

Ethos, Vision and Mission

Overton School

Approved by:	Omar Salahuddin, Principal
Last reviewed on:	26/08/20
Next review due by:	25/08/21

Mission Statement

At Overton School we nurture active, creative minds. Students will be encouraged to achieve their full academic and vocational potential and will experience success. They will develop confidence in their personal, social and emotional skills enabling them to move on equipped to make a positive contribution in society.

Our School Ethos

Life at Overton School is shaped by our commitment to provide ‘Learning for Life’.

We believe that autism is a different, not an impaired way of thinking, and understanding this is fundamental to our ethos. We accept the culture of autism and the individuality of every person with autism. We never make assumptions about our students but always listen to them.

For children and young people with autism it is important that their unique profile and needs for support are encompassed by a holistic approach to their learning. Schools have the potential to make a positive impact on their health and wellbeing through promotion of inclusion and equality through awareness of positive relationships and behaviour. We have high ambitions for all pupils, for them to fulfil their potential. We have a clear ethos respecting each young person, recognising their strengths as well as equipping them with effective supports to help minimise any barriers or areas of difficulty.

The pedagogy of Overton School is informed by carefully selected best practice in teaching young people with autism. Our school follows elements of the National Autistic Society SPELL FRAMEWORK. Social communication and interaction needs are met with small group sessions, support in class, social experiences and a commitment to meet objectives of each students statements. Students have planned scheduled activities with a lower academic demand but balance with a higher social demand. These include activities on and off the school site. During these activities staff support the students to lower anxiety around an enriching and novel experience. This develops social interaction and communication within the known group in a range of settings. This makes other experiences less daunting and stretches flexibility of mind sets.

The Teaching of Concepts

We teach concepts such as feelings in a structured way that enables our students to understand them and to link and apply their growing knowledge. As scenarios arise, we also teach concepts in context so that students learn to interpret situations and take responsibility for their actions and learning.

Timing and Preparation

A student with autism learns best when they are in the right frame of mind to do so, so we time our teaching carefully. We use incidents and experiences sensitively for learning and reflection. We recognise that we may need to defer teaching when a student’s feelings or senses are not overloaded. Staff work with each student individually to prepare them for learning, making sure that they fully understand what is expected of them.

Holistic Learning

We look at our students as whole people. We create a combined integrated plan for each student that spans their emotional, academic, social, physical and spiritual development, their therapeutic needs and their sensory profile. Every member of staff takes responsibility for making sure that the plans are applied every day. Emphasis is placed on; natural respect, integrity, friendship and the need to discover and develop individual talents. **We believe** that with guidance, encouragement, discipline and hard work, every child can do so much more than he or she may consider possible. Our objective is that our students should leave fulfilled, enthusiastic, self-disciplined and fully confident to meet the increasingly difficult challenges of life. **We aim** to ensure that each child's education is compelling and exciting enough to draw them into the magical world of life-long learning so that it becomes a joyous and integral part of their daily existence. We endeavour to find and then enhance these talents, whether they be creative, intellectual or athletic, employing the dedicated skills of a versatile and professional staff.

