



# Curriculum Statement

## Contents

1. The Curriculum .....	3
2. Structured Teaching.....	3
3. Creative/Independent Curriculum.....	4
4. PSED.....	4
5. Positive Behaviour Management.....	4
6. Multi-disciplinary Support .....	4
7. Enrichment Curriculum.....	5
8. Assessment .....	5
9. Pupil Self-Evaluation/ Feedback .....	5
10. CPD - on-going professional development to support learning .....	6
11. Quality Assurance.....	6
12. Parent /Carer Support .....	6

## 1. The Curriculum

Consistent with our Mission Statement, we aim to meet the complex learning needs of all our pupils, within an age appropriate context.

The curriculum is based on an Integrated model around “seven areas of learning” similar to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). These areas are:

The prime areas of learning:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Art & Design

It is intended that this model should lend itself to making effective connections across subject boundaries. This creates meaningful opportunities to emphasise some key elements of learning and development that many of our students need over time i.e. social, emotional, fine and gross motor skills. Implicit in our planning is a focus on communication, independence, life and social skills and a capacity for critical thinking which should support our students to play a full and active role in the world.

We seek to provide equal opportunities to allow experience of a curriculum, which is balanced, relevant, and reflects cultural diversity. The curriculum and creative means of delivery reflects our commitment to access and inclusion for all of our students.

The Multi-disciplinary team work closely with teachers and class staff to support the delivery of specific programmes to develop these areas.

## 2. Structured Teaching

We aim to develop independence skills in order that our pupils will be able to function as independently as possible and not rely upon others to organise and direct them. It is therefore essential that we establish and maintain ways of working, as early as possible, which enables the pupil to be able to organise themselves (over time) and gives meaning to their world. In order to do this, we use;

- Visual timetables
- Separate work areas and individual workstations
- Individual daily schedules with a defined start and finish
- Makaton and PECS, Colourful Semantics, Communication In Print
- Short, structured group introductions
- Visual aids for pupils to respond appropriately in terms of understanding
- Social understanding
- Visual aids to introduce and model activity
- Highlighted Key vocabulary
- Simple self-assessment
- Adaptations e.g. –software, hearing devices, magnifiers
- Programmes of work based on TEACCH learning principles
- Social stories – to promote understanding and improved behaviour/social skill
- Precision teaching
- Look and listen groups
- Elements of the Waldon technique
- Intensive interaction
- Motivators and incentives
- Movement programmes such as yoga and Write Dance
- First Class Number / Talking Partners / Key to Learning / 5 Minute Box / 5 Minute Phonics
- Lexia (Literacy), Symphony Maths –computer programmes
- Real P.E Programme
- Elements of ABA/VB

### 3. Creative/Independent Curriculum

The school has close links with other agencies/professionals outside of the school. These links provide creative opportunities for groups of children to develop their independence skills. Yoga and the EASIE programme is used to develop the children's self-regulation along with OT exercises that are part of daily routines.

Year 6 take part in a travel training programme run by MENCAP. The carefully structured programme, which begins with workshops, allows children to be assessed according to their independence and social awareness skills. Over the year this develops, for some children, into individual travel training opportunities with one trainer. This programme prepares children for independent travel and has enabled a number of children in the previous years to travel independently to their new High School.

The school has a dedicated Art room. Children from across the school have Art lessons in this room led by staff who use a sensory based curriculum to inspire and enable children to develop their creative skills. The curriculum has been enhanced by focussed Art opportunities for individual children across the school. This work aims to develop the skills and potential of the children who show 'flair' and also to provide support and encouragement to those children who find this area more challenging. In the autumn term this individual work prepares pupils to become part of an Art group which will take place each week in the spring and summer term. The school is involved with the 'Take 1 Picture' Art project run by the National Gallery. This project has encouraged and enthused both staff and children. There is an annual exhibition of pupils' works here at the school attended by all stakeholders.

The school has a trained member of staff for Forest school in the Science department. The Forest School approach is used to enhance pupils learning in Science, where pupils have hands on experience working within the outdoor wilderness area to support the curriculum topics. The area is also used by classes as a place to enhance and support learning in other curriculum areas and provides the ideal setting for the annual overnight camping trip attended by some of the Upper school pupils.

### 4. PSED

The PSED curriculum is designed to enable pupils to develop their independence, interaction skills and knowledge of relationships as they grow up. Image in Action (a company that supports SEND pupils with relationship and sex education) has worked closely with the school to embed a programme for the older pupils that supports parents and teachers to educate pupils about how the body changes and how to keep themselves safe.

### 5. Positive Behaviour Management

Castlebar is a calm environment where staff use a variety of strategies to support the management of behaviours:

- Use of positive language
- Use of limited language
- Use of schedules, signing and symbols
- Distraction
- Reward systems
- The use of Motivational techniques - including aspects of VB/ABA
- Team Teach 'positive handling' strategies including de-escalation techniques
- Use of Behaviour Management Plans developed by teachers and members of MDT.
- Use of ABC forms

Implementation of all strategies and processes mentioned in this document are established in the school by all staff and the MDT who work through a facilitative approach.

### 6. Multi-disciplinary Support

The school is supported by a range of professionals who help to deliver an effective curriculum to our pupils with a range of complex SEN. These include therapists (SLT/OT) Educational Psychologist; School Nurse and a Music Therapist.

