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CURRICULUM POLICY

The Ferry Centre: Curriculum Policy

1. Rationale and Philosophy

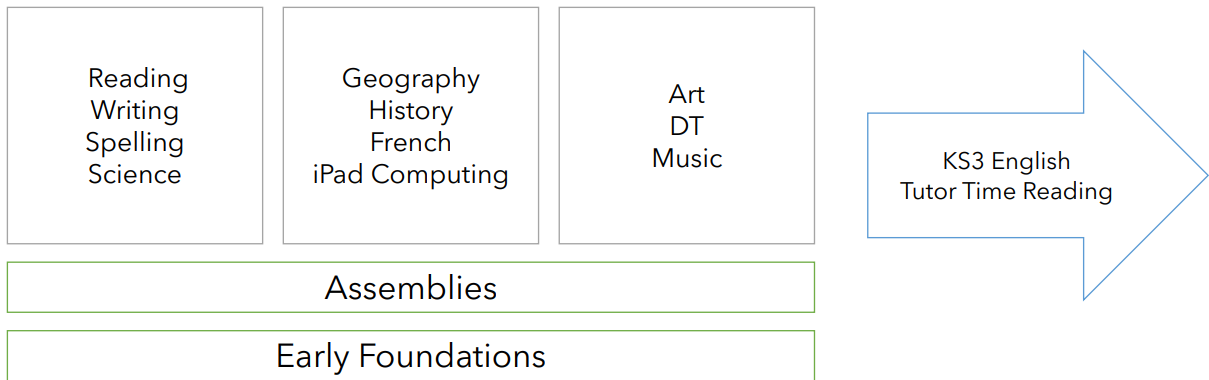
At The Ferry Centre, we believe that high-quality teaching and learning, underpinned by robust social and emotional support, are the foundations of student success. We utilise the CUSP (Curriculum with Unity Partnership) framework to provide an ambitious, knowledge-rich foundation tailored to our pupils' needs. Where CUSP do not yet provide a curriculum subject, Oak National Academy plans will be adapted in line with the CUSP structure.

Meeting the Needs of Our Cohort

As a mixed-year SEMH school, we recognise that a rigid, linear timeline does not always serve our learners' diverse starting points. Therefore, sequences of work are dynamically planned by the class teacher with CUSP support, once the specific academic, social, and emotional needs of the current cohort have been identified. This collaborative diagnostic approach ensures our ambitious curriculum remains highly accessible, supportive, and perfectly matched to every child's individual learning pathway.

We foster a Growth Mindset culture where learning is designed to be "sticky." By leveraging CUSP's evidence-led pedagogy—focusing on spaced retrieval and the science of memory—we ensure pupils know more, remember more, and can do more.

CUSP Curriculum areas



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2. Intent: What We Aim to Achieve

Our curriculum is a bespoke framework designed to:

- **Bridge Gaps:** Use CUSP's systematic sequences to identify and close prior educational interruptions.
- **Develop the Whole Child:** Balance academic ambition with the Thrive Approach to meet emotional and developmental needs.
- **Build Progression:** Ensure a logical, cumulative sequence of learning where knowledge is built upon solid foundations (Prerequisite Knowledge).
- **Master Vocabulary:** Prioritise Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary to empower pupils with the language needed to express complex ideas and emotions.
- **Cultivate Independence:** Nurture resilient learners through structured success, reducing "learned helplessness."

3. Implementation: How We Deliver

We deliver our intent through a structured, research-informed approach:

The CUSP Framework & Adaptivity

We implement CUSP across core and foundation subjects, characterised by:

- **Cognitive Science:** Utilising dual coding, spaced retrieval, and interleaving to support long-term memory retention.
- **Scaffolded Excellence:** While the content remains ambitious, we "scaffold up" rather than "differentiating down." This includes using CUSP Learning Modules, Point-of-Learning assessments, and visual organisers.
- **The Thrive Approach:** Certified practitioners ensure pupils are emotionally regulated. If a student is not "ready to learn," emotional interventions take precedence to stabilise the pupil for curriculum engagement.

