



CURRICULUM – TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Characteristics of the College

Calman Colaiste is an independent specialist college providing further education for young adults with autism, learning difficulties and complex needs. It offers a bespoke further education for its learners.

The curriculum provides learners with the opportunity to develop skills for adulthood through a range of Enterprise, Vocational and Work Related learning experiences. Learners are supported to develop their independence skills through a holistic programme of health, therapy and care.

The college offers young people, aged 16-25 with a range of special educational needs the opportunity to develop independent living skills, work-related learning skills and skills for adulthood. The college brings together the four preparing for Adult Pathways:

- Supported/Independence
- Supported /Employment
- Better Health
- Community

Learners will access all four Pathways but the content of their programme will be weighted towards their desired personal outcomes.

The curriculum will focus on communication and social interaction and can include Makaton, Picture Exchange Communication system (PECS) and the use of social stories to support understanding.

The majority of learners have 52 week care in the local area of Cambridge shire and Lincolnshire and will attend 38 weeks of college education.

Our approach to education at Calman Colaiste is to inspire and engage our learners through a range of positive learning experiences. Each learner will be engaged in a personalised learning programme that is appropriate to their age and ability.

Baseline assessment is used to formulate learning goals and a curriculum targeted to the needs of the individual.

Literacy and numeracy are at the core of the curriculum which is taught through enterprise and vocational work-related learning experiences.

Aims of the college

By working collaboratively with carers and young people we aim to:

- provide a positive, safe and caring environment within which young people and staff feel happy and secure in the process of learning;
- remove/reduce a young person's barriers to learning;
- provide young people with access to quality education and pastoral care which will enhance personal development, stimulate growth and provide equal opportunity;
- develop young people's self-esteem, independence and awareness of, and consideration for, the feelings and the needs of others in the college and within the community at large;
- encourage young people to positively manage their own behaviour and difficulties;
- establish a climate within which young people and adults can interact and relate, engendering high levels of mutual interest and personal respect;
- develop the skills needed in each young person so they can be as independent as possible and ready for life after college;
- provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets each young person's needs.
- work in partnership with carers and other professionals

In conjunction Calman Colaiste will embrace the Kisimul Learning for Life Programme as detailed below.

Kisimul's Learning for Life Programme

Philosophy:

The aim of the Kisimul's *Learning For Life* programme is to offer a broad, balanced and structured programme of learning opportunities to young adults aged 16 to 25 who are resident in our registered adult homes and supported living services. They can use Calman Colasite as the main site for learning.

The purpose of the provision is to help our learners to continue to develop core functional skills, vocational skills and life skills. The programme is designed to enable our learners to continue to achieve and whilst living as independent a lifestyle as they are able to given their individual needs and abilities by integrating a learning programme into their daily living environment.

Aims of Learning for Life

- To be an inclusive learning provision which welcomes all young adults with diverse ranges of complex needs, behaviours and sensory processing disorders;
- To develop confidence and skills through a relevant and flexible programme appropriate to our learners' individual needs;
- To equip young adults with the tools to effectively communicate; self-regulate their behaviour; and cope with sensory dysfunctions through a multi-disciplinary approach;
- To offer our learners accredited courses such as Personal Progress; Towards Independence: ASDAN; Personal and Social Development; BTEC. And AQA Unit Awards.
- To use accredited learning routes as a means of support individual progression within the college/home environment to develop independent living and vocational skills.
- To empower our learners to plan and manage their own futures where possible.
- To provide a programme which raises aspirations and recognises personal achievements.
- To provide a programme which actively promotes equality of opportunity and challenges stereotypes.
- To enable our learners to enjoy and achieve.

Organisation of *Learning for Life*

The Kisimul *Learning for Life* programme has been specifically designed to include the development of suitable skills to equip our young adults to continue to develop in terms of their functional skills, vocational skills and socialisation skills; to enable them to lead as fulfilling and independent lifestyle as possible, whilst continuing to gain accreditation and to make positive contributions to the wider community. In accessing the programme, a balance must be maintained between reaching a learner's full potential, and setting achievable and attainable outcomes. We aim to enable our learners to build upon their strengths and manage their emotional difficulties.

Much of this work takes place in the college/home environment, but we believe that a structured programme of learning activities will help to embed the personal development that takes place there.

