



Hillingdon Manor School

Curriculum Overview

Academic Year 2026-2027

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Introduction

“In special education, there's too much emphasis placed on the deficit and not enough on the strength.”

Temple Grandin

The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive overview to share with staff, governors, other professionals, families and other interested stakeholders. The document incorporates our philosophy, aims and values as well as describing the approach to our curriculum, the content and the specialised approaches required for teaching the pupils at Hillingdon Manor.

At Hillingdon Manor School the curriculum underpins the ethos of the school and strives to provide the context within which pupils with autism are given the opportunity to achieve high standards. In line with the National Curriculum aims, we would like all children who attend Hillingdon Manor School to become:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

Aims

Pupils and students will receive:

- A firm grasp of basic skills through the teaching of individualised curricula including the National Curriculum where applicable.
- The stimulus of a broad and balanced curriculum that introduces new ideas and experience to all.
- A curriculum that promotes and supports development and understanding of fundamental British Values.
- The benefits of learning and growing in a calm, friendly, stable and structured environment.
- An education which prepares them for successful, inclusive, enjoyable, rich and active lives.
- An education which gives them high expectations for their future and accepts and understands their individual learning needs.
- A curriculum that builds on a variety of approaches to learning and teaching.
- An education that allows development and expression through creative opportunities and one which uses real experiences as a foundation for learning.
- A curriculum that supports the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual development of the child.
- A curriculum which aims to give them skills for life, integrating in the local community and being a part of society.

Pupils and students will develop:

- Respect and consideration for theirs and others individuality, particular backgrounds, cultures and religions as reflected in the inclusive ethos and multicultural nature of the school; and in preparation for life in a diverse society.
- The confidence that comes when achievement is recognised.
- Their skills in cognition and learning, communication, independence and self-care, physical development – all transferable skills to equip them for lives in challenging and changing world.

Context

Hillingdon Manor is an independent day school for children on the Autistic Spectrum, Year 7 to Year 14. Located over two sites: The Manor and the Courtyard. Pupils attend the school from a number of Local Authorities within London and the home counties. All pupils have an Education Health and Care Plan and have access to a broad and balanced curriculum tailored to individual needs. Our clinical team support a need-led curriculum that removes barriers to education and promotes independence for all of our learners.

Curriculum Intent

At Hillingdon Manor School our personalised curriculum is designed to offer our learners a wide range of learning experiences including the national curriculum plus the wider curriculum which focuses on addressing our learners' barriers to education and needs in order to prepare them for the next stages, wherever that may be; their life outside of school and ultimately their adult life.

Through our curriculum we aim to develop transferable skills for all children in the following areas: cognition & learning; communication & interaction; physical, motor & sensory; social, emotional & mental health, and community & independence.

The curriculum at Hillingdon Manor School is broad and balanced and is designed to meet the needs of all our pupils. Following three distinct pathways: immersive, flexible and concrete. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure each child is ready for the next stage in education. It is adapted and tailored to their needs which makes progression possible. It additionally promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. At Hillingdon Manor we know that each child is starting their learning from a different point. We recognise that our pupils do not progress following a linear trajectory and will develop and progress at different rates.

Teaching & Learning

Teaching at Hillingdon Manor School is the practice carried out by all staff to ensure all students acquire knowledge, skills and understanding as they progress through a curriculum designed to meet their special educational needs. This practice is multi-sensory, language-centred and connective. Learning is the process through which the students can develop their knowledge, skills and understanding to the point where they have retained and generalised what has been taught. Teaching and learning is carried out in a context which is relevant and meaningful to all students on the autism spectrum to ensure effective learning and appropriate accreditation. All staff will work in such a way that the learning environment is one which is calm and consistent, with clear expectation, both as a group and as individuals. This will maximise information processing throughout each day allowing the students to realise their full potential. The curriculum design across all age ranges connects each student with the acquisition of knowledge, skill and understanding. This design makes meaningful connections for students which maximises their potential for success, access and independence.