24 Hour Curriculum

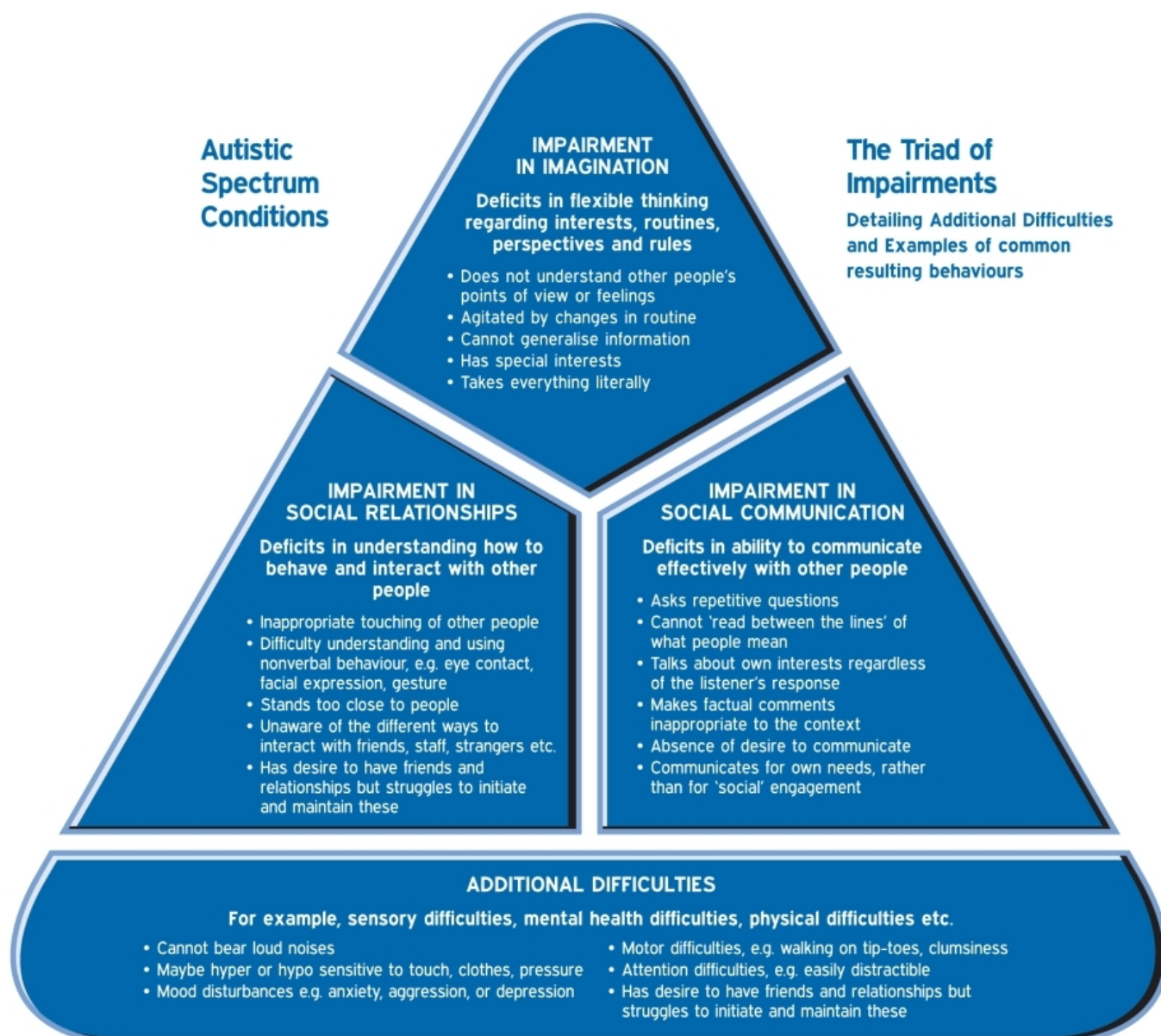
All aspects of a pupil/student's day are seen as learning opportunities with wide ranges of additional areas being taught including personal, social, behavioural and self-help skills. Joint planning by school staff, parents and residential staff if appropriate, will provide a consistent approach in a variety of settings whilst supporting pupil/students to generalise and transfer knowledge and skills across groups of people or from one environment to another over a 24-hour period.

Residential staff will actively contribute and support students/pupils with their education within the residential provision. They will be familiar with and aware of the educational needs and progress of pupils/students they are supporting and will communicate with school staff to promote and encourage each pupil/student's personal, social and educational development. Short-term achievable objectives matched to individual need will form part of education and care plans.

Our School Background and Philosophy

Pupil Profile

Our school provides for those with ASC, as well as other needs or diagnoses, including mental health, ADHD, ADD, and other difficulties. Most of our children are referred to us and funded through the local authorities. Our age range may vary depending on specific cases; however our pupils will range between 11 and 18 years of age. Our students have an Education Health Care Plan. Emphasis in the school is thus on the development of social interaction, social communication and social imagination.



Our holistic approach ensure that opportunities for learning are intrinsic and embedded throughout the school day as part of the ethos of the school. All this, of course, has a direct bearing on our curriculum design.

Our School Attitudes and Discipline

A school's pastoral policy and approach to discipline are crucial factors in its effectiveness as an educator of children for life. Our objective at our school is to develop the highest standards of motivation and behaviour in a supportive environment. To these ends, we endeavour to ensure that each child develops a strong sense of responsibility, self-discipline, care and tolerance for the views of other people.

A Positive Attitude

We are committed to ensuring there is an ethos of enthusiasm in the school, with emphasis being placed on positive rather than negative aspects of behaviour. We believe that if children are praised and rewarded for the positive things they do (e.g. showing sensible behaviour, courtesy, self-control, a caring attitude, hard work, etc), this will serve not only to encourage these desirable

aspects of behaviour at school and in the home but also to foster these traits in all aspects of the child's life. Children at Overton School are made aware that certain standards of behaviour are expected from them. We recognise the need for consistency throughout the whole school, so that all staff expect the same standards of behaviour and that all issues are dealt with in a similar way.

The Behaviour Policy at Overton School outlines our positive approach to Positive Behaviour Support for young people with Autism and Complex Needs. Our belief is that challenging behaviour is driven by an individual's needs and that behaviour has a communicative purpose or intent. The difficulties children and young people with autism experience in addressing their own needs and communication may account for any challenging behaviour they present.

Our behaviour support aims to promote positive behaviour and informed by an effective functional analysis of the context in which the behaviour occurs. Each student has a Positive Behaviour Support Plans (PBSPs) which focuses upon the functions of behaviour, triggers, levels of behaviour, reactive and reactive strategies. Proactive strategies enable an individual to learn alternative ways to meet their needs. The BSP is a key working document which forms an integral part of their IEP and Care Plan which aims to promote consistency and continuity of practice from all staff working with a student.

