Holme Court School Cambridge

CURRICULUM POLICY 2026

1. Curriculum Intent

At Holme Court School, our curriculum is ambitious, personalised and inclusive. As a specialist school for pupils aged 7–16 with dyslexia, specific learning difficulties and associated SEND needs, alongside a developing pathway for pupils experiencing Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties and Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), we recognise that successful learning begins with understanding each child as an individual.

Our curriculum is closely aligned to the National Curriculum whilst retaining the flexibility required to meet the diverse needs of our learners. We seek to remove barriers to learning, rebuild confidence, and develop pupils who are curious, resilient and ready for the next stage of education and life.

The curriculum is designed to:

- Deliver a broad, balanced and ambitious education for all pupils.
- Develop secure literacy, numeracy and communication skills as the foundation for lifelong learning.
- Provide specialist teaching approaches that address dyslexia and specific learning difficulties.
- Support pupils with SEMH and EBSA needs to re-engage successfully with education both in their placement at Holme Court or in their next steps beyond.
- Foster self-confidence, self-esteem and emotional resilience.
- Promote independence, responsibility and positive relationships.
- Develop creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Prepare pupils for successful progression to further education, employment, training or reintegration into mainstream education where appropriate.

At Holme Court, we believe that every child has talent and potential. Our curriculum is therefore designed not only to address individual difficulties but also to identify, nurture and celebrate strengths. Academic achievement, personal development and emotional wellbeing are viewed as complementary outcomes, each essential to long-term success.

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2. Curriculum Implementation

Personalised Approach

The curriculum is built around the principle that learning is most effective when teaching is responsive to individual need. Through detailed assessment, regular review and close collaboration with families and external professionals, staff develop a clear understanding of each pupil's strengths, barriers and learning profile.

Our provision is delivered through:

- Small class sizes and high staff-to-pupil ratios.
- Specialist dyslexia teaching methodologies.
- Adaptive teaching and differentiated learning experiences.
- Multi-sensory teaching approaches.
- Explicit instruction in literacy, vocabulary and study skills.
- High-quality formative and diagnostic assessment.

- Close partnership working with parents, carers and external agencies.

Curriculum Structure
Pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum including:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Humanities
- Computing
- Art
- Photography
- Religious Education
- PSHE
- Careers Education
- Physical Education
- Enrichment and Personal Development Opportunities

Learning is carefully sequenced so that pupils build knowledge, skills and understanding over time. Wherever possible, meaningful links are made across subjects to promote engagement and deepen learning. Educational visits, enrichment activities and real-world experiences further enhance the curriculum offer.

Dyslexia Specialist Provision
As a specialist dyslexia school and recognised centre of excellence, literacy development underpins all aspects of the curriculum. Teaching incorporates evidence-informed approaches that support the acquisition of reading, writing, spelling and language skills whilst ensuring pupils can access the wider curriculum successfully.
Pupils are supported to develop:

- Reading fluency and comprehension.
- Accurate spelling and written communication.
- Vocabulary and language skills.
- Independent learning strategies.
- Confidence as learners and communicators.

Through specialist teaching embedded throughout the school day, dyslexia support is not viewed as an additional intervention but as an integral part of everyday learning.

SEMH and EBSA Pathway
Alongside our dyslexia provision, Holme Court now offers a dedicated pathway for pupils whose attendance, engagement or learning has been significantly affected by SEMH needs or EBSA.
The aim of this pathway is to help pupils rebuild relationships with education by creating psychologically safe, nurturing and predictable learning experiences while maintaining high aspirations for achievement.
Provision may include:

- Individualised timetables and phased reintegration programmes.
- Relationship-based and trauma-informed practice.
- Emotional literacy and self-regulation support.
- Wellbeing interventions and pastoral mentoring.
- Flexible access arrangements and graduated exposure to learning demands.
- Close collaboration with families and external professionals.

For these pupils, success may initially be measured through attendance, engagement, belonging and emotional regulation before academic gains are fully realised. The pathway therefore recognises that wellbeing and learning are intrinsically linked.

Personal Development
Personal development is woven throughout school life and reflects the school's values of respect, responsibility, resilience and aspiration. Through PSHE, assemblies, careers education, enrichment and wider opportunities, pupils develop:

- Self-confidence and self-awareness.
- Positive relationships and social skills.
- Respect for others and diversity.
- Emotional resilience and wellbeing.
- British Values and citizenship.
- Preparation for adulthood and future employment.

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3. Curriculum Impact
The impact of the curriculum is measured through both academic outcomes and personal development achievements. We recognise that our pupils often join Holme Court having experienced barriers to learning, reduced confidence or disrupted educational experiences. Success is therefore evaluated in relation to individual starting points and aspirations.
Leaders monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum through:

- Formative and summative assessment.
- Standardised testing and diagnostic assessments.
- Reading, spelling and literacy measures.
- Progress against individual targets and EHCP outcomes.
- Attendance and engagement data.
- Behaviour and wellbeing indicators.
- Pupil voice.
- Parent and carer feedback.
- Quality assurance activities and lesson visits.
- Destination and transition outcomes.

By the time pupils leave Holme Court, we aim for them to demonstrate:

- Stronger literacy, numeracy and communication skills.
- Improved confidence and self-esteem.
- Greater resilience and emotional regulation.
- Positive attitudes towards learning.
- Improved attendance, participation and engagement.
- Increased independence and self-advocacy.
- Successful progression to further education, employment, training or appropriate educational settings.

The ultimate measure of success is that pupils understand their strengths, possess effective strategies to overcome barriers, and leave Holme Court equipped to lead fulfilling, productive and independent lives.

Policy Statement
The curriculum at Holme Court School reflects our commitment to providing every pupil with the opportunity to succeed academically, socially and emotionally. Through our specialist dyslexia provision and our developing SEMH/EBSA pathway, we ensure that learning is accessible, ambitious and appropriately personalised so that every child can flourish and achieve their full potential.

Policy Owner: Headteacher
Review Cycle: Annual
Next Review Date: September 2027