Professionals from other disciplines primarily give advice and support to teachers and staff in strategies to help children. They also deliver formal training to staff, introducing interventions to support classroom practice and run workshops for parents and carers offering advice and support. Occasionally therapists will work with groups of pupils supported by school staff.

## 7. Enrichment Curriculum

The school is committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle. In order to promote independence, socialisation and the development of fine and gross motor skills the school provides a range of after school clubs:

- Football
- Cooking
- Walking
- Gardening
- Dance
- Cricket
- Bike
- Wii Fit
- Basketball
- Music
- Swimming

As part of the curriculum, children have the opportunity to go on trips and visits related to the topics they are studying. Theatre groups, Musicians and other visitors are also invited into school throughout the year to promote and consolidate the work already taking place in the classrooms.

New facilities offer new opportunities to develop skills using rebound therapy and swimming.

A series of opportunities are in place for residential trips across the school including an overnight camping trip, a four-day residential trip in the summer term for the oldest pupils and a two day residential at Woodrow House for a younger group. The children get the opportunity to engage in physical activities and social group activities. They are expected to follow washing routines independently and expected to take responsibility for keeping their rooms/tents tidy. Again the children have opportunities for physical activities and independence skills are encouraged through personal hygiene routines.

## 8. Assessment

All staff are involved and aware of the need to assess children. Systems are in place in the classroom to ensure the gathering of information to inform planning and assessment procedures. Two Progress meetings a year allow teachers to discuss the progress of their children, with the Assistant Heads. Teachers carry out detailed assessments of the children at the start of each year. Individual Education Plans are written and reviewed termly and progress is recorded on the Progress Tracker. Evidence of every pupil's work is collated at the end of each year and kept in a portfolio. This work is annotated to record the achievement of the child. The Literacy and Numeracy leaders analyse the progress on the Individual Education Plans and share this analysis with staff. Children's progress from the Progress Tracker is transferred onto Assessment Manager where trends and inconsistencies can be monitored and interventions are put in place if required. Children achieving less than 1 PIAVTS progress in the Autumn term are placed on Action Plans which are monitored by the Assistant Heads. Children in early years are assessed on entry (baseline) and at the end of the year according to the Development Matters statements.

## 9. Pupil Self-Evaluation/ Feedback

All pupils are encouraged to comment on their own work and work of their peers. A variety of mechanisms are used to promote pupil voice.

- Pupils are encouraged to give feedback on completed work i.e. by showing their completed work to their peers and talking about what they have done. They are encouraged to comment on the work of their peers and ask questions depending on the abilities of the pupils
- Within the curriculum, opportunities are set up for pupils to carry out surveys and information gathering using the school environment and their peers
- At the beginning of the 'Take 1 Picture' project, pupils are asked to choose which picture the school will use for the project
- In planning for the science fun day pupils are asked to choose a favourite experiment they have done and set it up as part of the activities for the fun day
- A School Council is in place, made up of pupils from across the Red, Blue, Orange and Purple clusters. The council have weekly meetings and produce half termly newsletters, compiled of information provided from pupils across the school. They lead the 'Castlebar's Got Talent' assembly each week. They are also supported to run surveys and competitions involving all pupils

## 10. CPD - on-going professional development to support learning

A comprehensive CPD structure is in place. The training provided reflects the school improvement priorities. Training and development is provided by in-house and outside speakers. Training is delivered both formally and informally throughout the school. Training is also delivered through modelling of specific programmes and interventions within the class, observed by the learner. Staff use CPD on-line and other routes to access external courses and may be required to deliver training when back at school in order to share the learning. The MDT provides formal training and more specific training for departments and classes.

All new staff members receive Induction which is timetabled over the first half term in their new role.

## 11. Quality Assurance

In order to ensure the highest quality of outcomes for the pupils, the school monitors and evaluates through:

- Formal classroom teaching observations including sample book looks/pupil discussion
- Annual learning walks in each of the leadership areas
- Formal book scrutiny each term
- Progress meetings (twice yearly)
- Induction for all new staff
- Induction for NQTs
- Cross Phase moderation

## 12. Parent /Carer Support

Castlebar values the relationships developed with parents. In order to promote communication a home school book is sent home each evening. Staff are encouraged to make contact with parents over the phone in order to develop good rapport. The school has introduced the Structured Conversation which is an opportunity for teachers and parents to work closely together to support the child's progress by setting targets together. As part of the Structured Conversation there will be the annual review. The pupils also attend the meeting, usually for the first five or ten minutes depending on the age and ability of the pupil.

Events are planned to encourage parents' involvement in the school's life;

- Class Assemblies on a Wednesday afternoon.
- All special occasion Assemblies
- Discos
- Parent Workshops- A variety of workshops led by staff, MDT and outside professionals including Parent Links and Makaton training
- Parents group run by parents
- Class projects –programmes set up by class teacher and Educational Psychologist to enhance the learning for a group of pupils in one particular area
- A series of transition opportunities in Yellow team for introducing new parents to the school.
- Structured Conversations
- A barbecue and leavers' assembly for parents to celebrate their child's achievements in Castlebar before the transition to High School.
- 'Take 1 Picture' exhibition
- Concerts at Christmas and the end of the academic year

Implementation of all strategies and processes mentioned in this document are established in the school by all staff and the MDT who work through a facilitative approach.