The programme is able to build on skills such as numeracy, literacy, computing and social development. These skills are strengthened through a functional and true to life approach to contextualised learning and practice of independent living. Core skills are developed in real life activities and situations, such as cooking, shopping, community based learning, work related learning tasks, house-keeping, self-help and socialisation tasks.

Our learners are given every encouragement to continue to move forward towards independence, which is the common thread of our 'Learning for Life' programme. Particular emphasis is placed on the way the environment is managed, resources and materials used, though activities such as animal care and horticulture.

Our learners are encouraged to take ownership of their learning by choosing activities they wish to participate in and modules and courses they wish to achieve accreditation for. The learning tutors and support staff are committed to enable all our learners to have greater control and choice in all aspects of the curriculum, through differentiated approaches to learning and communication styles and preferences.

The programme is delivered in the college by a team of learning tutors, who receive support and guidance from the leadership team of our highly successful colleges based in Lincolnshire, to enable learners to develop skills in appropriate contexts and situations. This helps them to contextualise their understanding. The learning tutors plan and deliver sessions that are true to life and which encourage the learners to develop the range of skills needed to improve their independence skills and understanding. Each learner develops an Individualised Learning Plan which reflects their wishes and individual needs as well as agreed areas for development.

Relevant accredited modules are planned and delivered, and tailored to our learners' individual choices and needs. They are given opportunities to access a range of off-site sporting and leisure activities, such as rebound therapy, swimming, vocational based tasks, business enterprise, work experience placements. These opportunities help to develop engagement and personal interests. Included in the programme is access to a range of therapeutic experiences such as communication groups, musical interaction, aromatherapy and occupational therapy.

Kisimul's learning for Life and adult residential care and supported living services work closely together to ensure that our learners gain maximum benefit from a broad, balanced and engaging 24 hour programme which meets their individual needs and interests.

Equal Opportunities:

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic willingness and appropriateness, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief.

Disabilities: In accordance with the statutory requirements the provider aims to make the programme accessible to all learners as far as is reasonably practicable.

Purpose

Calman Colaiste is an independent specialist college for young adults aged 16-25 with autism, learning difficulties and complex needs. It offers a bespoke further education for its learners and is aimed at enabling them to continue in further education and ensure that they continue the development of skills for life.

This statement explains our approach to education in our services, particularly our college; it does not attempt to be a detailed analysis of autism and the range of available interventions.

Autism

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects 1 in 100 people in the UK. It affects the way a person communicates and how they experience the world around them. Autism is described as a spectrum condition. This means that while people with autism, including Asperger's Syndrome, share certain characteristics they will be highly individual in their needs and preferences. Some people with autism are able to live relatively independent lives but others may face additional challenges, including learning disabilities, which affect them so profoundly that they need support in many areas. Early intervention, education and support are critical in enabling students and young adults with autism to lead fulfilling lives. Our vision is to make the ordinary possible and to achieve this society needs to accept autism as part of everyday life.

Education

Calman College exists to meet the educational needs of its learners and aims to enable students to learn, thrive and succeed. It offers young adults with autism the specialist education and support they need to transition successfully to an active adult life as part of their community. Learning programmes are highly personalised. The balance and focus will be determined by individual priorities. The learning programme is delivered using the expertise of a dedicated staff team.

Positive Behavioural Support

Our approach to support for learning is geared to improving the way a young person lives, learns and participates in community activities, and comes from a person-centred appreciation of each individual's preferences and of their cultural expectations. Our chosen method of intervention to support learning for all our learners is Timian.

Timian is used to enable young adults to overcome patterns of challenging or social isolating behaviours and supports them to acquire behaviours which enable them to achieve their long term goals and aspirations.

Support to Access the Curriculum

As part of their personalised curriculum, all Calman Colaiste learners will have access to additional supporting including the following:

- Highly structured and planned learning environment to help make sense of the world, including the use of timetables and visual strategies
- A communication environment which includes careful use of language, focusing on key words supported by visual strategies and a planned and consistently applied programme of communication support
- Planned and consistently applied management strategies to address behaviour, where appropriate, including immediate intervention to address behaviours which put the individual or others at risk
- Clear consistent expectations which are articulated simply and with visual supports
- A personalised programme which promotes engagement and supports motivation by building on skills and interests, and which includes regular changes of activity. We help learners to acquire vocational skills so that their prospects of being able to live an ordinary life in their home communities as adults will be improved. Everything is aimed at supporting the young person's access to learning opportunities.
 - Calman Colaiste programme of study includes:
 - Animal Husbandry
 - Horticulture
 - Creative Arts
 - Catering
 - ICT
 - Literacy, Numeracy, ICT are embedded within the curriculum.