Making the Curriculum work

What do we all need to learn at school?					
Effective social communication	Body awareness	Self-care, independence and resilience	World awareness and willingness to contribute	Self-expression and creative realisation	Thinking and problem-solving skills.
How will you make it relevant to me?					
Pupils' interest-led & EHCP-informed	Access to local community	Parental and wider network involvement	Learning in real life and meaningful contexts	Understanding my difficulties & identifying coping strategies	Breaking things down and formulating support plans
How will you know if I am making progress?					
Positive or improving attendance	Behaviour data	Skill development	Ongoing assessment	Therapy targets	EFL
What about Post 16 and preparing me for life after school?					
Planned and carefully executed transitions	Options evening & taster days	Careers and advice	Accredited courses, assessment and exams	Annual reviews and pupil's views	Liaison with colleges, schools, and other placements

Structure

Curriculum		
Immersive	Flexible	Concrete
Learners on this pathway follow Immersive Curriculum. They have complex learning needs and have a combination of high sensory/processing/communication/interaction difficulties, which in some cases may present with self-injurious behaviours. It is a person-centred curriculum, designed to enable students to learn functional skills and experience a range of activities through meeting students' sensory needs. The focus is on developing the key skills of communication, cognition, independence and personal care in an engaging and stimulating environment. Immersive learners are unlikely to go on to further education or a workplace. Their learning must focus on addressing their safety needs, their wellbeing, and ability to independently attend to their own immediate personal needs. Therapeutic input may be significant in order for them to meet those goals. Teaching and learning should be sensory based with opportunities for practice and repetition. The progress can be evidenced through engagement and participation in the process of learning. Immersive students have the opportunity	Students in Pathway 2 follow a Flexible Curriculum. Students have severe learning difficulties, and some have a complexity of needs and emergent communication, social and interaction skills. The focus on this pathway is on engagement with learning in a narrower selection of options which may be linked to employability. Flexible learners have an inconsistent profile and learn best through a combination of experiential learning and a topic-based approach. Life skills permeate the curriculum and focuses on real life experiences and application in engaging and stimulating environments. Students have the opportunity to pursue accreditation in AQA's Entry Levels at KS3 and Functional Skills, BTECs and some GCSE's at KS4 and 5.	Students in Pathway 3 follow a Concrete Curriculum. Students have developing communication, social and interaction skills. They have a more consistent learning profile and are able to access a range of National Curriculum subjects for their Key Stage, such as Computing and Science. It aims to develop higher order thinking skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving as well as functional skills, employability and independence skills. Concrete learners are able to access lessons delivered in a more traditional format. Students have the opportunity to pursue accreditation in AQA's Entry Levels at KS3 and to then work towards recognised accreditations at KS4 and 5.

to pursue accreditation in AQA's Pre-Entry and Entry Levels at all Key Stages.		
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Curriculum Pathways Breakdown

Pathway - Immersive	
Aims To develop cognition, communication, independence and self-care. To increase attendance and engagement at activities and complete tasks. To develop skills that will be useful in adult life, To develop learning, co-operation, social and communication skills through the presentation of and involvement in tasks that are meaningful, relevant and motivating. To meet sensory needs in order to support learning.	Approaches to Learning Contextual and multi-disciplinary approach. Small learning groups with a high level of support and personalised instruction. Engagement through practical and interactive activities. Sensory needs must be met before engaging in activities that develop functional skills. Personalised and structured timetable. Total communication used to develop communication and cognitive skills.
Clinical Provision Most students have a "specialist" or "enhanced" level of therapy input from the therapy department which may include indirect input through upskilling the team around the learner or providing specific equipment and/or training. All students have a Communication Profile and My Sensory World documents which outline their needs that must be met before learning can take place or to facilitate the learning.	Accreditation Students on the immersive pathway have the opportunity to pursue accreditation in AQA's Pre-Entry and Entry Levels at all Key Stages.
Assessment: Portfolio EFL AQA units	

Pathway - Flexible

Aims

To develop cognition, communication, independence and self-care.
To increase attendance and engagement at activities and complete tasks.
To develop transferable skills that will be useful in adult life and increase employability.
To develop learning, cooperation, social and communication skills through the presentation of and involvement in tasks that are meaningful, relevant, academically-stimulating, enhancing their learning and motivating.
To meet sensory needs in order to support learning.

