



Odyssey House School

Curriculum Policy

This policy links with policies for:

- Individual subjects
- Schemes of work and programmes of study for each subject
- Assessment
- SMSC
- Teaching

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1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Odyssey House School provides for pupils in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 who need nurturing through their educational journey. This could include children with social, emotional and mental health needs, for example, those who are not thriving in their current educational placement; those with some behavioural difficulties; those who refuse to attend school; previously home educated children; and those with particular learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and developmental coordination disorder (dyspraxia).

Odyssey House is an independent school that gives its pupils specialist teaching, support and therapy tailored to suit their individual needs. At Odyssey House School pupils are in control of their education journey. They can either stay at the school until they are 16 years old or they may choose to stay for a shorter period with the aim to move on to a school or college of their choice. At the very least, pupils will attend Odyssey House School for a minimum of one year based on regular in-depth reviews of their academic progress and personal development.

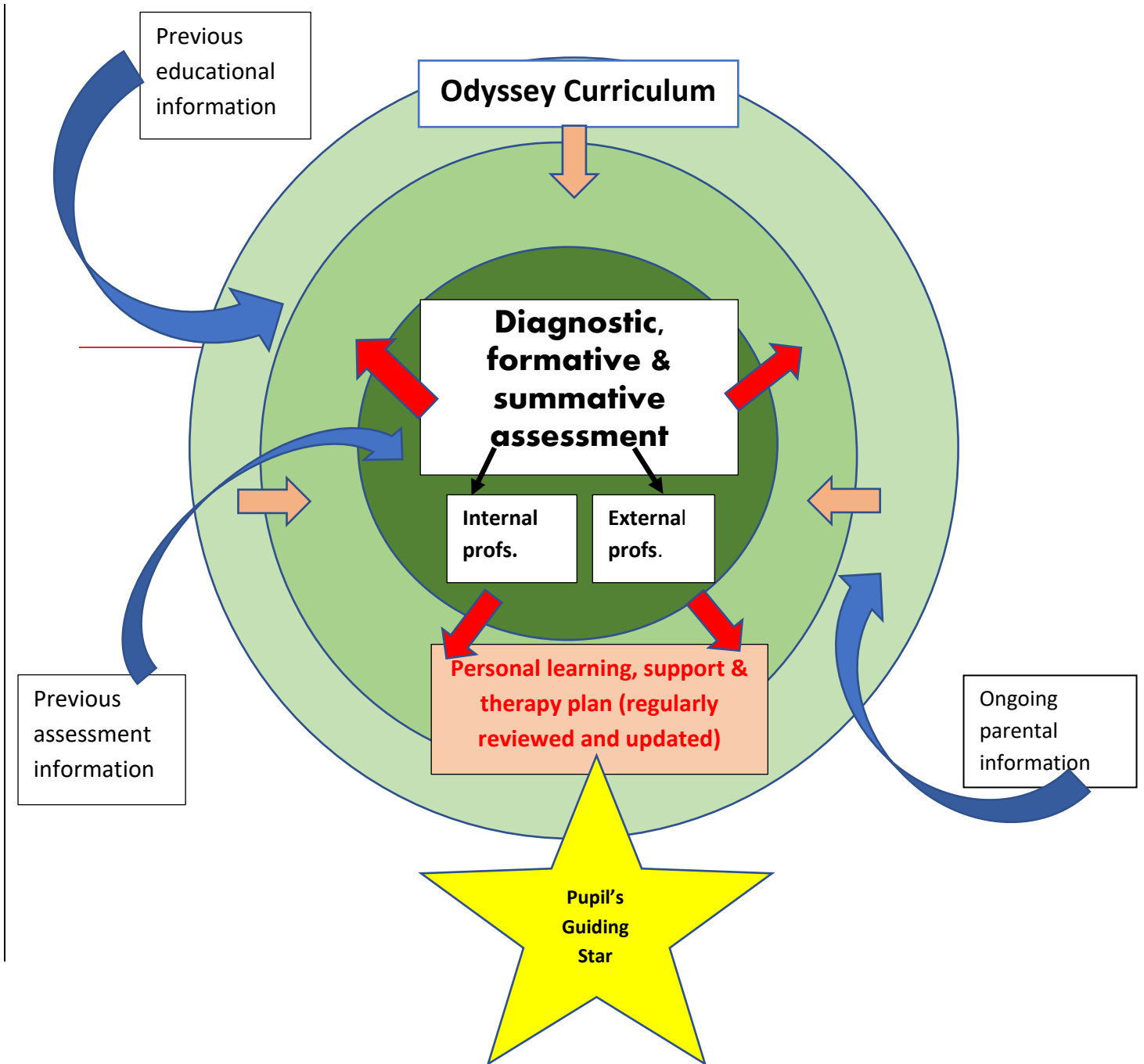
Assessment is central to the work of Odyssey House School. We have a multi-disciplinary led Assessment Hub to determine the exact needs of pupils who will attend, as well as those who will be served by the Odyssey Outreach and Support Service. This latter provides sessional education, support and therapy for children with a wide range of needs. The clinicians, therapists and subject experts at the Assessment Hub will continue to assess and provide input and guidance to Odyssey House School pupils and staff, usually at the school.

