

# The Phoenix Bay School Curriculum Policy



## Rationale

This Curriculum outline forms part of the overall Phoenix Bay Curriculum offer. It sets out the detail of the Curriculum Intent for Phoenix Bay Students; the resources, approaches and opportunities for its Implementation and the methods by which we will recognise, measure, and celebrate its Impact. This curriculum statement derives from the agreements made between the Head of School, Proprietor and consultants in September 2022 and is informed by the views of staff, students, and parents/carers. Phoenix Bay offers subjects and experiences beyond the national curriculum that are relevant to preparing our young people to enter the world of work and thrive as adults. Time on these subjects slightly curtails the range of traditional subjects we are able to offer, but this does not diminish the breadth of the curriculum.

*"A broad curriculum can mean limited subjects."*

Amanda Spielman

June 2020

# The Phoenix Bay Mission

To create authentic opportunities for students in a trauma-informed education setting, leading to students thriving beyond the classroom and prepared for the challenges of everyday life. To support all students to become intuitive and to reach their potential.

## School Proprietors' Vision

Phoenix Bay School is a trauma-informed independent school providing therapeutic education to support students to develop increasingly independent lives, leading to them thrive in adulthood. The school provides a specialised, small, nurturing environment for traumatised students who have been unable to manage in larger class settings or mainstream education. The students attending the Phoenix Bay School will have often been excluded or unable to manage both ordinary schools and other specialist educational provisions.

Phoenix Bay staff believe that every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. The students who come to Phoenix Bay are often functioning emotionally and developmentally below their chronological age, but at Phoenix Bay, all students can learn to be strong and independent from a base of secure relationships with staff and others. We recognise that students develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected. At all times we keep at heart, both the developmental age of the student and their readiness for learning. Formal education and larger group working is likely to have invoked anxiety and corresponding disruptive and destructive behaviour or withdrawal. Through small groups and individually tailored education packages, the education team provide sensitive, creative and empathetic approaches to learning. This enables the students to begin to engage in education properly, perhaps for the first time. Readiness for learning comes from the combination of being able to be on task and to trust those supporting them to engage. Curriculum content and strong relationships can then provide the hook for further enjoyment of learning.

The Education Team work closely with the students' carers/parents. This enables an integrated approach that puts the students's emotional trauma and corresponding impediments to learning at the centre of their detailed curriculum planning. Support with peer relationships and associated conflict resolution enables Phoenix students eventually to manage larger group learning and potentially to be integrated into more mainstream educational settings and/or employment.

## Phoenix Bay Curriculum Values

- Empowering
- Therapeutic
- Voice
- Choice
- Authentic
- Inspiring
- Achieving

## Phoenix Bay Curriculum Aims

The Phoenix Bay Curriculum contributes to the provision of meaningful education, care and therapy. It has been devised to enable the establishment of healthy attachments and personalised learning outcomes. Through enjoyable experiences, we aim to raise students' self-esteem and address gaps in learning and any developmental delay created through deprivation or trauma.

- Successful Learners: who enjoy learning, make progress, achieve and 'love to go to school'.
- Confident Individuals: who are able to thrive beyond the classroom.
- Responsible Citizens: prepared for the challenges of life and go on to make positive contributions to society.
- Independent Adults: who can realise their potential and lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

## **Designing Bespoke Offers**

At Phoenix Bay student choice is at the heart of each student's bespoke curriculum plan. Staff support students to understand and accept that there are some areas of learning that are critical to widening opportunities in their adult life. As such, these areas are common in all student pathways and timetables. Additionally, a large proportion of each student's timetable is filled with subjects chosen by them. These optional subjects are selected from the Phoenix Bay Six Faculties offer. The proportion of lessons from each faculty varies according to student starting points, their ambitions and their changing interests while at Phoenix Bay. As the student group expands, more subjects across the six faculties will be offered to meet the individual needs of each student. During secondary years, best practice Careers provision is delivered through all 8 of the Gatsby Benchmarks and this has a significant influence on the student choices and the proportion of learning within each faculty and on the subjects within each.

## **The Common Offer**

In line with the curriculum values and aims, some aspects of the Phoenix Bay Curriculum is common to all learners.

A wide range of enrichment activities and timetabled visits / visitors will feature in all timetables. The teaching of reading and the development of a love of story is essential to widen employment opportunities, increase independence in adulthood and to support fulfilling leisure time. Writing opportunities will be blended with subject based learning to add meaning and an authentic audience wherever possible. Number, Shape and measurement will be daily timetabled activities. The teaching of financial awareness will be through maths lessons, through real life experiences and often part of community access and navigation visits. PSHCE and British values is for all students and features highly in focus days and weeks, which are timetabled throughout the year. (In the teaching of RSE and HE the school will follow DfE guidance as issued under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. A summary of the detail of this critical aspect of the Phoenix

Bay curriculum can be found at the end of this policy). This approach to delivering core subjects, often those areas of learning that they have been challenged most by in other educational settings, through real life circumstances and experiences, is in our opinion the best means of maintaining interest and supporting the resilience of students when overcoming barriers. These traditional core subjects fit alongside PSHCE and PE: Fitness and Well Being, as key elements to all timetables.