Approaches to Learning

Contextual and multi-disciplinary approach.
Small learning groups with level of support and personalised instruction.
Engagement through practical and interactive activities whilst exposed to more traditional teaching and learning approaches.
Sensory needs must be met before engaging in activities that develop functional skills.
Personalised and structured timetable.
Total communication used to develop communication and cognitive skills.
Create enriching learning opportunities to allow pupils access to elements of both immersive and concrete pathways.

Clinical Provision

Most students will be able to have their needs met via "universal" or "enhanced" level of therapy input. Some may still require access to "specialist" input from the therapy department which may include indirect input through upskilling the team around the learner or providing specific equipment and/or training.
All students have a Communication Profile and My Sensory World documents which outline their needs that must be met before learning can take place or to facilitate the learning.
To aid in developing securing independent thinking which might be transferred into supported employment opportunities.

Accreditation

Students have the opportunity to pursue accreditation in AQA's Entry Levels at KS3 and Functional Skills, BTECs and some GCSE's at KS4 and 5.

Assessment:

Portfolio
EFL
AQA units
Coursework (BTEC, GCSEs)

Pathway - Concrete

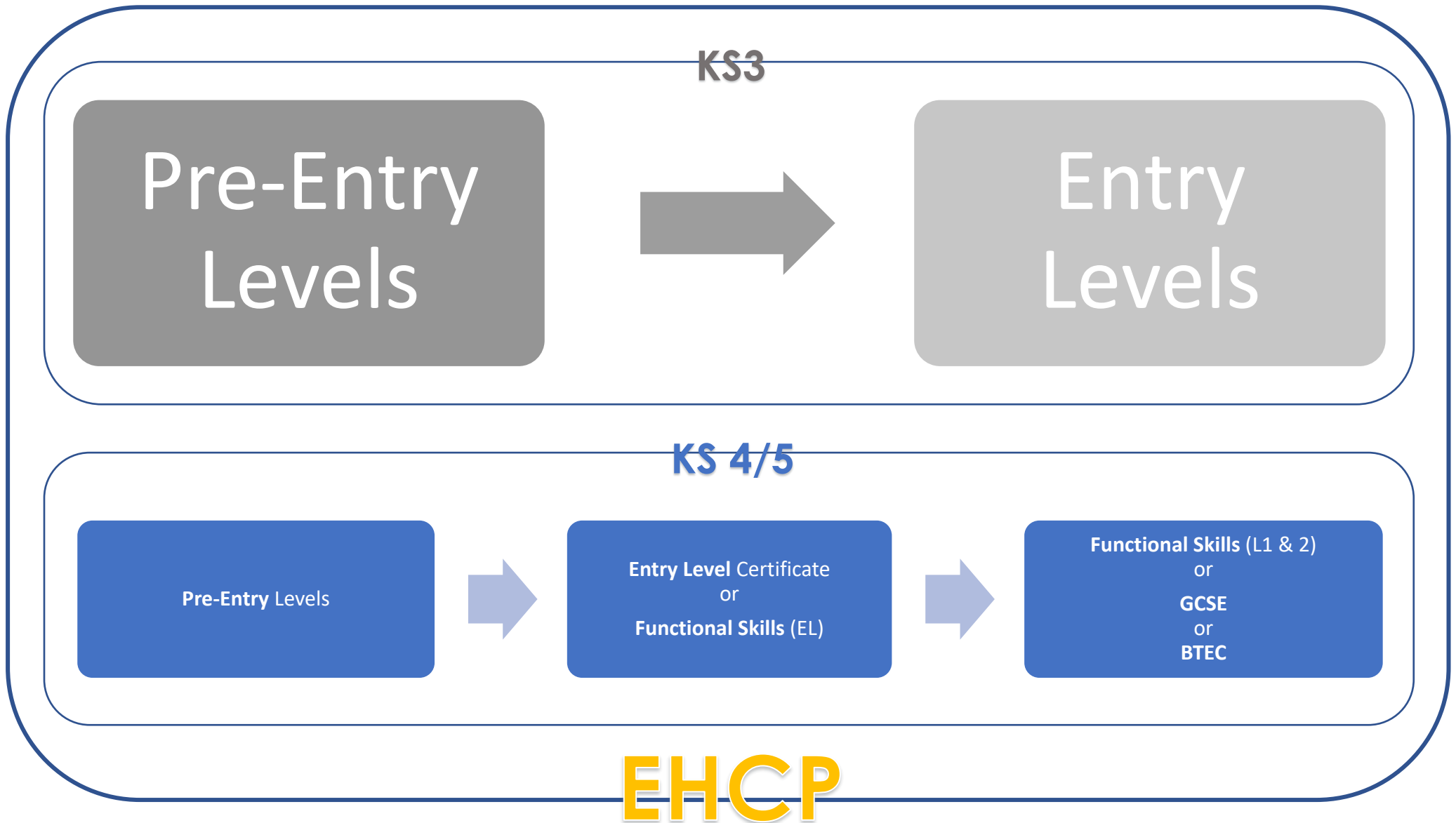
Aims To develop and expand cognition, communication, independence and self-care. To increase attendance and engagement at activities and complete tasks. To further develop transferable skills that will be useful in adult life and increase employability or opportunities to access further education. To develop learning, cooperation, social and communication skills through the presentation of and involvement in tasks that are meaningful, relevant, academically-stimulating, enhancing their learning and motivating. To meet sensory needs in order to support learning. To promote and encourage secure independent thinking which can be transferred into employment opportunities.	Approaches to Learning Contextual and multi-disciplinary approach. Small learning groups with level of support and personalised instruction. Engagement through academic, practical and interactive activities whilst predominantly following traditional teaching and learning approaches. Support may be required to fully meet sensory needs. Personalised and structured timetable. Total communication used to promote appropriate communication and cognitive skills. Create enriching and thought-provoking learning opportunities.
Clinical Provision Most students will be able to have their needs met via "universal" level of therapy input via their class team and AAD strategy. Some may still require access to "enhanced" or "specialist" input from the therapy department which may include indirect input through upskilling the team around the learner or providing specific equipment and/or training. All students have a Communication Profile and My Sensory World documents which outline their needs that must be met before learning can take place or to facilitate the learning.	Accreditation Students have the opportunity to pursue accreditation in AQA's Entry Levels at KS3 and Functional Skills, BTECs and GCSE's at KS4 and 5.
Assessment: Portfolio EFL AQA units Coursework (BTEC, GCSEs)	

