

Curriculum Policy

- Our innovative curriculum, including therapies
- Teaching, learning and assessment
- English, literacy and handwriting, including how we support students with English as an additional language
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and students' Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)
- Impartial careers information, advice and guidance
- Assessment, marking & feedback

Reviewed by Governing Body – September 2020

Next Review Date – September 2021

This document outlines simply, efficiently and clearly the key things we do at Infiniti School to ensure that our students access an outstanding quality of education and make accelerated progress. All students at Infiniti School have additional special educational needs, including (as examples) Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Dyslexia and Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Most of our students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

OUR CURRICULUM INTENT

Vision

- Creating a great balance between an academic and vocational curriculum allows our students to achieve and excel, in and out of school.
- Has value to our students now, as well as in the future.
- Is as hands-on and interactive as possible.

Ethos and aims

We provide:

- a place where students feel safe and secure
- a rich curriculum that enables students to re-engage with learning
- students with the necessary skills to manage their behaviour and emotions so that they make the right choices
- a well-qualified staff team who are highly skilled in helping students to flourish, by breaking the cycle of adversity often caused by difficult childhood experiences, including trauma and associated mental health difficulties.

In addition, we promote: **Enjoyment - Respect – Responsibility - Resilience.**

- Infiniti School teaches national curriculum subjects to all students which includes art, English, geography, history, ICT, mathematics, science, personal, social, health education (PSHE) (which incorporates religious education and citizenship) outdoor education and physical education (PE).
- The curriculum design is strongly differentiated to meet students' needs and to incorporate the various therapies on offer.
- **Our curriculum model enables students' learning to be developed sequentially over time, where learning builds from one year/key stage to another.** This ensures that students are well prepared for life after Infiniti School.
- **Teachers have real flexibility to adapt their planning to meet the needs of the very complex and challenging students** whom they know and understand well.



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- **Our focus is facilitating quality opportunities for students to learn and make progress.** Teachers produce curriculum overviews which are carefully planned to build from one term to the next. Clear differentiation in meeting the needs of all individual students in the class is shown. These plans are available on the school's shared drive and in teachers' planning files. Students' learning is evaluated regularly and activities amended accordingly, so as to plan for real progression.
- **All parts of the school day, including breakfast, breaktimes, lunchtimes and assembly are utilised to the full to deliver the curriculum, including SMSC through the PSHE programme. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are structured and community activities (including eating together) are again fundamental pillars of our curriculum.**

Key stage 3

At Infiniti School, the key stage 3 curriculum offer comprises a range of academic and vocational subjects for Years 7, 8 and 9. These subjects comprise of:

- Art
- Careers
- Drama
- English
- Forest School
- Geography
- History
- ICT
- Mathematics
- Outdoor Education
- PE
- PSHE
- Science

Key stage 4

The key stage 4 curriculum offer comprises of a range of academic and vocational qualifications at a variety of levels:

- Art
- English
- Geography
- Science
- History
- ICT
- Mathematics
- Outdoor Education
- PE
- PSHE

Students also have the following as option subjects:

- BTEC Performing Arts
- BTEC Sport
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Key stage 5

At key stage 5, Infiniti School intends to offer a range of academic and vocational qualifications for Years 12 and 13. Students can select from a wide range of qualifications:

- BTEC Art
- BTEC Health and Social Care

- BTEC Performing Arts
- BTEC Sport
- ECDL
- Functional Skills – English and mathematics

AQA Unit Awards

Unit awards are used to supplement the curriculum. They allow a different approach to reinforce student learning. Units vary in their duration and depth, being from entry levels to level 2. They are used in a variety of ways. For example, if a specific local issue arises, such as water safety in the summer or the use of synthetic highs, units can be delivered in the PSHE curriculum. For those following the Duke of Edinburgh course, the units can be used to reinforce learning and for shorter term recognition of the students' achievement. These units are claimed as they are achieved and the presentation of certificates used to motivate and recognize students.

THERAPY

The range of therapies we offer, include:

- Lego therapy
- Speech & language therapy (SaLT)
- Occupational therapy (OT)
- Pets As Therapy.

Who can access therapy?

All of our students may benefit from having some form of therapy. At Infiniti School, we tailor each student's therapeutic programme so that it meets their individual needs.

The support can be accessed as and when it is required: on a day-to-day basis or through more regular one-to-one or group sessions. Our range of therapies is not entirely dependent on spoken language. For example, sessions in which art, play, drama and movement are a primary means of communication, can be helpful to students who find it difficult to express their thoughts, emotions and feelings verbally.

