

Kisimul

EDAC11 | Acacia School Curriculum

Policy and Procedure

Document Information

Document:	EDAC11 Acacia School Curriculum Policy and Procedure
Division:	Education
Document owner position:	Group Executive Education Lead
Authorising committee:	Practice Effectiveness Forum/School Governance
Date authorised:	April 2025

Document Publication & Review

Date first published:	April 2025
Date of last revision:	April 2026
Date of next review:	October 2026
This document will be reviewed at least every 2 years, or sooner if legislation/guidance changes	
A full Change Log can be found at the back of this document	

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement

No person or group should suffer oppression or lack of opportunity because of a protected characteristic. Kisimul Group opposes all forms of unlawful discrimination, and we are committed to encouraging equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion in the application of our policies so that everyone has equal access and feels welcome and at ease. To achieve this aim, the application and accessibility of our policies, and the decisions and outcomes arising from our policies, may be monitored to ensure their use is fair, equal and consistent irrespective of any characteristic as may be defined by the *Equality Act 2010*. This is to ensure that we are listening to people and appropriately understanding their needs, and are tailoring the way we interact and publish or act on our policies to ensure we are promoting equal access and opportunity at all times.

Contents

Contents	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Scope.....	4
3. Roles and Responsibilities	4
3.1 The Chief Executive Officer	4
3.2 The Group Executive Education Lead	4
3.3 The Headteacher.....	4
3.4 The School’s Senior Management team.....	5
3.5 Teachers	5
3.6 All staff.....	5
4. Curriculum Intent.....	5
4.1 Aims	5
4.2 The 3 “I can” statements	6
4.3 Curriculum Design	6
5. Curriculum Organisation and Implementation	7
5.1 The 5 core areas.....	7
5.2 Maths and English.....	8
5.3 Careers and work-related learning	8
5.4 RHSE.....	8
5.5 Therapeutically-informed curriculum.....	8
5.6 24-hour curriculum.....	9
5.7 Individual Care Plans	9
6. Curriculum Impact	10
7. Training Requirements.....	10
9. Linked Documents	11
9.1 Kisimul Policies.....	11

1. Introduction

1.1.1 Kisimul Group's Acacia School is a provision for children and young people of ages 8-19, who are identified as autistic and typically have Severe Learning Disability (SLD) and associated complex and communicative needs. Acacia School is an Independent Special School which offers day placements and supports a number of young people who live in the group children's homes on the shared campus and nearby villages. There is an emphasis on therapeutic input and shared outcomes and approaches are integral to the personalised programmes of support in place for each child/young person.

1.1.2 Children/young people typically enter Acacia School in crisis, disengaged from learning, and using their behavioural presentation to communicate. Their educational experience is that of disengagement and often isolation and exclusion from whole or parts of their previous settings. Through application of consistent structure and routines, and using evidence-based approaches to management of behaviour and sensory modulation and communication, Acacia School aims to provide a meaningful educational experience for children/young people.

1.1.3 Kisimul Group works towards a Meaningful Life Model for all learners and residents, which aims to identify a purpose and value for each individual, and structure curriculum and provision to support a young person's journey to achieve their aspirations. We at Acacia School recognise that young people are more motivated to learn and engage when working towards goals that are meaningful to them.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all learners at Acacia School, and to all teaching staff.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Chief Executive Officer

Has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with national and local standards that are reflected in the organisation's policies.

3.2 The Group Executive Education Lead

Is responsible for ensuring that the **Headteacher** executes their responsibility for adapting and personalising the curriculum for each child/young person at Acacia School.

3.3 The Headteacher

Is responsible for regularly reporting to the Kisimul Group Executive team in respect of the implementation of the curriculum, and showing clear links to outcomes for child/young persons to ensure purposeful and functional learning is clearly defined for each child/young person.

3.4 The School's Senior Management team

Should put statutory subject coverage and assessment processes in place for each child/young person, taking account of their EHCP provision and evidence from ongoing assessment of needs.

3.5 Teachers

Should take account of the learning needs and cognitive ability of each child/young person at Acacia School, and balance the curriculum offer in place for them accordingly.

3.6 All staff

Should be aware of each child/young person's individualised learning intentions, which outline communicative, behavioural and sensory approaches required to meet the needs of children placed within the schools.

4. Curriculum Intent

4.1 Aims

Acacia School aims to:

4.1.1 Teach children/young people functional skills that can be applied in real life and generalised across settings, so that they are meaningful and purposeful.

4.1.2 Promote a positive attitude towards learning, accepting that for child/young people with complex profiles this be individual, and therefore require an evidence-based approach.

4.1.3 Recognise that a semi-formal curriculum, using developmental and thematic approaches, has the best chance of achieving meaningful outcomes for the majority of our learners.

4.1.4 Provide purposeful and useful accredited schemes of learning that reflect pathways to independence and outcomes as a child/young person progresses through the school.

4.1.5 Support physical and creative skills development, to promote healthy lifestyle choices and support engagement with learning.

4.1.6 Link the curriculum delivery to an evidence-based assessment system, to enable next steps of learning to be purposeful and functional. See ***EDAC14 Acacia School Assessment Policy and Procedure***.