Subject Overview

KS3	KS4 & KS5
My Communication	Literacy, English, Literature, Makaton, Reading, Speaking, Listening, Communication, Interaction
My Thinking & Problem Solving	Numeracy, Mathematics, Money Management, Business
The World Around Me	Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, Horticulture
Personal Development & Employability	Creative Arts, Art, Music, Design Technology, Woodwork, Engineering, Construction, Food Technology, Life Skills, Printworks, Market Garden, Business
Physical Development & Independence	Physical Education, Life Skills, Dance, Performing Arts, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Forest School, Money Management

| Cognition & Learning | Communication & Interaction | Physical, Motor & Sensory |
| Social, Emotional & Mental Health | Community & Independence |

Trajectory & Qualification



Transitions

The 3 pathways: Immersive, Flexible and Concrete have been put in place to support successful transition between Key Stages. Particularly in Key Stage 3 the curriculum focuses on self-regulated learning to ensure all learners are able to adapt swiftly without difficulties and challenges. For that reason, it was important for the teaching and learning styles to be similar to those offered in Key Stage 2.

This approach provides pupils with much needed familiarity and allows staff to invest time in building secure attachment and establishing positive rapports.

The school leaders are aware of many transitions and phase transfers in pupils' education, especially as outlined in The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Regulations; "transfer between phases of education" means a transfer from

- a. early years education to school
- b. infant school to junior school
- c. primary school to middle school
- d. primary school to secondary school
- e. middle school to secondary school, or
- f. secondary school to a post-16 institution."