



The Birtenshaw Group

Transforming Lives

Birtenshaw College Curriculum Policy

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Rationale:

The Curriculum at Birtenshaw College supports the mission statement: *transforming lives* by giving learners the opportunity to learn and develop in a supportive and creative environment in which there is a focus on recognising achievement and supporting progression and in which learners feel safe and are happy. The curriculum is individualised, creative, innovative and flexible allowing for the needs of each learner to be met. It aims to promote the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the learners as well as their intellectual and physical development.

The college is committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This gives opportunities for learners to develop essential skills in literacy and numeracy as well as functional skills, independent living skills, healthy lifestyle skills, social skills and skills for working life.

The timetable and curriculum are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current legislation and guidance and taking into account best practice within special needs education.

The curriculum is planned to provide continuity and progression. It enables learners to make connections and transfer skills and to think creatively and solve problems. It also develops learners' capacity to work independently and collaboratively.

Some learners have complex needs. In addition to the academic curriculum, their individualised timetables provide opportunities for learners to participate in therapeutic activities.

We know that learners with autistic spectrum disorder are happiest and achieve most when their routine is clear and when their learning opportunities build on their particular skills and talents. To this end, we tailor the curriculum to help learners make progress in a way that best suits them.

Aims:

- That learners make outstanding progress against personal targets
- That learners acknowledge their achievements and have a sense of pride
- That learners have opportunities to participate in a range of enrichment activities within and beyond the curriculum via working with professionals within the community for example: sports coaches, musicians, gardeners and so on and by visiting places of interest.
- That learners develop communication skills including use of symbols, signing and objects of reference
- That learners develop reading skills
- That learners develop skills for independence
- That learners use of ICT is encouraged
- That learners develop a greater awareness of their local community and make a positive contribution
- That learners learn a range of skills as they prepare for adulthood
- That learners develop employability skills

Functional Skills:

The development of Functional Skills is taught as a discrete subject. Literacy and numeracy skills are also embedded throughout the curriculum in order to prepare all learners for adulthood.

Vocational Studies

We see the development of own interests and passions as vital to learners as they prepare for adulthood. A number of vocational courses are offered to support this:

- Land-based studies
- Animal care
- Hospitality and Catering
- Administration
- Maintenance
- Art and Design
- Health and Social Care

Enrichment:

The curriculum is enriched by educational trips and visits, local community links and opportunities within the timetable to engage with new experiences for example: community inclusion trips, pottery, yoga, gym activities, gardening, educational visits and national awareness days.

Accreditations:

At present, Birtenshaw College supports learners to gain the following qualifications, as appropriate:

BTEC Art and Design
 BTEC Health and Social Care
 BTEC Home Cooking
 BTEC Land-based Studies
 Functional Skills English
 Functional Skills Maths
 Functional Skills ICT

Non-accredited Learning Programmes (RARPA - Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) are based on the preparing for Adulthood outcomes which disabled young people say is important to them. These include paid employment and higher education, housing options and independent living, good, health, friends, relationships, community inclusion and choice and control over their lives and support.

Responsibilities:

Class teachers are responsible for:

- medium and short term planning
- differentiation to meet the individual needs of learners
- summative and formative assessment
- using a range of teaching and learning strategies, techniques and resources
- directing the work of Learning Support Assistants
- attending and contributing to training and meetings as requested.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The Head of Service will co-ordinate the monitoring cycle. This will include:

- auditing planning
- analysing progress data
- observing lessons
- deep dives
- learning walks
- work scrutiny
- curriculum development and planning
- initiating training/workshop opportunities with a specific focus.

Resources:

Resources are allocated in line with the priorities indicated in the College Quality Improvement Plan.

CPD:

All staff are provided with opportunities for professional development and training in line with the College Quality Improvement Plan and the organisational training needs analysis and strategy. Training needs will be linked to the college's performance management process.

Equal Opportunities:

The college supports the rights of all learners to equal access and opportunities regardless of age, culture, religion, gender, ability, disability or sexuality. The college promotes an ethos of respect for everyone.