Learner progress and inspection

We are working to enable learners make as much progress as possible, and to ensure that they can achieve clear and significant outcomes. Our evidence based approach means that, we analyse the progress of learners in considerable depth. We tailor how we teach to match the individual young person, and we also measure whether the approach is working. This helps to ensure that most learners make better, or much better than average progress. The college is subject to formal Ofsted inspection.

The team

Calman Colaiste has a multi-disciplinary staff team. All staff undertake robust training and on-going review and development to ensure that they have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to carry out their work to a high standard in all environments. The staff team includes additional access to specialist input from Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapist. The promotion of the wider safeguarding agenda ensures that learner safety is a priority in all aspects of the curriculum. We are Care Quality Commission and Ofsted registered and all staff receive ongoing training to ensure that we are compliant with all relevant statutory requirements.

The college environment

Calman Colasite is located on the outskirts of the village of Thorney, near Peterborough. The college has learning spaces, education classrooms, creative art, horticulture, animal husbandry, café and a lending library.

The college's facilities are continuously maintained and enriched to support learning. Services are being developed for young adults through several building phases.

Learner participation

Learners are encouraged to be involved in decisions about their learning and their voice and opinion are valued. For many learners, communication can be difficult, so we invest skills and resource in enabling their participation in a variety of ways. We also recognise the enormous importance of working together with families and carers to ensure that the partnership between college, other services and home works for the young person. Above all we value young adults and believe they have a right to the best education that can be offered so they learn, thrive and achieve.

Entry to programmes of study is, regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief. In accordance with statutory requirements the College aims to make the curriculum accessible to all students as far as is reasonably practicable. The College has a policy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and an Accessibility Plan.

Enrichment opportunities

All students have the opportunity to develop existing interests and nurture new ones through a variety of enrichment activities, which within the timetable supported by the education team and residential support workers. These reflect the talents and interests of the staff and students, while some will also involve the input and expertise of external specialists.

Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum in three phases.

We agree **long-term** plans whose schemes of work give an annual overview of the content of the curriculum. From these plans the Tutors identify curriculum aims appropriate for each student they teach. The overview policies and plans are updated by the Head Tutor. They indicate what topics/units are to be taught in each term and to which students. This long-term plan is reviewed on an annual basis.

In our **medium-term** plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that are used when teaching each topic/unit.

Our **short-term plans** are written on 3 x weekly basis. They are used to set out the learning objectives for each session and to identify the resources and activities required for the lesson. When teaching we focus on motivating the students and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the college and details what is to be taught to each student/group. These are reviewed annually and may be subject to change.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the students' level of attainment. Tutors make on-going assessments of each student's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their students. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the students. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each student's level of ability and give due regard to information and targets contained in the students' Individualised Learning Plan (ILP). We value each student as a unique individual, and Tutors are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our students, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

Disapplication

In accordance with the government legislation the college has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying the curriculum programmes. Decisions will only be made after discussion with the social workers/local authorities and will allow a student:

- to participate in extended work-related learning
- with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area
- making significantly less progress than other students of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum.

The curriculum underpins the fundamental aims of the College. The curriculum must be seen as the major component of a student's education which, together with the pastoral care help students to develop a wide range of key and transferable skills. Our planned curriculum activities are organised in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. We aim to provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum which encourages an enthusiasm for learning, creativity, personal growth and development.

The teaching at Calman Colaiste is committed to inspiring, motivating and enriching the learning opportunities of its students in terms of both curricular and co-curricular delivery. Teaching styles

are adapted to meet the varying needs of our students. Our Schemes of work are designed to bring the curriculum to life and are interpreted creatively by Tutors to inspire and challenge students.

Effective Ethos and Classroom Environment

We believe that a purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards. A positive caring environment and culture will promote positive self-esteem and confidence. Organised resources, displays of student's work, stimulating materials and bright, colourful, language enriched displays all help to provide the Optimal Learning Environment. We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the students perform are safe. When we plan to take students out of college, we follow Department for Education (DfE) and Health and Safety (HSE) advice. We provide details of proposed outings for carers.