How can therapy help?

Students who have endured (and continue to endure) adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and/or associated mental health difficulties will likely have high cortisol (stress) levels and low self-esteem.

Therapy works to:



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- provide students with an opportunity to express and reflect on their thoughts, feelings and experiences in a safe environment
- student to build a positive therapeutic relationship with the therapist, which raises self-esteem and can alter negative attachment strategies
- enhances a student's emotional well-being and encourages creative problem solving
- improve self-esteem, confidence and self-worth
- help to develop student's emotional vocabulary, encouraging and enabling them to identify and name their emotions
- help to develop effective strategies to manage their behaviour and their ability to self-regulate their emotions
- help to remove barriers to learning and facilitate better engagement with the curriculum.

Who can benefit from therapy?

Students who may benefit, include those:

- who have experienced ACEs and/or high levels of stress and unpredictability
- who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- with social communication difficulties
- who experience low self-esteem and fear of failure
- who struggling with life events, such as grief and loss, changes within the family or home, illness
- who have suffered abuse, bullying or other trauma
- with learning difficulties.

Supporting families

Infiniti School helps families in a targeted and supportive way. Senior staff meet parents/ carers when their child joins our school to gain a picture of family life, the needs of the student and how we can best support them. We are able to offer parents emotional and practical advice to support their child's journey at Infiniti School. We are also able to act as a strong link between the family and social care, North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) and paediatric care, and facilitate regular meetings and/or conversations in which we can suggest strategies in the home.

Home visits

Home visits are part of our practice, with their core aims being to:

- gain greater insight into the student's home environment in order to understand the whole child. This is **non-judgemental** and arranged purely to better meet our students' needs
- reduce anxiety and increase attendance
- build positive relationships with the family
- offer time to the family in their own environment to show a greater sense of support.

Risk assessments

- There will always be either **two members of staff at every home visit or one member of staff and a parent/carer present.**
- Home visits will be undertaken by a teacher or outreach worker.
- Staff will always gain consent from families prior to the visit.
- Robust home visit risk assessments, alongside individual risk assessments will be completed in advance.

Confidentiality

Typically, therapists ensure that all sessions are kept confidential in order to maintain trust within the therapeutic relationship and to create a space that feels safe to explore sensitive and meaningful aspects of the student's life. A therapist may break confidentiality if they become concerned about a safeguarding risk. The decision to break confidentiality is subject to the professional judgment of the therapist but will always be made with the best interests of the student in mind and with full consideration given to the full context within which the disclosure was made and the foreseeable risks surrounding the concern. Where possible, the therapist will seek consent from the student before making an external disclosure or reporting a concern, unless there is an immediate risk of harm.

Sharing of information/therapists' notes

Therapists keep records securely and confidentially in the head of centre's office. Records are kept in order to ensure that actions are conducted in a timely manner and that an ongoing chronology is maintained. Information about students' progress in therapy sessions (in terms of their social and emotional wellbeing and development) is provided to the leadership team on a regular basis.



TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

Students learn in many different ways. Many of our students have particularly complex needs. This often manifests itself in poor behavior and becomes a barrier to them making the progress. They generally arrive with a history of poor attendance, placement gaps and have therefore missed significant periods of education. As a result of this, they may arrive with very low self-esteem and consider themselves a failure.

Our job as staff is therefore a significant challenge but one that is faced with enthusiasm and energy. We achieve this in a number of ways:

- **We teach using precise learning objectives and differentiated success criteria** for each lesson
- **We facilitate learning using a wide range of activities** and strategies borne out of in-depth knowledge of our students
- **Where appropriate, we use ‘cold’ (pre) tasks to check for prior understanding and plenaries to check that our students have fully understood the learning objective.**
- **We plan and teach in reference to our assessment milestones, curriculum plans and individual students’ learning**
- **We teach according to our students’ preferred learning styles** (visual, auditory and kinesthetic) and forms of intelligence (mathematical/logical, visual/spatial, interpersonal, musical) as best we can
- **We ensure that the best possible environment for learning** by developing a positive atmosphere in which students feel safe and that they belong, enjoy learning and being challenged, trust that they can take risks with their learning and know that they can and will succeed
- **We ensure that teaching builds on previous learning through a learning sequence** and that constant praise, engaging learning tasks and positive use of our behaviour system keeps students motivated
- **We ensure that learning tasks are varied and tailored to individuals**, and include investigation and problem-solving tasks, use of ICT, debates, role-plays, design and making activities, critical thinking tasks and time for reflection. Students work in a variety of ways – in groups, pairs, with the whole class or independently, depending on the task and the individual
- **We encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning**, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn, and to reflect on how they learn best – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult.



