



2. Sheiling School Curriculum Policy

Review by AW / Jan-March 2026 (Annually)
Ratified by Board: May 2026
Full Review date: Spring Term 2027
EDI Review: At the end of this policy document.

1. Curriculum Intent

The mission of Sheiling School is:

‘To create an educational therapeutic community and environment, which upholds each person’s human integrity and spiritual wholeness and where every child and young person, both because of and despite their individual challenges, has something to give and something to learn through all of their relationships with others’.

The school will ensure that all students have a right to, and access, a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity, progression and takes individual learning needs into account. Work in school is planned in a way that meets the breadth of learning indicated within the National Curriculum for England (2014) and the requirements within the Independent School Standards (Guidance, Department for Education, 2019). The school curriculum provides adaptive, differentiated and developmental learning for all students. Where necessary, the school may change aspects of learning set out in the National Curriculum, to ensure that the level and complexity of information and concepts are accessible to students. This policy describes how the school curriculum and learning extends far beyond subject specific learning and seeks to address the very substance of the needs and difficulties that students may have, promote their future potential and personal development, and primarily to prepare for adulthood and life beyond the school.

In fulfilling our mission statement, Sheiling School provides:

- A nurturing, holistic approach to the education and care of our young people, who present with moderate to severe learning difficulties and complex needs. The school provides learning opportunities across the extended day.
- A curriculum that addresses the very special needs of our learners and that promotes individualised approaches to learners.
- A skilled team, who are empathetic to the needs of students and are trained to a high standard.
- A therapeutic environment and facilities that maximise opportunities for students to learn and make progress.
- A multidisciplinary approach to working where every professional around the student is fully involved and working together to secure the best possible outcomes.

The Sheiling ‘I Can’ Curriculum is designed to promote and enable students to progress to the best of their potential in:

- Learning
- Personal Growth and Community Involvement
- Communication and Friendship
- Independence
- Resilience
- Confidence and Self-Esteem

The Sheiling School curriculum, the ‘I Can’ Curriculum, draws its inspiration from models of child development-centred model of learning and education, the National Curriculum and best practice within the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) school sector. Additionally, the underpinning approaches of Total Communication and enabling our students to “have a voice and exercise choice” and supporting the sensory needs of our students further underpins the approach and is incorporated throughout the curriculum. The Sheiling’s ‘I Can’ Curriculum promotes thematic, cross-curricular learning across curriculum subjects and age range in order to robustly meet the broad educational needs of each pupil.

2. Legislation

This policy reflects the aims of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study (2014). It also takes account of the Independent School Standards (2015) requirements for the curriculum as presented in Part 1- Quality of Education as well as the Independent School Standards (Guidance, 2019).

3. Organisation and Planning

This policy should be read in conjunction with the overarching aims and ethos contained within the Statement of Purpose (available on the Sheiling website).

Sheiling School's 'I Can' Curriculum provides opportunities for all students to learn and to achieve and promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The curriculum is designed and adapted to meet the needs of our students, all of whom have SEND and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Our students have moderate to severe and complex learning needs and characteristically the students work at a pace which meets their specific need, rather than age-related expectations.

As a residential and day school, Sheiling School offers an educational provision embracing all aspects of life. We believe that every moment of every day is an opportunity for learning, and this is fostered within the houses, classrooms, therapeutic activities and in the wider community as part of an integrated holistic approach. Our curriculum has been designed to enable our students to achieve their best while providing them with opportunities to learn the knowledge and skills that will enable this. Through the delivery of our curriculum within our learning environment our students are nurtured and empowered which enables them to learn, grow and develop.

- The Sheiling School 'I Can' Curriculum is broad, rich and ambitious. It provides highly positive, memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning. The curriculum provides exceptional education to all students.
- The Curriculum supports and enables all students to work towards, achieve and exceed their individual EHCP outcomes.
- The Curriculum promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.
- Our 16-19 Upper School curriculum offers a distinct and personalised curriculum designed to support students to become independent and learn vocational skills.
- The curriculum is highly successful in enabling students to express a preference, communicate needs, make choices, make decisions and choose options. Students develop their resilience and persistence in getting their needs met and their choices respected.
- The Sheiling School Curriculum prepares students for life beyond school, instilling a sense of 'cultural capital' and supporting students to become valued citizens both within the school setting and their inclusion within the wider community.