On entry to the school further rigorous assessments are made of pupils' educational, support and therapy needs. These will include numeracy and literacy assessments and other assessments as required, for example, for dyslexia, attitude, cognitive abilities, mental health etc. The Odyssey House School Assessment policy outlines in detail the assessment strategy and procedures.

Assessments continue throughout pupils' time at Odyssey House to ensure provision is tailored to drive their progress effectively. The initial and subsequent assessments inform each pupil's individual learning and support plan (Guiding Star) which, in turn, enables a challenging but relevant curriculum to be developed for them. (See diagram 1 below). The plan will be reviewed termly as a minimum.

Parents are closely involved from the initial assessment right through to the pupil's transfer from Odyssey House School. We believe the most successful outcomes for individuals are based on a strong partnership between parents and Odyssey House School staff, and close liaison with the receiving school/college.

Diagram 1: Generation of a pupil's personal learning support and therapy plan (Guiding Star)



Each pupil's PLSTP (Guiding Star) is developed by integrating the outcomes of the assessment hub, together with parents' contribution and previous assessment and school information, with the Odyssey House School curriculum.

1.2 Summary overview of the curriculum

Odyssey House School is committed to providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for its pupils. Up to the end of Key Stage 3, the curriculum is based on the National Curriculum and includes all the areas of learning required by the Independent School Standards. (See diagram 3). In Key Stage 4, GCSE courses (generally EdEXCEL and AQA) are provided to suit each individual and include the core subjects required. Other accreditation, for example provided by ASDAN and AQA will be offered as needed.

All pupils regardless of age, ability and needs, have access to an education which has the breadth and range expected by national frameworks. The amount of time spent on each subject will be based on priority needs, on the age of the pupil and, for those in Key Stage 4, to meet subject specification requirements.

Curriculum planning is rigorous and ambitious. Each pupil's personalised curriculum is developed from information gained from the Odyssey House School assessments and information from parents and the pupil's previous setting and assessments. Our intent is that each individual's curriculum will give them the knowledge, skills, support and personal development they require for a successful future in education or employment.

Intrinsically tied in with the curriculum is its effective implementation. This is achieved through closely monitored and supported high quality teaching, suitable resources and ongoing assessment to help pupils embed and use their knowledge widely, and to check understanding and inform teaching.

The impact of our strong curriculum, teaching and support is that pupils achieve well. They develop their skills and knowledge across the curriculum and can apply them in a range of contexts and cross-curricular work. They read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension.

The curriculum encompasses three important streams. Firstly, it emphasises the core subjects to help pupils fill gaps in prior learning and move forward to make effective academic progress. Secondly, it engages pupils through an active, dynamic approach which makes links between subjects to extend, deepen and embed their learning. Some of these subjects are combined and taught through themes and topics, such as 'the value of friendships' or 'culture, identity and place'. Thirdly, the curriculum both explicitly and implicitly supports pupils' personal, social, emotional, spiritual, moral and cultural development. This is achieved through the ethos of Odyssey House, through taught lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education, with constant support for pupils' mindfulness and resilience. (see diagram 2)

The curriculum policy and schemes of work are reviewed annually to ensure that they are properly effective and up to date with national developments.

Underpinning our curriculum is the conviction that all adults must be aware of pupils' strengths and difficulties, and work in conjunction with them, their parents and other professional agencies to:

- safeguard pupils and ensure their well-being, as well as the safety and well-being of staff
- foster a secure, safe, stimulating and enriching educational environment
- hold high expectations of pupils for academic achievement, behaviour and personal development
- incorporate multi-professional advice and support into their planning for the benefit of each individual pupil.

The expectation at Odyssey House School is that teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity, have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date, are self-critical, forge positive professional relationships, and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils. Teachers will, at all times, adhere to the Teachers' Standards.