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- **Teachers deploy support staff effectively**, tailoring what they do to the learning activity and students' needs. Sometimes, they work with individual students, sometimes with small groups, and sometimes they 'float' to support whole-class learning. Whilst they may be used to help a student to calm down or take time out, their focus is primarily one of supporting learning
- **We ensure our classrooms are attractive learning environments.** We change displays regularly so that the classroom reflects the subject themes and current topics being studied by the students. All students have the opportunity to display their work. We believe that a stimulating, yet calm environment sets the climate for learning, and that an organised classroom promotes focus and independent use of resources, which results in high-quality learning
- **Leaders and governors monitor the quality of education** through learning walks, lesson observations, workbook scrutiny, workbook moderations student progress meetings, student, teacher and parent interviews and feedback to staff with constructive developmental targets
- **We believe that parents & carers have a fundamental role to play in helping students learn** which is why we have, student progress days where parents & carers can meet staff to discuss their child's report, achievement and progress; these are written in accessible language with clear explanations about effort and expected levels of progress
- **We support students with English as an additional language (EAL)** through planning differentiated tasks during lessons, offering focused vocabulary support and also provide targeted literacy support on a 1:1 basis if this is appropriate. In addition, we ensure that our classrooms are vocabulary rich and that classroom displays reflect and support the current learning topics in order to reinforce new vocabulary.

ENGLISH: LITERACY, READING AND WRITING

Raising students' literacy levels is of fundamental importance to us. Our students have missed out on crucial parts of their education as a result of exclusion, isolation and lack of support. It is up to us to facilitate their accelerated progress in their phonics, reading and writing despite the multiple challenges they face.

With this in mind, we provide:

- **Students who are in need of additional one-to-one or group intervention** access this with either a member of the support staff team or a qualified teacher. This includes intensive phonics, reading and writing support.
- **Students have access to a variety of engaging fiction and non-fiction texts** in their classrooms. The teaching of writing encompasses a wide range of genres, both fiction and non-fiction, which prepare students for later life (for example writing reports,



recounts and letters).

- **Achievement in reading and writing is celebrated**
- **Reading is given a high profile** across all subjects, and cross-curricular opportunities to develop reading skills are planned throughout the week. Strong links are made between reading and subjects such as sports science, history and geography.
- **Students who have a diagnosis of dyslexia** are supported through targeted literacy support using resources specifically designed for them. Their progress is closely monitored and interventions put in place.
- **Teachers plan regular guided writing** opportunities, which enable them to demonstrate word, sentence and text level skills with small groups of students or one-to-one.
- **We believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and the presentation of written work helps to raise standards.** Students should take pride and have a sense of ownership in their work.
- **At Infiniti School, students in Years 10 and 11 will work towards GCSE English** or the highest level of functional skills qualification in English they are capable of.

MATHEMATICS & NUMERACY

Students arrive with us displaying varying degrees of competency in mathematics, many with large gaps in their knowledge of basic concepts due to disrupted periods of schooling. Often, students have missed out on the early learning experiences necessary to cement key mathematical skills and concepts.

With this in mind, we provide:

- **Mathematics lessons** which focus on **mastery** of concepts but take into account each student's unique starting points.
- **High quality, practical resources** which help mathematics to 'come alive' for our students. Teachers strive to present each new skill within a practical context that has relevance for our students. For example, measuring may be taught through the medium of cooking and food technology or probability may be taught in the context of a favourite football team's predicted performance.
- **Displays in classrooms** which support and scaffold students' knowledge of mathematics concepts. Mathematics prompts on learning walls in classes reflect the current mathematics unit being taught. Other displays in classes (such as multiplication tables) help to immerse students in a number rich environment.



