
The Glenwood Curriculum

‘What we do to make a difference’

Every one of our young people is inspirational and can lead the way

It is our role to support each learner to recognise their own value and find ways of sharing this with the World Beyond Glenwood.

- 1) *Curriculum Aspirations and Intent*
- 2) *Building and Designing each Young Person’s Curriculum (Structure and Sequence)*
- 3) *Ensuring Balance and Breadth*
- 4) *Use of Assessment to support thinking and planning*

We create a personalised curriculum, with communication at the core. In planning for each learner we start from where the learner is (if we look and listen carefully enough they will show us). Each individual’s curriculum must come out of what we know about them and what they want and need and the knowledge, visions and priorities of parents, carers and other professionals. We think about future outcomes and put targets and strategies in place to begin the journey of equipping them with skills that will lead to a future where they can be happy, communicate as well as they can and be as independent as possible.

At Glenwood we recognise that children and young people with learning difficulties have unique abilities and ways of learning. Our learner-centred curriculum aims to provide a framework that will support young people to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours they require to learn effectively and enable them to enjoy the best quality of life. Our curriculum strives to be responsive to each learner and build on individual strengths and interests. A personalised thematic programme is in place, which supports a balanced range of stimulating contexts for learning through different learning experiences, themes and settings. Assessment, topics and subjects all have a part to play in building a truly learner centred curriculum.

We recognise the need to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which is prioritised, pertinent and wholly appropriate to the needs of the young person. This means that a broad and balanced curriculum means different things for different learners. Time in full-time education is limited and precious and we are duty bound not to waste it. There is no single curriculum that suits all our learners and no ‘set’ of subject areas. Every next step must be part of a functional and meaningful path for that young person, not part of a pre-programmed or linear route.



We feel it is important that no young person is limited by a pre-designed curriculum. Assigning young people to a curriculum pathway according to any assessed areas of ability sets young people on a rigid route and risks keeping their range of learning opportunities and experiences within predetermined parameters. This can risk denying them the opportunity to excel in other areas and to show real strengths and talents. Possibilities are limited by only exposing young people to what a pre-designed curriculum pathway brings. By constantly reflecting, revisiting and redesigning a young person's curriculum without restrictions of an expected route we aim to push aspirations far beyond what may have been in sight at the start of the journey. We hope to support young people to find their ways and opportunities to shine bright.

Our intention is to help make each young person's experience of the world bigger, brighter, purposeful and compelling and to help them to be confident, secure and as independent as possible within it. We know that this means different things for each young person at Glenwood, so the way we set about it will be as diverse and individual as they are. We need to be relentless in searching for ways to learn about each young person's potential, constantly providing time and space in which careful thought and analysis takes place. We feel a deep responsibility to ensure our young people develop skills, knowledge and self-belief in order to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. We need to work in partnership with families and young people over their time with us to ensure we fully understand what this means for them.

Curriculum Aspirations and Intent

Our curriculum is driven by a series of pivotal and ambitious aspirations which celebrate and encompass the aims we hold for every young person. We refer to these as our Curriculum Intentions. Key Questions further enhance and support our aspirations and guide thinking and reflection around meaningful next steps and planning the curricular journey for young people.

We have a focus on depth and relevance that can make a profound difference to the young person's experience of the world and their ability to contribute, be recognised for their unique strengths and have faith in their own value

A main focus of teaching and learning within our Curriculum is planning for young people to have learning opportunities and experiences to apply and generalise the skills and knowledge they have gained. We only recognise true learning and progress when it has been applied across settings. Our curriculum only succeeds if it reaches the young person's life beyond Glenwood.

Building and Designing each Young Person's Curriculum (Structure and Sequence)

In order for our curriculum to be truly learner led it must remain flexible and agile. Each and every time we learn something new and significant about a young person this should be



reflected in their curriculum. Each young person's curriculum is unique and needs to be fully responsive to what they are telling and showing us.

Within our Curriculum model Key Steps have been identified towards our curriculum intentions. These can be used to guide the way and support teachers in their thinking and planning but each young person, with support from professionals and family must be able to forge their own path.

At the end of each key stage and at other significant points in a young person's journey, school, family and other professionals come together to set aspirational outcomes for the next stage of the young person's journey. These become the basis of the young person's curriculum as they encompass the main priorities agreed by key professionals and family. Through this work together it is made clear what knowledge and skills need to be taught at this stage. In this way outcomes and transition planning (within the setting and beyond) offer us aspirational and meaningful 'end points' to aim for at stages along the young person's journey.

Annual Review meetings offer an opportunity to hear the many voices around a young person. We are able to gather a consensus of the young person's progress across family and professionals. In this way we gain perspective on meaningful learning across settings. Working together we can be sure that new targets (knowledge and skills to be gained) build on what has been taught before and towards agreed priority outcomes (end points). These targets, signposts to the outcomes, guide the curriculum. The 'Big Picture' which comes out of these meetings and ongoing communication with families describes the most important priority for the young person at that moment in time. This could be a significant challenge to support the young person to manage or the key area of learning that would make the biggest difference at this time in their journey (allow their world to become bigger).