The Teachers' Standards can be found on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

2. Curriculum Aims

2.1 Odyssey House School aims to:

- provide pupils with an exciting, rigorous and interesting range of challenging learning experiences and opportunities, through both the core and extended curricula
- recognise the individual needs and talents of all pupils and facilitate the development of their intellectual, moral, physical, social, spiritual, cultural, creative and personal capacities through explicit teaching and the implicit ethos of the school
- ensure that the curriculum reflects statutory requirements and guidance, but is flexible and relevant to pupils' varying needs
- systematically measure, assess and record the progress of each pupil from entry and throughout their time at Odyssey House School, and use this information to tailor their curriculum and support to ensure effective progress
- set achievable but challenging targets that promote an ethos of continual improvement and self-recognition of value in each pupil

- prioritise core skills and address any gaps in learning.

2.2 Odyssey House School pupils' outcomes are to:

- become successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve well
- become confident individuals and responsible citizens, who live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives and make a positive contribution to society
- develop positive self-esteem, a sense of worth and respect for themselves and others, and achieve personal well-being
- develop their curiosity, problem-solving and thinking skills
- improve their skills, knowledge and understanding in literacy, numeracy and science
- improve their skills, knowledge and understanding in all other subjects
- develop their speech, language and communication skills, and communicate with and relate to others effectively and constructively
- access and use technology effectively and safely
- understand and positively influence the world in which they live
- develop physical understanding and ability
- appreciate and enjoy aesthetic and creative activities
- extend their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- develop a thirst for learning.

3. Diagram 2: Curriculum Overview
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Shown below.

Core Curriculum

English, mathematics and science form the core curriculum at Odyssey House School. Pupils will have regular lessons across all three core subjects throughout all key stages with subject content taken from the National Curriculum or GCSE courses in line with pupils' skills and abilities. We recognise that pupils will enter Odyssey House School at different stages of their educational life. Through high quality teaching and assessment will come the most effective learning. Pupils' individual needs will be carefully planned for and lessons tailored to suit their abilities and needs. The core curriculum is essential for supporting pupils in becoming independent learners, raising their self-esteem, achieving their potential and preparing them for return to their mainstream schools.

Promoting British Values:

The core curriculum promotes British Values (BV) through choices in literature that support the values such as tolerance and mutual respect, and class discussions, class debates and poetry from different cultures. At times, lesson content may explore the meaning of concepts such as liberty, democracy and tolerance.

SMSC Development:

Pupils' SMSC development is nurtured through the core curriculum. Improving their basic skills in these essential areas builds self-esteem and gives them skills to further explore themselves, their sense of belonging and where they see themselves in the wider world.

Extended Curriculum:

This includes art & design, computing, design & technology, food technology, geography, history, modern foreign language, music, and personal, health, social and citizenship education, physical education and religious education. Providing pupils with an extended curriculum that augments their core curriculum is essential for an exciting, productive and engaged learning community.

Where possible, links will be made between subjects, such as history, geography and religious education to deepen pupils' understanding and give them opportunities to master and apply their developing skills in topic-based projects. Subjects' content will be checked to ensure appropriate balance and curriculum coverage over the academic year.

Promoting British Values:

The extended curriculum actively promotes BV by creating an ethos of respect, tolerance, fairness, freedom of speech and a right to voice an opinion without fear of ridicule or prejudice.

SMSC Development:

The extended curriculum makes a significant contribution to the SMSC development of our pupils. Through PHSCE especially, SMSC provision during lessons will be substantial and explicit.

Curriculum for personal development

The core and extended curricula, and the support and therapy provided, promote pupils' overall personal development. This is achieved implicitly through the ethos of the school, by taught lessons such as PSHCE, and by constant support for pupils' mindfulness and resilience.

3.1 Planning the curriculum

The curriculum can be clearly categorised into three streams as shown in diagram 2: the core curriculum, the extended curriculum and the curriculum for pupils' overall personal development. Learning opportunities will be presented through a range of approaches, such as enquiry, active and practical learning, and will take account of pupils' varying learning styles. Wherever curriculum planning is explicit, adjustments will be made for each individual pupil's learning needs and the support required, as identified by ongoing assessments.

3.1.1 The core curriculum

This consists of English, mathematics and science. The core curriculum forms the foundation on which all other aspects of learning take place. Extending their literacy, numeracy and scientific skills, knowledge and understanding enables our pupils to develop their ability to communicate, engage in other subject areas, solve problems and think creatively.

Literacy and numeracy are particular foci. These are taught daily as discrete subjects, with all staff being aware of individuals' targets, and are also cross-referenced in other curricular planning. Careful baseline assessment will enable staff to identify gaps in learning or particular talents and provide catch-up programmes or extra-challenging work to meet each pupil's particular needs.

Subject matter for the core subjects will be taken from the Odyssey House School schemes of work, each, in turn, based on the National Curriculum or GCSE courses at the appropriate age and stage. More detail is found in each subject's policy and planning documents.