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- **Regular problem-solving activities** are planned in order to provide students with the opportunity to apply their mathematics skills in different contexts, and begin to develop abilities for higher order thinking



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- **A variety of interactive resources** to help students to learn and cement complex mathematical concepts. ICT is used in different ways to demonstrate key concepts and allow a range of opportunities for students to explore their own mathematical understanding. Online teaching tools such as BKSb are used, where appropriate, to offer students the opportunity to master mathematical skills.
- **Infiniti School** students in Years 10 and 11 work towards GCSE mathematics or the highest level of functional skills qualification in mathematics they are capable of.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) and SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (SMSC)

Developing our students' social skills and teaching them about healthy living, preparing them for life in modern Britain and enabling them to make positive life choices is of considerable importance.

A weekly formal lesson of PSHE is not enough in a school setting such as ours, which is why we have developed a curriculum which encompasses regular themed assemblies and visits from outside speakers.

As well as fulfilling the objectives in our tailored PSHE schemes of work at all key stages, we aim to develop all students':

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT (S)

- ability to be **reflective** about themselves
- use of **imagination** and **creativity** in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences

MORAL DEVELOPMENT (M)

- understanding of **right and wrong**
- respect for the **rule of law** in modern Britain
- understanding of the **consequences** of their behaviour and actions

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (S)

- use of a range of **social skills** in different contexts
- willingness to participate, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- understanding of, and engagement with, the fundamental British values of democracy, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (C)

- understanding and appreciation of the **range of different cultures** within the school, the football club, in Medway, the United Kingdom and overseas
- knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system
- positive participation to **artistic, sporting and cultural** opportunities
- improving understanding of and showing respect for **different faiths and cultural diversity**.

We do the following:

- **Teach values across the school as part of our wider curriculum.** These values:
 - form the basis for **weekly assemblies**
 - form the basis for **learning conversations** around the school
 - contribute to the **planning and content of discrete PSHE lessons**
 - link closely with **Fundamental British Values**.
- **Formally teach Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) within the PSHE scheme of work to our key stage 3 students** which aims to:
 - help students develop an understanding of the different types of relationships, including family relationships
 - help students to develop skills in forming and maintaining relationships with others, including their peers
 - teach students about the changes to their body that occur during puberty
 - introduce students to reproduction.

At key stage 4, Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is within PSHE lessons enabling students to discuss the topic in a mature and inclusive way.

This includes topics such as 'Personal and Social Relationships' and 'Managing Social Relationships'.

- **Formally teach e-safety to students of all ages across the school, according to age and ability.**
- **Formally teach PSHE to all key stage 3 and 4 students on a regular basis which focuses on:**
 - the development of social skills, including managing anger and emotions, building relationships, dealing with conflict and making positive choices, including online as part of e-safety education



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- the development of anti-discriminatory understanding including knowledge and understanding of bullying, cyber-bullying, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and religious tolerance
- preparation for life in modern Britain and knowledge of fundamental British values, including cultural diversity, mutual respect, the rule of law, democracy, right & wrong, consequences and the range of faiths, religions and values in Britain and London
- providing opportunities for reflection, thinking, discussion and formal argument
- helping our community, supporting charity and helping others
- personal health and how to stay healthy with specific focus on nutrition and exercise
- the development of the understanding of risk and keeping safe in everyday life
- an understanding of the world of business and consumers through enterprise projects and fundraising for projects and/or charities.

Carefully planned and differentiated activities ensure that all students begin to view and understand themselves in the context of wider society, in a structured and supportive way.

In addition, our PSHE curriculum also ensures that students have the opportunity to:

- **learn about public institutions and services in England** (for example, the Royal family, Government, national health service, fire service and the police)
- **develop an understanding of the importance of tolerance and equality** while challenging prejudice and discrimination. We teach specific lessons which promote tolerance of different family structures and recognise that whilst not everyone's families are the same, they should all be respected and valued as part of an inclusive school community.

Our provision supports the development of students' PSHE skills in the following ways:

- we provide all placed students with **relevant therapies** with trained members of the staff team and external **therapists**, for example, lego therapy, dog therapy and speech & language therapy, therapy to meet varying personal, social & health needs
- we provide students with a **varied curriculum** that draws on the expertise of visitors to support their personal, social and health education, including motivational speakers and **enrichment activities** which develop and broaden students' interests and talents
- we hold regular sessions on the importance of staying **safe and healthy**, for example on drug and alcohol awareness.



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LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER RIGHTS

Lessons will be taught to students in line with British Values which also promote equal opportunities and an understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights.

Assembly topics will be carefully chosen to ensure students understand the facts about sexuality and gender identity, and understand the damage and prejudice that stereotypes can cause.