4. Curriculum Implementation

The 'I Can' Curriculum is organised so that learning can be delivered in a flexible way, encompassing cross-curricular themes and allowing a rich variety of learning experiences. Subject content, within our schemes of work, allows the planning and delivery of discreet subject-specific lessons, but the school also recognises that for some learners, especially at lower levels of cognitive ability, this may be less appropriate and subjects and learning content can be delivered as 'learning episodes' within a sensory-based curriculum.

Lower School (Key Stages 1-4)

Learning Area	School curriculum elements that support learning:
Linguistic and Mathematical	Main Lessons and subject teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Lessons Mathematics Lessons Phonics and Communication
Scientific and Technological	Main Lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science Subject Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computing/ design and technology
Human and Social	Main Lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History and Geography Subject teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSHE&C, RSE Careers Education Assemblies and Religious Education
Physical	Subject Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eurythmy PE lessons Community, outdoor and adventurous activities
Aesthetic and Creative	Subject Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art/Music/Crafts/Drama

Upper School (Key Stage 5)

Learning Area	School curriculum elements that support learning:
Linguistic and Mathematical	Main Lessons and subject teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Lessons Mathematics Lessons Phonics and Communication
Scientific and Technological	Main Lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science Subject Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers and Vocational Education Enterprise Work Experience on site and off site
Human and Social	Main Lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History and Geography Subject teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSHE&C, RSE Assemblies and Religious Education Careers and Vocational education Community Skills
Physical	Subject Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eurythmy Community Access and using public transport Physical Leisure-e.g. team sports, cycling
Aesthetic and Creative	Subject Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Leisure- Art and Music

Additional Learning experiences (throughout the age range) include:

- Individual and group therapies
- Social skills groups
- Attention Autism groups
- Motor skills development work
- Music, art, massage therapies
- Festivals, social events and celebrations
- Curriculum enrichment and special days, e.g. careers, science, music events
- Educational Visits and learning in the community
- Gardening/horticulture, crafts and woodwork

These areas are woven into all areas of the curriculum, through discreet subject lessons, Main Lesson routines and topic themes and through the opportunities provided by the extended curriculum across a range of settings.

The strong values of the school community are reflected throughout the curriculum, in its therapeutic approach and its celebration of festivals and special events.

In summary, the key curriculum areas are covered as follows:

Linguistic

A strong emphasis on Total Communication and the opportunities throughout the school's different contexts to practice reading, writing, speaking and listening. Provision includes main lesson topic themes, discreet literacy lessons and cross-curricular learning and a systematic approach to Phonics and Reading. Phonics is taught through the age range due to the needs of our students.

Mathematical

Opportunities throughout the school day to experience order, patterns, to develop an understanding of number in practical settings, e.g. setting a table, and to develop thinking, reasoning and logical skills. Provision includes discreet lessons and practice in a range of contexts and through a range of practical tasks and experiences, e.g. through household tasks, enterprise, shopping. Formal and informal use of measure is accounted for, for instance, measuring ingredients whilst cooking, counting out objects when shopping.

Scientific and Technological

Through Main Lesson topic blocks, from exploration of nature and the human being in earlier classes, through to the study of simple mechanics, chemistry, the environment and human biology in later classes. These discrete learning opportunities are supplemented by a range of practical experiences, e.g. baking, gardening, etc. - a clear emphasis is placed throughout the school on practical work - learning through doing. Computing is taught through KS1-4 and a wide range of educational technology is used to support learning in key skills, particularly literacy and communication, throughout the age range. All students access Design and Technology lessons at KS1-4.

Human and Social

A strong syllabus of Main Lesson topics in history and geography. History leads the students through the historical development of mankind from the ancient civilisations through to modern history. Geography opens the students' experience from their initial familiar circle of the immediate locality of home and school to an experience and appreciation of the world as a holistic entity and the interrelationships of nature and human activity.

Physical

A fundamental part of the provision for the students is the range of opportunities for developing body image, balance, poise and strength through Physical Education and Eurythmy lessons, additional therapies and therapeutic exercises and warm-up and movement sessions in class. There is a clear cross-over with the Technological curriculum in terms of applying physical skills to practical activities, e.g. crafts, caring for the school's grounds, etc.