The soft skills employers seek are also delivered through core lessons and a wide range of enrichment activities, these skills include Teamwork; Communication; Problem Solving; Creativity; Task deconstruction and Customer Service skills, to name just a few. Self-confidence is built steadily alongside these skills, as this is critical to success in many areas of learning and a pre-requisite for advanced resilience, the biggest indicator of our students' success in adulthood.

## Options

An increasing proportion of curriculum time will be filled with student options as they move through the school. These choices will be supported skilfully by staff and informed by the best practice careers provision. They will provide the basis of lessons, the style and level of accreditation and experiences in/of the World of Work. Although opportunities will be provided for students to switch options, as students move through the school, the Phoenix Bay team will be mindful to encourage students to show increasing focus and resilience in their options. The table below is indicative of options available. Some of our students will choose to follow academic courses alongside these vocational options. This will be negotiated according to individual strengths and facilitated through strong partnership working with other schools and through appointments at Phoenix Bay.

## The Phoenix Bay Faculties and Subjects:

FACULTY	SUBJECT 1	SUBJECT 2	SUBJECT 3	SUBJECT 4	SUBJECT 5
<b>HEALTH BEAUTY &amp; FITNESS SKILLS</b>	BARBERING /HAIRDRESSING	MAKE UP - BEAUTY MAKE-UP - STAGE & SCREEN	FITNESS COACHING	PE	OUTDOOR SPORTS
<b>VEHICLE TRADES SKILLS</b>	CYCLE MAINTENANCE	MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE	TRADITIONAL CAR/TRUCK MECHANICS	HYBRID/ELECTRIC VEHICLE MAINTENANCE	SPECIALIST VEHICLES

<b>LAND-BASED TRADES SKILLS</b>	HORTICULTURE / GARDEING	ABORICULTURE	ANIMAL CARE	IRRIGATION	CONSERVATION / RECYCLING
<b>BUILDING TRADES SKILLS</b>	<b>DECORATING</b>	<b>PLUMBING</b>	<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>PLASTERING</b>	<b>ELECTRICAL</b>
<b>CATERING AND HOSPITALITY</b>	FOOD HYGIENE	COOKING	FRONT OF HOUSE	EVENT PLANNING	SPECIALIST
<b>ARTS / PERFORMING ARTS</b>	DRAMA	MUSIC	ART / DESIGN & PHOTOGRAPHY	GRAPHICS / GAME DESIGN	MEDIA & MEDIA TECHNOLOGY

## Phoenix Bay Community Pathways to Post 16

The Phoenix Bay offer for KS4 is designed to ensure a smooth transition for Students into KS5 education and beyond. Central to the offer is the provision of six distinct pathway options for Students to follow; being delivered within a nurturing class-based, therapeutic education offer. This pathway model will enable KS4 education at Phoenix Bay to be implemented.

Some specialist choices as well as the style and level of outcomes will differ to match starting points and pathway choices, creating a truly bespoke offer. Collectively, the carefully chosen subjects and experiences will cover the intended Phoenix Bay outcomes of preparing our students to thrive as independent adults, with strong foundations to continue their education as lifelong learners.

We know that to thrive as adults, our students will need to have the widest range possible of employment options. Phoenix Bay will utilise local community strengths and opportunities to build programmes of vocational learning and experiences of the World of Work. As fitting with the Gatsby benchmarks for excellence in Careers Provision, the Phoenix Bay KS4 Curriculum will also provide the core skills and 'soft' skills that employers seek, preparing Phoenix Bay Students for sustainable employment in adulthood.

## **Personal Development and Well Being**

Along with academic progress, Phoenix Bay places great importance on the personal development of each Student. Formal and informal opportunities to make progress in this aspect of their development will be provided onsite and beyond (see RSE summary at the end of this policy). This area of progress will be tracked and suitably celebrated. A well-being passport will ensure that the recording of student progress in their personal development is neither forgotten, nor narrow in its definition.

## **Assessment and Qualifications**

The assessment and recording of progress in KS4 and beyond will also be individualised, with some students requiring the measurement of learning progress to be recognised through internally driven benchmarks and certification, while most will access a range of standardised accreditation with transferable points for further education.