4.1.7 Ensure that there is a multi-cultural and varied curriculum offer in place, to reflect the diversity of the cohort and wider British culture.

4.2 The 3 “I can” statements

4.2.1 Our priority is to enable young people to acquire meaningful skills and knowledge that they can apply throughout life to be positive and successful citizens: The following key “I can” statements represent the key function of our curriculum at Acacia School.



4.2.2 The intent of our school curriculum is to enable all learners to be active learners, moving towards independence, autonomy, control and choice, and that they learn to effectively communicate as confident individuals, stay safe and healthy and become responsible citizens, ultimately fulfilling their aspirations.

4.3 Curriculum Design

Acacia School has a unique curriculum design and intends the curriculum to:

4.3.1 Be knowledge-led and skills-engaged – we believe that these are not mutually exclusive, and do not perceive a tension between knowledge and skills. We teach skills alongside knowledge, ensuring that both are explicitly developed.

4.3.2 Focus on developing key skills which improve learning and performance in education, work and life, and will include participation for all young people in community-based activities. For autistic young people these skills are fundamental to participation and achievement in the curriculum and personal development. These skills include:

- Social communication (including literacy).
- Social interaction working with others.
- Social imagination and flexibility of thought.
- Improving learning, performance, and problem solving including functional maths skills.
- Independence and community participation.
- Sensory processing.

4.3.3 Allow our learners to acquire skills in literacy, numeracy and listening through contextualised and functional learning opportunities.

4.3.4 Bridge gaps in learning and build upon the strengths of the young people.

4.3.5 Have a strong emphasis on cross-curricular teaching to support our young people with social generalisation skills. This is important for making the curriculum relevant and meaningful to young people and for putting knowledge into context.

4.3.6 Be regularly reviewed to ensure sequential, layered knowledge and skills acquisition.

4.3.7 Address social disadvantage.

4.3.8 Offer new experiences and opportunities.

5. Curriculum Organisation and Implementation

5.1 The 5 core areas

5.1.1 The curriculum at Acacia School is organised into 5 core areas:

- Core (Functional Skills).
- Creative Learning.
- Life Skills.
- Physical and Mental Wellbeing.
- Cultural and Community.

5.1.2 This reflects the priority needs of the cohort at the school, and ensures that within the semi-formal outline of the curriculum there is also statutory coverage of the subject-specific requirement for each age group.

5.1.3 An outline of the different curriculum focus, and associated assessment and accreditation for each key stage is outlined in the associated schemes of work, thematic overviews and assessment and progression maps. In addition, it details our knowledge and skills progression maps which describe in more detail the links between learning, and how the curriculum is applied across each age range in the school.

5.1.4 Within the 5 core areas, phased skills pathways linked to developmental milestones are identified to provide a broad framework for teachers to outline learning intentions at various phases of development, and also to help support the sequencing of learning across time. Themed learning or skills-focused input is identified as a vehicle to support understanding and to promote engagement. A child/young person may be working at a similar developmental level at KS2 and KS5 – so while the learning intentions may be similar, there is an expectation that the different ages and factors such as adolescence and preparation for adulthood are clear in the different teaching approaches and curriculum content.

5.1.5 Teachers are required to plan personalised pathways for each child/young person, and assessment for each child/young person is outlined within their individual learning record (see **EDAC16 Acacia School Assessment Policy and Procedure**). This

assessment covers learning, social emotional and health outcomes, and is the evidence-based evaluation of the purpose and application of the curriculum offer.

5.1.6 Kisimul is a secular school, and provides a rounded curriculum that is designed to reflect modern British culture and the cultural needs of the child/young people within the school. This is reflected in the themed learning, the multi-cultural elements of the curriculum, and in embracing world events and the sporting calendar within the curriculum offer.

5.2 Maths and English

Maths and English are embedded within all aspects of the curriculum. While there is some discrete teaching on individual learning intentions, only a minority of children/young people require daily English and Maths-focused input allied to more formal national curriculum descriptors. The majority of learning is targeted toward functionally embedding these skills into daily living activities, such as shopping, vocational tasks, and art and creative curriculum elements. This is reflected within planning outlines and curriculum assessment strands, to ensure that there is clear and tangible evidence of generalisation and maintenance of basic Maths and English skills over time.

5.3 Careers and work-related learning

See ***EDAC12 Acacia School Careers Education Policy and Procedure***.

Careers and work-related learning is embedded within the curriculum and has a particular focus on the adult pathways in place within the KS4 and post-16 curriculum. This is reflected in the increased emphasis on practical and community-based learning skills as a learner progresses through the school. This ensures a careers focussed pathway for each child/young person in the school.

5.4 RHSE

See ***EDAC13 Acacia School RHSE Policy and Procedure***.

Acacia School has RHSE curriculum has been designed using SEND resources from the *PHSE Association* and *Sex Education Forum*, whereby relationships and building social interaction skills will be threaded within all aspects of learning. The curriculum is designed to teach learners how to keep themselves safe or to communicate this to others.