The actual content of lessons will depend on the prior assessments of each pupil's current level of skills, knowledge and understanding. Consequently, while pupils might be studying the same unit of work, challenging targets for each individual will reflect the next steps required in their personal learning journey. Assessment of their success in this will feed into the next lesson/unit of work's planning.

3.1.2 The extended curriculum

The extended curriculum provides an opportunity for pupils to experience a wealth of different subject areas and see the connections between them. This approach deepens pupils' understanding of each subject and enables them to apply the skills learned in other areas, particularly literacy.

The curriculum for these subjects follows the Odyssey House schemes of work, based on National Curriculum guidance, and GCSEs as relevant. However, subjects may, at times, be combined and taught through themes and topics, for example, PSHCE with religious education, or design and technology with art and design. To ensure that breadth and balance across the curriculum is maintained, the subject content covered is carefully tracked to ensure that the expected breadth in all subjects is maintained.

3.1.3 The curriculum for personal development

Supporting pupils' personal development, including the promotion of British values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins learning across the curriculum. Odyssey House School strongly promotes pupils' personal learning and thinking skills with the aim of pupils becoming successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens of the future.

Where pupils have had difficult experiences in their previous school, this can result in anxiety, a negative attitude towards school or the pupil falling behind in their learning. Pupils might have an Education and Health Care Plan outlining the specific support required for their needs. Conversely, pupils may struggle with relationships or anxiety in school, because they find learning easier than their peers which is resented.

Odyssey House School aims to address all such issues through its small classes, supportive and, as necessary, therapeutic provision, careful planning, and flexibility. We emphasise mindfulness and resilience in each individual. We do not fit the pupils to our curriculum and provision; we tailor our curriculum and provision to fit the pupils. At times, this will require a flexible approach to the timetable, for example, for those pupils who might previously have refused to attend school.

However, the overriding objective is for young people to leave Odyssey House School with a high level of self-esteem, confidence in their ability to learn and develop further and to be able to engage positively and productively in their next educational setting or in employment.

Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is taught through a coherent, planned and progressive program of study for all year groups. However, we recognise that successful personal development stems from a wider provision, which includes:

- constructive relationships with staff
- appropriate daily routines in school
- assemblies and community meetings to give pupils a voice
- curriculum enrichment through visitors to the school and educational visits
- upholding and actively promoting British values
- the provision of religious education and careers education (see separate policies)
- constructive approaches to behaviour management.

i. British Values

We promote 'British Values' in all aspects of our provision and through our explicit and implicit provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These aspects permeate the curriculum and support the holistic development of pupils. We recognise that such development is most successful when these values and attitudes are promoted and modelled by the staff. Subjects such as history, English, PSHCE, religious education and current affairs provide excellent vehicles for the direct promotion of British Values.

We have identified 'British Values' to be:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

ii. Promotion of political views

Partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject at Odyssey House School. When political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, we ensure that a balanced presentation of opposing views is offered. This applies:

- while the pupils are in attendance at school
- when the pupils are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school
- in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere.

iii. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development

The Odyssey House School vision and values have a strong commitment to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We take this to mean:

Spiritual development

the ability to explore beliefs and experience and respect faiths, feelings and values; enjoy learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world; use imagination, creativity and reflection.

Moral development

recognition of right and wrong; have respect for the law; understand the consequences of actions; be able to explore moral and ethical issues; and have the ability to offer reasoned views.

Social development

use a range of social skills appropriate to different contexts; participate positively in the local community; appreciate diverse viewpoints; participate, volunteer and cooperate with a range of other people in different situations; resolve conflict; appreciate the role of Britain's parliamentary system; and engage with the 'British values' of democracy, the rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance.

Cultural development

appreciate and value diverse cultural influences; participate in cultural opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity.

The provision for pupils' SMSC development is embedded throughout the curriculum and everyday activities at Odyssey House School. All subjects provide excellent vehicles for promoting pupils' SMSC development, for example through collaboration with peers, exploring moral dilemmas in science, learning about different cultural influences in art and history, and appreciating the plight of those less fortunate than themselves in current affairs.

Diagram 3: Odyssey House School curriculum delivery

Regulatory area of learning	National curriculum/GCSE subject	Embedded (throughout)
Linguistic	English MFL	✓
Mathematical	Mathematics	✓
Scientific	Science	✓
Technological	Design & technology Food technology Computing	✓ ✓
Human and social	Geography History Religious education Current affairs	✓
Physical	Physical education	
Aesthetic and creative	Art and design Music	✓
PSHE Careers education	PSHCE Citizenship	✓ ✓