Our college is an attractive learning environment. We ensure that all students have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All our Tutors reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our Tutors in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

All our staff make a special effort to establish good working relationships with all students in the class group. We treat the students with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our staff follow the college policy with regard to classroom management.

We aim to provide a learning environment which is challenging and the role of the Head Tutor at stimulating, peaceful and calm, happy and caring, organised and well resourced, makes learnings accessible, encouraging and appreciative, welcoming, enabling equal access and inclusion and providing a professional working atmosphere.

Auditing our Curriculum, Teaching and Learning:

We ask ourselves the following questions when auditing our current performance:

How well are we doing?

- How do we compare with similar colleges?
- What more should we aim to achieve?
- What must we do to make it happen?
- Self-evaluation and development is a critical part of the colleges managerial role and tutors, care staff and managers will input into the development as well as students own feedback.

For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It also includes support and intervention strategies. In assessing the quality of the teaching in our college we take account of the evidence of students' learning, achievements and progress over time. When evaluating the quality of teaching in our college, we consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress and personal development for every student by:

- extending the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of all students in a range of lessons and activities over time;
- enabling students to develop skills in communication
- enthusing, engaging and motivating students to learn;
- using assessment and feedback to support learning and to help students know how to improve their work;
- differentiating teaching, by setting suitably challenging activities and providing support for students of different abilities, so that they can all learn well and make progress;
- using well-judged and effective teaching methods, deploying appropriate resources, managing class time and drawing on good subject knowledge and expertise to encourage students to make progress;

Effective Teaching - Expectations of Staff

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by:

- having high expectation of students.
- employing a variety of learning and teaching methods.
- ensuring that students are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful.
- delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression.
- providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire students.
- involving students in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking.
- developing students' skills
- encouraging, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment.
- working in partnership with students, staff and social workers/carers to achieve shared goals.
- keeping social workers/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their students through reports.

The Head Tutor ensures that all work is named, dated, marked with appropriate feedback and comments to aid learning.

Direct observation **must** be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate the impact that teaching has had on students' learning. Such additional evidence should include:

- observing some lessons jointly with senior staff before discussing them also with the Tutor who has been observed;
- discussing with students the work they have done and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods;
- discussing teaching and learning with TA;
- taking account of the views of students, social worker/carers and carers, staff and placing authorities, where appropriate;
- taking account of the college's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and
- scrutinising the standard of students' work, noting:
- how well and frequently marking and assessment are used to help students to improve their learning
- the level of challenge provided.

Effective learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. Our Schemes of work are designed to bring the curriculum to life and are interpreted creatively by Tutors to inspire and challenge students. We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which Students feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). We provide small class sizes which ensure that each students individual strengths, talents and aptitudes are nurtured and developed. All teaching is structured to maximise learning opportunities and lessons are planned in accordance with the following principles:

- the teaching should build on previous learning ;
- the Tutor should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;

- it should allow students to see the links within learning;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
- it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the Students, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- the teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

Learning outside the classroom - Educational visits/off-site activities

Integral to our curriculum is a wide range of educational experiences that extend beyond the classroom door. The college curriculum offers a series of educational journeys that deepen the Students' understanding of the world around them.

Communication with Carers/Parents

We believe that parents/carers and guardians have a fundamental role to play in helping Students to learn. We do all we can to inform parents/carers and guardians about what and how their students are learning by:

- Weekly Education Reports to Parents/Carers
- explaining to carers how they can support their Students with Independent Living Skills Programme (ASDAN)
- being available - we have an open door policy and can visit us any time.

We believe that the carers have the responsibility to support their Students and the college in implementing college policies. We would like carers to:

- ensure that their student has the best attendance and punctuality record possible;
- do their best to keep their young person healthy and fit to attend college;
- inform college if there are matters outside of college that are likely to affect a young person's performance or behaviour at college;
- promote a positive attitude towards college, staff and learning in general.

Concerns and complaints

Parents/carers and guardians who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these with the Head Teacher. The College has a Complaints Procedure in place.

Calman Colaiste will also offer a variety of accredited assessed courses which can be used to accredit any projects/units of work. The list below is a basic overview of what the college will offer.

- AQA Unit awards
- ASDAN Independent Living Programme – ASDAN – Towards Independence
- ASDAN Team Programme - Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

This Policy will be reviewed annually.