Our Curriculum Structure is further supported by the role of Curriculum leaders who are responsible for paving the way towards the school being a force for transformational change in the worlds of each of our young people and ensuring staff are confident and equipped to build each young person's unique and stimulating path. The Curriculum Worlds add structure to young people's curriculums and development of skills and knowledge, adding depth and detailed thinking around key areas of the Curriculum. Each leader develops the curriculum and learning opportunities within their 'Curriculum World' and works collaboratively with other leaders across the school to ensure high standards of learning through well designed curriculums.

It is the interactions between leadership roles that is important in adding support and structure to whole school Curricular thinking and planning. The staffing structure has been carefully designed to prioritise and support the development and enrichment of in-depth Curricular dialogue and thinking. Roles and processes have been thoughtfully put in place to support important Curricular discussions which lead to well-judged and brave decision making around planning for young people. With the right people and processes in place thoughtful, reflective and challenging questioning and dialogue ensures each Curriculum is well sequenced and effectively prioritised and implemented. 'Minds Around Meetings' are one of the processes that are now an integral part of our practice. This offers a structured



approach to bringing together colleagues and professionals from across the wider Glenwood team to share their thinking and expertise in order to support, shape and influence curricular thinking for and around young people.

The implementation of the Steps process (involving carefully considered analysis of what young people are showing and telling us and positive support strategies) and development of Steps leaders within school has ensured readily available support for class teams and teachers. This crucial thinking and process has strong links to ensuring well-judged curriculums, practice and meaningful progress.

Ensuring Balance and Breadth

We have a great responsibility to bring wide and varied learning opportunities to our young people. As well as creating learning activities linked to the strengths and interests that young people share with us and their families, we must ensure we are supporting and encouraging young people to develop their experiences, interests and increase the things they enjoy. Through thoughtful curriculum planning we can play a key part in supporting our young people's worlds to grow and expand.

Subjects taught within the curriculum act as contexts and vehicles through which we can teach young people their prioritised next steps and offers opportunities for deep learning and varied application. We are thoughtfully selective over the subjects and areas of learning that are part of young people's curriculums. We only include subjects and areas of learning that are of relevance and interest to our young people and will play a role in enhancing a young person's ability to meaningfully and purposefully engage and connect with the world around them.

Topics further enhance the learning experiences and breadth of the curriculum. Teachers, within each corridor, work together and support each other to plan curricular content that is responsive to the priorities and needs of the young people in their classes. Through their planning they thoughtfully consider the age of the young people and the stage of their journey through Glenwood.

The structure of our Curriculum Worlds leads the way for a broad and balanced curriculum. Each World encompasses important areas of learning for each of our young people and offers a way of ensuring coverage, balance and breadth. Each World is headed up by a Curriculum Leader who works with all staff across school to ensure their 'World' offers responsive, inspirational and forward-thinking learning opportunities for learners. An important aspect of the Curricular Leaders role is to take inspiration from inside and outside of Glenwood to bring new exciting learning opportunities to young people's Curriculums.

Cultural Capital is integral to the aims and intentions of our curriculum. Surrounding our young people with opportunities and experiences to develop their ability to choose who they want to be and what they want to be part of. Encouraging our young people to be brave in forging their own path, experiencing new things and finding out who and what brings them joy and purpose. We make some bold, but informed choices about what Cultural Capital means for our young people – bringing learning opportunities to our young people that will open up their world and inspire possibility.



Technology plays an important role in the lives of all learners at this school. Continued development of 'Powered Learning' is a recognition of both the need for them to have the knowledge, skills and understanding to use technology effectively, and of the way in which it can enhance teaching and learning. Powered Learning is embedded as a key part of our curriculum across the school. Glenwood School is committed to embracing new and emerging technologies and ensuring that it is an integral part of a balanced and relevant curriculum for our young people.

Use of Assessment to support thinking and planning

Assessments have been carefully chosen to guide and inform a young person's curriculum and journey and to support meaningful next steps and planning. Our assessment model has been carefully considered and designed in order to reflect our aims - to find out and analyse the most key information required to have the greatest impact on practice and outcomes. The core elements of the 'engagement profile' run through our process as we agree sustainable learning can only occur when there is meaningful engagement. The indicators and careful analysis of a young person's engagement is a key thread running through our assessments, support strategies and curriculum planning.

Evidencing and recording progress against outcomes (end points) further supports all curriculum planning and learning to be directly linked to the key priorities. The thoughtful design of our Annual Review paperwork and using it as a working document to reflect on and share the young person's journey has strengthened its links and impact on curriculum, progress and decision making.

Assessment is complex and multi-layered and only through skilled and thoughtful analysis can it be truly effective and purposefully informative. It needs to be an ongoing process, constantly 'finding out' in order to support an agile, well-designed curriculum for each young person. Effective assessment informs evidence-based decisions about what is right now and enhances and inspires what might be right for the path ahead.