IMPARTIAL CAREERS INFORMATION, ADVICE & GUIDANCE

Careers guidance is a planned aspect of the curriculum for all students, focusing on the range of career opportunities, suitable roles related to skills, qualifications and experiences, goals, next steps and raising aspirations.

In addition, key stage 4 work towards a range of qualifications enabling them to demonstrate their knowledge of life after Infiniti School.

- Students access additional careers experiences. For example, speakers from a variety of work-related backgrounds visit the school. Students also have the opportunity to visit places of work to explore options.
- Key stage 3 students begin to investigate possible future career paths in timetabled careers lessons.

National Careers Service

- Each student will complete the skill, health tests and assessments. This allows students to find out about different careers and matches their skills to jobs.

Employability skills gets students ready for the world of work.

The school will attend careers fairs to encourage students to contact future potential employers.

Gatsby

- Careers Enterprise Compass –The school use an online tracker that allows us to check our progress of meeting the 8 pieces of Criteria. The compass reaches 100% when all criteria are met.

ASSESSMENT, MARKING & FEEDBACK

We use our own bespoke assessment framework, which tracks the progress of students in national curriculum subjects and emotional wellbeing.

Students are graded on a scale from Emerging 1 (E1) to Secure 9 (S9). These levels run in



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conjunction with GCSE grading. Each grade is divided into 3 sub-levels, emerging, developing and secure. Students in the emerging category are at the bottom of the respective grade, whereas secure are at the top of the grade. Students work across these levels throughout Key Stage 3 and 4. Students' progress is tracked in their book through colour-coded stickers outlining the grade and sub level the student is working towards.

Success criteria of each grade and sub level is displayed in the classroom for the subject taught, allowing students to self-reflect on their progress and how to move to the next sub-level.

BASELINE

- Students often arrive at Infiniti School with limited or no assessment data, which is often unreliable.
- We assess students' knowledge during their first weeks with us in order to baseline their level of skill in English and mathematics.
- We immediately begin gathering evidence of work across the curriculum in order to track the student's progress and to develop them as a person.
- During their first term at Infiniti School, students in Years 10 and 11 are baselined using the BKSB diagnostic tool to determine their starting points and to set meaningful English and mathematics targets using the GCSE 9-1 scale and functional skills grading criteria. For all other subjects, students are baselined using a range of assessments in their chosen qualification areas (the grading for which will depend on the qualification e.g. levels of progress towards a pass, merit and distinction in BTEC qualifications).

MARKING STUDENTS' WORK: KEY POINTS

Marking and feedback is the *dialogue* that takes place between teacher and learner, in order to ensure that learning objectives are met and that students are secure in their knowledge. This may take a number of forms, including a written dialogue for older students, or a verbal dialogue for younger students.

Students work is marked according to Infiniti School marking and assessment policy.

We mark students' work and offer feedback in order to:

- show that we value the students' work, and encourage them to value it too
- boost students' self-esteem through use of praise and encouragement
- help students learn. If students' work is well matched to their abilities, then errors that need to be corrected will not be so numerous as to affect their self-esteem
- promote self-and-peer assessment
- provide students with specific information on the extent to which they have met the lesson objective and success criteria/or the individual targets set for them
- provide a basis both for summative and formative assessment
- provide the ongoing assessment that should inform future lesson-planning.

We ensure that:

- comments are appropriate to the age and ability of the student
- comments focus on the most significant strength and weakness for improvement, at any one time
- ticks are normal where work is correct, and annotations where errors have been made. Other symbols may be used once their meaning has been explained
 - please refer to our marking and feedback policy
- wherever possible, teachers should establish direct links between oral or written praise and the class or school rewards systems
- when self or peer assessment has been undertaken (i.e. students may mark their own or another student's work) the teacher must always review this marking
- teaching assistants are permitted to participate in marking and giving feedback provided they have been prepared/briefed on the teacher's expectations of the lesson and outcomes and that their input is reviewed by the teacher
- At Infiniti School, marking is bespoke to the subject being taught and specialists' professionalism takes priority - a hospitality and catering teacher is likely to take a different approach to an English teacher. However, there is consistency in so much that feedback to students must be high-quality, regular and accurately recorded in books, folders, or electronically. Staff are as responsible for students' rapid progress in all their chosen and core subjects and in emotional wellbeing and skills for life as at all other school sites.

POLICY REVIEW CYCLE

This policy and all policies at Infiniti School will be reviewed and updated as per our policy review cycle.