Staff are all trained in PRICE (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment) to reinforce the positive management of challenging behaviour with students with Autism and Complex Needs, with members of multi-disciplinary staff trained as PRICE trainers to support effective positive practice. Students as a result are increasingly supported to regulate their own behaviours effectively, resulting in a low number of incidents and minimal need for the use of a Physical Intervention, which is always seen as a last resort

School

The ethos is best seen in our three aims. We believe these aims to be essential to achieve happiness, contentment and fulfilment in later life. It is hoped that each child in our school will be:

- **Well educated** with an interest in learning, ready to engage with a wider world;
- **Happy** and self-confident
- **Generous in spirit**, kind to others and aware of others' feelings.

Overton School seeks to:

- have high ambitions for all students to fulfil their potential and a clear ethos of respecting each young person, recognising their strengths as well as equipping them with effective strategies to help minimise any barriers or areas of difficulty.
- have a distinctive ethos and philosophy: from the moment a person enters the building they will know this is a school where pupils are respected, achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives and have rich and varied experiences.
- build on pupils strengths and capitalise on interests, giving them a reason to learn and instilling a belief in the importance of what they can achieve, not what they can't!
- build on the extensive knowledge and experience of The National Autistic Society to be creative, pioneering and innovative in our approach to meeting the needs of these specific groups of pupils and use pedagogic strategies to enable all students to fully engage in learning.
- be regarded as a regional resource; a school where it is common practice to share our expertise with local schools, the community and beyond.

- establish a curriculum that enables pupils to overcome their barriers to learning, develop social skills and coping strategies and learn to manage their own behaviour.
- provide bespoke education through carefully planned educational pathways, which are focused on long-term outcomes and seek to improve the current and future lives of the students, their families and members of the local community.
- provide each student with a personalised learning programme that provides a balance of modified national curriculum and autism specialist curriculum tailored to meet their individual needs
- focus on developing functional (academic, social, independence and emotional regulation) skills to enable our students to become independent adults included in their local community
- put significant emphasis on community based learning and shared activities with partner schools that promote their inclusion into their local community.
- ensure all planning is outcome focused, person centred and co-produced with the pupil and their parent/carers.
- educate the whole child by providing opportunities in breadth and depth for the concurrent development of all dimensions of school life – emotional, spiritual, academic, cultural, aesthetic, moral, physical and practical;
- discover and develop the unique talents and abilities of each individual, in accordance with the philosophy and vision of our foundation;
- adopt a forward-looking and innovative approach which reflects our awareness of current and future trends without sacrificing traditional strengths;
- provide high-calibre staff who are themselves open to learning and who are given appropriate training opportunities to enhance the educational life of the school as an integral part of their professional development;
- provide quality learning environments with a happy, vibrant atmosphere, and within them a sense of purposeful learning and a climate of open, friendly communication, mutual trust and respect; and
- create a culture of achievement and positive reinforcement at all levels of ability through appropriately differentiated expectations.

Our commitment to learning is fundamental to achieving our purpose and as such we aim to:

- develop individual potential, willing and autonomous learners, and the highest standards in spiritual, social and academic life;
- provide a programme of lessons and activities which will best develop literacy and numeracy skills;
- enable children to acquire knowledge of, and respect for, moral and cultural values;
- sustain and nurture the partnership between home and school;
- affirm concern for others, expressed by our courteousness and discipline;
- recognise, appreciate and celebrate cultural, aesthetic and creative achievements;
- create a stimulating and happy environment in which children can reach their full potential;
- establish a caring community in which children are supported and support each other;
- foster self-respect, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility and concern for others;
- encourage care for the local and world environment and community;
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant, rich and differentiated curriculum;
- foster a positive and enquiring attitude to learning which encourages self-motivation and perseverance;
- promote close partnerships with parents/guardians/carers and the local people and organisations;

- provide a curriculum appropriate to the needs of each child, which whilst being based on the National Curriculum goes above and beyond it as is appropriate and
- provide continual assessment and evaluation to monitor each child's progress.

Our School Staff Vision

All staff must strive for the well-being of the children, observe a purposeful code of conduct and work in harmony with one another to create an environment and a sense of common purpose which we would desire for our own children. Our staff aim to:

- help the children to achieve our educational aims;
- create a happy working atmosphere;
- develop children's self-discipline and self-control;
- encourage children to achieve in all aspects of the learning process;
- ensure that children recognise and respect the rights of others;
- help the children to work as a team and as individuals;
- help children to learn to support and help each other;
- create an awareness of the values of honesty, fairness and respect for others;
- facilitate sensible and rational solutions to conflicts and
- encourage accountability for behaviour.

When speaking to children, staff are:

- expectant of good behaviour;
- sensitive to the emotional and intellectual understanding of the child;
- calm but firm;
- assertive when the situation requires it;
- ready to encourage and
- positive in comments.

Legal Status:

Complies with Part 3(3)(7) of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations, *Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges* (KCSIE) (DfE, 2020) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (WTSC) (HM Government, 2013) along with any further amendments as they are published.

Applies to:

- the whole school inclusive of activities outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

Related Documents:

- Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHE) education and citizenship.
- Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural (SMSC) education
- Curriculum handbook.
- Behaviour Policy

Availability

- This policy is made available to parents, guardians, carers, staff and pupils from the school office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head teacher.
- The Proprietor undertakes an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.