
- Twinkl resources and schemes of work

- Little Wandle Phonics scheme
- Accelerated Reader
- TES resources and schemes of work
- White Rose resources and schemes of work
- EYFS framework
- NSPCC share aware lesson plans and teacher guidance
- NSPCC lesson planning Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.
- St Johns Ambulance lesson planning

Policy Amendment Log

This log details when amendments have been made to this policy and outlines the material changes made. This does not replace the scheduled formal policy review which will be undertaken by the governing body as highlighted at the beginning of the policy.

Version No.	Amendments	Date
1		Nov 2022
2		July 2023
3	Added ISP Whitstable Added to curriculum enrichment	September 2023
4		July 2024
5		July 2025