Meaningful Connections

- **Vocabulary Focus:** Every lesson explicitly teaches "Sticky Knowledge" and essential vocabulary.
- **Integrated Themes:** Using CUSP's interconnected modules in Science, History, and Geography to provide a cohesive world view.
- **Active Engagement:** Prioritising first-hand experiences, trips, and expert guest speakers to bring the CUSP modules to life.
- **SMSC, British Values, and PSHE:** Interwoven with the CUSP and Oak National Academy framework is a robust, age-appropriate PSHE and statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum. Delivered through daily structured tutor sessions and dedicated timetable blocks, this provision actively promotes Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) development alongside Fundamental British Values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect).
- **Adaptive Timetabling:** While we hold uncompromised academic ambition for all, the Curriculum Lead retains the flexibility to temporarily modify a pupil's timetable profile during periods of acute emotional crisis, ensuring emotional stabilisation via the Thrive Approach acts as the prerequisite gateway back into full academic learning.

Phonics

At our school, we use Sounds-Write, a highly structured, multi-sensory, and evidence-based linguistic phonics programme, to teach reading, spelling, and writing. By starting with the sounds of spoken language and systematically teaching how those sounds are

coded in print, Sounds-Write provides an accessible, predictable, and highly successful route to literacy. For our students aged 5 to 14, this system is uniquely powerful: the clear, script-based lessons reduce cognitive load and performance anxiety, while the absence of childish imagery ensures that older pupils requiring reading intervention can engage with the material with dignity. Whether introducing the Initial Code to our youngest learners or utilizing the Extended Code and polysyllabic word structures to support older students with gaps in their learning, the programme's emphasis on the core skills of blending, segmenting, and phoneme manipulation builds the confidence, resilience, and independent literacy skills our learners need to thrive across the wider curriculum.

4. Organisation and Planning

- **Long-Term Mapping:** We follow the CUSP long-term sequence but allow for "flexing" the pace. If a cohort requires more time to master a concept, we pause to ensure deep understanding before moving on.
- **Literacy at the Heart:** We use CUSP's literature-heavy approach, embedding high-quality texts across the curriculum to improve reading fluency and comprehension.

5. Assessment and Impact

Assessment Strategy

The Ferry Centre uses a dual-layered assessment approach:

1. **Formative (CUSP Point-of-Learning):** Ongoing checks for understanding within lessons to identify immediate misconceptions.
2. **Summative (Quest Assessments):** Timing: Administered in the second half of each term (December, late March, early July).
 - a. **Data Recording:** Results are tracked centrally to monitor progress against national expectations.
 - b. **Gap Analysis:** Teachers use Quest data alongside CUSP cumulative quizzes to identify specific knowledge gaps, informing the "re-teach" sessions for the following term.

Impact: The Projection Education Graduate

When a pupil leaves The Ferry Centre, the impact of our curriculum is evidenced by:

- **Academic Progress:** Gaps are closed; pupils possess a robust bank of knowledge and vocabulary.
- **Emotional Resilience:** Pupils can navigate frustration and challenge using self-regulation strategies.
- **Social Mobility:** Pupils understand their place in the world and have the confidence to contribute meaningfully to society.
- **Independent Living:** Practical life skills (cooking, AQA awards) are married with academic achievement to ensure a successful transition to adulthood.

Key Stage 3 Transition Readiness: As a specialist KS1–3 provision, a core metric of our curriculum's impact is 'Transition Capability'. We ensure our Key Stage 3 academic baselines and self-regulation pathways explicitly equip pupils with the resilience, accreditations (such as AQA Unit Awards), and functional skills required to successfully transition into Key Stage 4 settings or reintegrate into mainstream environments.

6. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, the Equality Act 2010, and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015. The Ferry Centre is committed to ensuring that curriculum delivery explicitly reflects, supports, and tracks the individualised targets set out within each pupil's Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP).

Policy Review and Monitoring The Head of Education monitors the fidelity of CUSP implementation and the effectiveness of scaffolds.

Date of Policy: June 2026

Review Date: June 2027