



EDUCATION MY LIFE MATTERS

Curriculum Policy

Approved by:

**Independent Executive
Board**

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Last reviewed on:

N/A

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May 2024

- 1 Curriculum Policy: May 2023
Review date: May 2024

Context:

Education My Life Matters (EMLM) is an independent school offering alternative provision support for learners aged from 11 to 16. The learners who attend EMLM have joined our school due to a crisis in their education and have faced many barriers to learning in the mainstream school environment or are non-school attenders. Many of our learners have some form of diagnosed or undiagnosed Special Educational Needs, have experienced trauma or present with social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Due to the complex nature of our learners, we recognise our responsibility to provide them with the most appropriate curriculum, a tailored approach, to both academic learning and life skills.

Curriculum Core Offer and Vision:

At EMLM, we offer a curriculum which intends to empower our learners by providing them with the resilience required to overcome challenges, along with the skills, knowledge and qualifications necessary to thrive in the modern workplace and be valued members of society. We aim to ensure that social, emotional aspects of learning will permeate every area in the curriculum, so that it is explicit and implicit within the taught curriculum.

Our curriculum has been designed so that we apply a **holistic** approach to our curriculum, ensuring equal access to learning to all and appropriate levels of challenge and support. Our curriculum is ambitious and designed to ensure all our learners are given the opportunities to excel regardless of their starting points or background; by ensuring an appropriate mix of academic and life skills.

Where does the curriculum from?

The curriculum is based upon the National Curriculum programmes of study at KS3 and 4, we have adopted and adapted external schemes of work to ensure that the curriculum reflects our learners and context. For each learner their next step will be based on their assessed previous skills and knowledge rather than for their age or year group. It will be highly personalised. The curriculum provides the opportunity for learners to access a broad and balanced curriculum at a differentiated level.

Our curriculum has been adopted in order to support our learners to build their knowledge to apply that knowledge as skills. Subjects are planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and towards clearly defined end points.

Intent:

At EMLM, the overall intent is each learner engages, achieves and makes personal progress. Our curriculum aims to ensure that learners have access to age and developmentally appropriate education that encourages all learners to develop their academic achievement, independence, engagement and social development. Our curriculum:

- promotes learning that develops curiosity, creativity, expression, and confidence
- Provides opportunities whether these are academic, social and emotional or a bespoke programme

Our curriculum aims to enable learners to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations. This includes:

- Building independence, resilience and self-help skills
- Developing confidence in their basic skills of English and Maths

2 Curriculum Policy: May 2023

Review date: May 2024

- Communicating effectively within their own means
- Gaining a sense of belonging
- Developing their interests and skills which will enable them to enjoy and make the best use of their time both in and out of school
- Learning strategies for social and emotional development to access successful relationships
- Having positive interactions within the community
- Understanding that our actions have an impact on others
- Gaining knowledge and skills required to keep them safe both in school and in the wider world
- Choice of vocational opportunities to support progress in employability

Our curriculum provides a broad and balanced education for all learners. It is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning. It is a curriculum that is designed to promote the social inclusion of all learners and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as pertinent to their circumstances. Our curriculum allows our teachers the opportunity to support learners' strengths and fill their gaps, whilst using the best approach to their learning style. Our learners learn best when learning is related to their own experience; some learn more effectively through functional activities, and others respond well to a topic-based approach. Progression is celebrated when our learners are able to apply the skills and knowledge that have been learnt to different contexts, situations, with less scaffolding and support, with different adult and in different environments. Retention of fundamental skills and knowledge to embed into the long-term memory is very important - to know more, do more and remember more.

At EMLM we are informed by educational research into effective teaching practices, pedagogy (the method and practice of teaching), cognition and how knowledge and understanding develops. This allows teaching staff to provide timely feedback, reshape learning and adapt teaching as needed.

Implementation:

At EMLM we implement the curriculum through contextual learning experiences, supporting learners to generalise their skills. We assess each learner's ability and work with parents/careers and any linked professional to target the next steps, which are linked to EHCP and/or individual targets. We also identify the strategies that each learner needs to access the curriculum. This is individual to each learner. We use a range of strategies to support learners to learn and retain information.

At EMLM the curriculum is covered by using a two-week cycle where English and Maths takes place daily.

Writing, Reading and Oracy: We have designed the curriculum that suits the needs and the interests of our learners. We aim to capture their imagination and encourage them to write, regardless of their mistakes. We encourage discussion and provide opportunities for our learners to speak confidently and fluently about topics and wider issues which interest them. They are encouraged to use their imagination, expand their vocabulary, listen to their peers and support each other to achieve their best.

Learners at EMLM have a negative impression of English. Some learners have missed large chunks of their education and are reluctant to read and/or write. Therefore, we have to be creative in our teaching practice, adapting schemes of work to inspire and enthuse our learners.

Maths - basic maths skills are taught daily. The main focus is on key mathematical skills including place value, the four operations, fractions, decimals and percentages. A range of manipulatives and reasoning resources are used to challenge all learners and give them the opportunity to articulate what they have learnt.

We aim to nurture and develop learners social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding and appreciation of British values. Religious Education lessons offer opportunities where learners can discuss a range of world religions and belief systems and share their own beliefs. We intend to cultivate our learners' individual strengths in order to create a learning environment which builds confidence and resilience.

For all other subjects, the curriculum overview outlines the units of work. Learners are grouped based on a range of factors e.g. their needs, abilities and friendships. Interventions and catch up programmes are put in place according to the needs of the learners. Learning mentors provide additional support to ensure learners are emotionally ready for their learning, and to provide motivational breaks and/or support as and when necessary.

We offer bespoke online tutoring dependent of the needs of the learner.

Enrichment and wider development:

The curriculum provides many enriching and creative learning contexts.

Use of external coaches/professionals or internal programmes e.g. linked to Sports, Arts or Science

Whole school events e.g. World Book Day, Arts or Science

Other wider opportunities are provided such as <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/>

Careers and work-related learning – bespoke careers programme

Impact:

Whilst our learners may only make tenuous connections between old knowledge and new knowledge being acquired, they all respond positively to the curriculum in some form. Some have engaged and are excited with the curriculum and attendance has improved, for others it has ignited other interests and they are linked to work experiences e.g. hair and beauty, experiential equine assisted learning and motor mechanics etc

Case studies are written and retained to testify where our learners started and ended their successful journey with us.

Support is provided in enrolling for further education at colleges and appropriate life skills pathways.

We have high expectations of all learners and strive to provide curriculum challenge, breath and enrichment in learning as we know and acknowledge the individual starting points of each learner and understand the progress needed to attain a successful outcome. This is also achieved through the use of a range of assessment and analysis strategies: termly assessing, moderation of work, pupil voice and in data tracking. The outcomes are seen as a result of the work produced, feedback from the parents, carers and stakeholders also through a developing sense of pride the learners have in themselves and for the school.

Frequent monitoring shows that our learners are self-directed, motivated, are able to use knowledge to construct their own arguments and ideas based on their learning style and are creatively cultivating a growth mindset.

Planning indicates the types of learning activities provided whilst challenging also affords individual success and a sense of achievement.

The analysis of assessments offers staff an accurate oversight in order to rapidly close any learning gaps.