To provide the broadest range of options, where a pathway is chosen that requires an exam not able to be administered by Phoenix Bay, the school will decide on the best method of delivering that choice for the student. This will include the possibility of registering Students for exams with a partnership school/organisation.

## **The Phoenix Bay Structure / Approach to New Learning**

Many of our students will have missed or forgotten the habit of formally addressing new learning. Phoenix Bay School will address this gap by supporting students to approach all new learning using a systematic method, introduced and rehearsed throughout their time at school. This

approach will provide the discipline and tools for students to find the resilience to overcome challenges faced in their learning, now and into adulthood.

Stage 1 – Investigation - Individual and group research activities

Stage 2 - Respect and Consideration - An opportunity to think about the challenge from different cultures / viewpoints.

Stage 3 - Perseverance and Agility - Recognising real and personal obstacles and planning to overcome them.

Stage 4 – Communication - Presenting work using a range of methods: orally, in writing, PPT, photographs or using video, podcast etc.

Stage 5 – Reflection - Essential reflections on personal leaning and growth, recorded in an equally varied range of methods, using agreed teacher 'coat hooks 'to focus.

## Measuring the impact of the Curriculum

In order to evaluate the impact of the Phoenix Bay curriculum, we will answer the following questions based on our agreed accountability measures:

Does every Student enjoy school?

- o Optimum attendance
- o Positive engagement
- o Participation



- o Achievements

Is every Student a reader?

- o Meeting ambitious Reading targets annually
- o Reading ability not preventing students from achieving the highest level of qualification within their individual capabilities

Do we have aspirational expectations for all Students?

- o Staff and Students share ambitious targets and goals.

Is every Student sufficiently improved in confidence?

- o Able to participate in society and make their voice heard.
- o Significantly more confident than on arrival at Phoenix Bay

Is every Student sufficiently equipped with numeracy and literacy to take their place in the world of work?

- o Clear pathways to employability

Is every student a Leader?

- A leadership role in school and/or beyond
- School delivers the knowledge, understanding, skills and experience to be a leader.

Is every Student sufficiently independent to thrive as adults in society?

- o Significant progress along Phoenix Bay Independence descriptors table

Do all Students have the knowledge and understanding to make healthier lifestyle choices?

- o Completed PE, Health, Fitness and Wellbeing Passport
- o Living significantly healthier lifestyle than on arrival at Phoenix Bay

Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education at Phoenix Bay: A summary

Phoenix Bay works on the basis that Relationships Education is compulsory in all primary schools, Sex Education is compulsory in all secondary schools and, although Health Education is not compulsory for independent schools, it is advisable.

Our students are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. Although this presents positive and exciting opportunities for them, they need to know how to be safe and healthy.

Our guiding principles are that all subject content will be age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate for our students and always with the aim of providing them with the knowledge they need of the law. All content (see below) will support the wider work of the school in helping to foster student well-being and develop their resilience and character that we acknowledge are fundamental to them going on to be happy, successful and productive members of society. Alongside the specific content Phoenix Bay will support the development of personal attributes such as kindness, integrity, generosity and honesty.

Parents and carers have a right to request to withdraw students from part or all of sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education). If such a request is submitted, the school will be informed by the process for headteachers to follow in considering such a request, as detailed in the DfE RSE statutory guidance.

The bulk of the taught Relationships and Sex Education at Phoenix Bay will be delivered as part of the PSHE programme. School staff will be mindful not to duplicate content covered in national curriculum areas such as citizenship, science, computing and P.E.

Phoenix Bay is aware that for the majority of our students, the distinction between the online world and other aspects of life is less marked than for some adults. Our students need to be aware that social media users are sometimes prepared to say things in more extreme, unkind or exaggerated ways than they might in face-to-face situations and some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online. Phoenix Bay students should also be aware that certain websites may share personal data about their users and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes.

Phoenix Bay recognises that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all students and that this is particularly important when planning teaching for students with special educational needs and disabilities. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Phoenix Bay staff will be mindful of the preparing of adult outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice.

In RSE, Phoenix Bay will ensure that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all students understand the importance of equality and respect.

Phoenix Bay will not unlawfully discriminate against students because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics).

When it is appropriate to teach students at Phoenix Bay about LGBT, the content will be fully integrated into the programmes of study for this area rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.

RSE Primary:

- Families and people who care for me.
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships

- Being safe

#### RSE Secondary:

- Families
- Respectful relationships including friendships.
- Online and Media
- Being Safe
- Intimate sexual relationships, including sexual health.

#### Physical health and mental well-being Primary:

- Mental well-being.
- Internet safety and harms

- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Physical health and mental well-being Secondary:

As above - revisited

For full details please refer to the Phoenix Bay policy for Relationships Education and RSE, established in consultation with parents, governors, and the wider community.