Aesthetic and Creative

The school has a strong emphasis on an artistic and beautiful presentation of environments and learning materials. Painting, crafts, drama, and music are all important aspects of the curriculum and are taught as discreet subjects or as a means for presenting and developing main lesson topics.

How the Curriculum Works for the Students

Teachers systematically check the understanding of our complex students who need differentiated support with their communication, social interaction and sensory processing. Key concepts and skills are embedded by using repetition and the generalisation of skills in order that they are transferable to real-life settings.

Our large estate and therapeutic outdoor environment give rise to rich opportunities for learning, allowing and supporting students to learn to their full potential. Teachers use well-judged and imaginative teaching strategies that, together with sharply focused and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately.

We work with a number of external providers who help to complement and extend our curriculum. These include sensory storytelling, choir and drama, theatre groups and music education groups. The school has worked with Dorset African Activities to provide culturally enriching activities for students, and students also attend the Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy.

Each year, the school provides a wide variety of special events and learning opportunities. Focussed 'Curriculum Weeks' extend learning opportunities in the areas of Arts, Sciences and Careers, for example. Students also engage in a range of extracurricular activities, including gardening, archery and yoga.

Regular lesson visits, learning walks and moderation of work take place throughout the year.

The school works closely with a range of local special schools to inform practice, support assessment and inform the development of our curriculum and learning offer.

Individual Progress Towards Individual Outcomes

Lessons and activities form a vehicle towards the achievement of individual outcomes for individual students. Through the 'I Can' Curriculum, the school has developed a bank of individual outcomes that students work towards across the curriculum.

Each individual subject within the curriculum is supported through individual subject policies and guidance and through schemes of work.

The school places a strong emphasis on equality and our programmes of study are delivered to and available to all students. Students present with a variety of starting points, prior rates of progress and may join the school at any curriculum year group, Key Stage or

point within the school year. Curriculum planning is differentiated to individual student needs, allowing each student to take their individual learning away from shared learning experiences, topics and curriculum activities. This enables 'co-creation' of the curriculum, where the balance of activity, subject, and individual outcome is fully reflective of individual needs and priorities for progress. We link this strongly to students EHC plans, utilising these to plan for and document the progress that students are making.

5. Curriculum Impact

The 'I Can' Curriculum is fully supported through the 'I Can' Curriculum Assessment Framework developed by the school and this provides continuity of learning through an established continuum of complexity and difficulty, allowing for stretch and challenge for student learning.

Teachers have high expectations for student outcomes and are highly ambitious and are not afraid to take risks and, in each class, there is a positive climate for learning. Our highly complex students make excellent progress, meeting and exceeding targets. Students make rapid and sustained progress in the majority of areas of learning over time given their starting points and capabilities. They develop a wide range of skills commensurate with their complex profiles.

Progress and outcomes for students are evidenced in the student's individual case studies and learning journeys as well as in the school's academic data analysis.

Through the 'I Can' Curriculum, all students have the opportunity to work towards a range of nationally accredited ASDAN awards at Entry 1-3, based on offering progression for all from their starting points. The school has maintained a 100% achievement of accreditation for all leavers over the last five years. The accreditation pathway offers students meaningful recognition of their progress and learning in life skills, vocational skills and a range of exciting projects and modules which they select from and complete towards their accreditation. Students can also study towards Pearson-EdExcel Functional Skills Awards at Entry 1 to 3. These are formally assessed qualifications and offer further aspiration and challenge, linked to the curriculum, with flexible delivery so that students can work towards these qualifications at an age- and stage-appropriate point in time.

Increasingly, students are leaving the school with further capacity to engage with learning. In many cases, students are moving onto specialist college provision Post-19. In some cases, students will transition into social care settings either as part of or separately to their education offer post-19, having gained a greater degree of independence and autonomy over their lives during their time at Sheiling School.

6. Review of this Policy

This policy to be reviewed as part of a rolling programme of policy reviews set by the Senior Management Team.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Single Equality Scheme. The general equality duty requires that, in the exercise of their functions, schools must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. This includes endeavours to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations for all.

The Sheiling Ringwood does not currently identify any EDI impact of this policy but, should new information come to light, this will be considered at next review.

End of document.