5.5 Therapeutically-informed curriculum

The therapeutically-informed curriculum is informed with evidence- and theory-based approaches deriving from applicable therapies. Education staff take an active role in attempting to generalise objectives from therapy into everyday learning, widening the impact of therapy outside of the therapy room/sessions. Therapy programs are designed for individual young people, and education staff provide feedback to the therapist regarding progress, and watch therapists modelling approaches or interventions. Beyond

individual programmes, Acacia's curriculum aims to also be therapeutically-informed as a universal approach. This means that education staff are trained in beneficial approaches or interventions, and that this is embedded into lesson planning or the environment proactively e.g. using visual schedules to break down a sequence such as a cooking method in food-tech, or using Makaton signs whilst teaching to support verbal language.

5.6 24-hour curriculum

5.6.1 There is active multi-disciplinary management of learning throughout the waking day. Psychology and therapy teams work across settings and provide an integrated approach. Education and care teams co-operate through a variety of multidisciplinary processes to achieve positive outcomes in independence, life skills, communication and interaction, behaviour and educational progress for learners on an integrated placement. All aspects of the day are seen as learning opportunities. Focus on generalising and the maintenance of skills is an integral part of the assessment and planning processes. A 24-hour curriculum is achieved by fostering a unified approach to learning across multiple environments. Consistent and proactive programmes are implemented during and after school hours, as informed by a wide range of health, education and social care perspectives.

5.6.2 Teaching methods will focus on individual and small group approaches with emphasis on learning for independence, with progress systematically recorded and reviewed.

5.6.3 Life skills cannot always be compartmentalised or fully addressed within the school day. Education and care interventions and programmes are delivered through continual reinforcement and overlearning, so that skills become generalised, and reinforced in context. This also enables learning to happen at the optimum time for engagement and when child/young people are motivated to learn, not simply because the timetable dictates it. Integrated placements with Kisimul Group's Acacia School and residential facilities provide an environment with a 24-hour approach to developing communication and interaction skills. We are mindful that consistent and appropriate strategies are imperative in the reduction of frustration linked to difficulties with communication.

5.6.4 Social skills are taught and reinforced consistently in as wide a variety of situations as possible, hence the level of input involved in Kisimul education allied to residential support goes further than a typical school day could provide.

5.7 Individual Care Plans

ICPs contain important information regarding the following: health needs, dietary requirements, cultural, religious, language and cultural needs, personal care, communication, education needs, leisure needs, sensory needs, behaviour management and risk assessments. Each child/young person's care plan is a whole provision document

and is followed by all staff working with the child/young person. This ensures consistency of approach and maximises the child/young persons' potential for learning and development. Staff across all settings are involved in the regular review of the child/young person's care plan.

6. Curriculum Impact

The aspiration for all of our learners is to achieve their full potential. The outcome of the curriculum is highly individual. All achievement and progress are celebrated. Progress for our learners can be demonstrated through:

6.1.1 Learners making progress towards/achieving their intended outcomes set with parents/carers for 12 months within the EHCP annual meetings. These outcomes are informed by any relevant professionals working with the learners.

6.1.2 Learners making progress towards personalised learning outcomes when reviewed.

6.1.3 Learners making progress/achieving in the curriculum planned by teachers. Progress and achievement in all subjects are within reports to parents in either EHCP (annual review) report and in the learning journals.

6.1.4 Achieving external accreditation where relevant.

6.1.5 Using existing skills in a wider range of contexts.

6.1.6 Supported transition within, in and out of the setting.

7. Training Requirements

Training is provided, which all staff are expected to complete. Acacia School's key developments are built into the competencies framework and Performance Management targets for all education staff. The Development Plan highlights its key areas for development and sets out the training priorities. We are committed to developing staff and their knowledge of special educational needs, and how this informs our curriculum.

8. Monitoring Compliance

8.1.1 Acacia School regularly and carefully monitors and evaluates the quality of provision which we offer our learners. We do this in several ways which include:

- Environmental and sensory audits.
- School self-evaluation.
- Evaluation of School Development Plan.
- Analysis of the progression of young people set against challenging targets, carried out three times per year.

8.1.2 Analysis of the quality of teaching and learning, through a combination of planned and unannounced observations where a team of staff which includes senior and middle managers carry out lesson observations.

8.1.3 Staff progress made to performance management targets.

8.1.4 Annually assessing progress set against various targets including: EHCP outcomes, objectives measured through PIVATS objectives, One Plan, PEP targets, Accreditation outcomes.

8.1.5 Regular curriculum evaluations to plan, monitor and regularly review curricula, ensure they are inclusive, set suitable learning challenges, respond to young people diverse learning needs, include all young people by overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment, provide a stimulus to revisit and revise existing schemes of work and or provide a basis for the development of new ones. Revision and development will take account of any changes in legislation and guidance.

9. Linked Documents

9.1 Kisimul Policies

9.1.1 EDAC12 Acacia School Careers Education Policy and Procedure

9.1.2 EDAC13 Acacia School RHSE Policy and Procedure

9.1.3 EDAC14 Acacia School Assessment Policy and Procedure.

