



ruskinmill
clervauxgardenschool

Curriculum Policy

Updated September 2019

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1. Context

Ruskin Mill Trust provides students with holistic learning by role modelling positive relationships in the fields of arts, crafts, commerce, agriculture, nutrition, living skills and the environment with pathway support onto further education bespoke to the individual student.

Since 1987, the Trust has developed its unique brand of expertise working with young people with complex behaviour, and learning difficulties and disabilities including the autistic spectrum and conditions. Our provisions offer both day and residential placements and we accept admission applications all year round.

Clervaux Garden School is a unique and exciting school. Nestled on our 100 acre biodynamic farm, our Steiner-inspired holistic curriculum provides the skills, experience and character necessary for young people aged 10-19 years old with complex needs to flourish and thrive in modern society. Our school is a place of therapeutic learning and growing which brings together hand, heart and head to support personal development and progression

Our Vision

That each individual has the potential to shape their own future through experiencing meaningful relationships with universe, earth and people.

Our Values

We value inclusive learning and living activities that integrate practical activity, thinking and our emotions.

We value mutual respect and we strive to understand all people's differences and uniqueness.

We value the capacity for re-imagination present in all people, towards positive change and development.

We value openness, goodwill, tolerance and treating individuals with dignity and respect.

2. Statement of Intent

2.1 At the schools operated by Ruskin Mill Trust we ensure access to the curriculum areas that are listed in the Independent School Standards (in force from 2014). In accordance with this we undertake to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of each student based on the student's Education, Health and Care Plan. All students receive full-time supervised education, in which they experience a curriculum that includes a range of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative aspects appropriate to their age, aptitude and stage of development. All students also receive Personal, Social & Health Education and those of secondary school age receive impartial careers guidance. The overriding aim of the curriculum is to prepare our young people for life in modern Britain, by achieving the best possible outcomes for students in terms of individual learning, independence, personal growth and development.

Signed by:



Executive Headteacher

Date: 02/09/19



Board of Trustees

Date: 02/09/19

Review date: September 2020

3. Curriculum Intent

3.1 Clervaux Garden School is committed to ensuring our students can flourish in modern Britain by providing a curriculum which will:

- provide a high quality education that is tailored to individual needs
- ensure every student achieves their potential
- help students to develop positive feelings of self-worth and confidence
- enable students to interact and communicate with a wide range of people
- develop successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- provide a broad and balanced curriculum, including a focus on independence skills that is inclusive and accessible to all
- help students to be confident learners who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- help prepare children and young people for the next stages in their life
- encourage students to become responsible citizens who make a contribution to society
- deliver activities that provide suitable learning challenges, giving every student the opportunity to experience success and achieve as much as possible.
- devise individual approaches and interventions, in response to the curriculum, to match student's diverse learning needs, interests and strengths.
- teach students to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, understand right from wrong and have an appreciation of British values.
- provide a curriculum that is free from partisan political views.

3.2 The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school is strictly prohibited. All staff have a responsibility to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of students they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. The school's leaders will monitor timetables and schemes of work across the curriculum. Rigorous monitoring of lessons will ensure balance in the presentation of all subject matter.

3.3 Four key principles underpin these aims and are embedded in our provision and day to day working:

- Respect our students - we are committed to listening to students and respecting their views
- Helping them to achieve self-determination - we support students to make choices and be responsible for decisions around their own lives.
- Be included - we support students to engage in the school and wider community.
- Helping with relationships and interactions - we help students to engage with different groups and people and support them to make positive relationships and build friendships.

4. The Ruskin Mill Trust 7 Fields of Practice

Ruskin Mill Trust's 'Practical Skills Therapeutic Education' (PSTE) works with Seven Fields of Practice to provide our students with a truly holistic and integrative education. Whilst being distinct, the Fields of Practice form an educational continuum that assists in the structuring of the student journey. So as to best serve our students, the Seven Fields of Practice are subject to research up to Master's and PhD level and inform our staff training. Practical Skills Therapeutic Education and the underpinning Seven Fields of Practice have been developed and inspired by the work of John Ruskin (1819-1846), William Morris (1834-1896), and Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925).

The Seven Fields of Practice are: 1) Spirit of Place, 2) Practical Skills, 3) Biodynamic Ecology, 4) Therapeutic Education, 5) Holistic Support and Care, 6) Holistic Medicine, 7) Transformative Leadership and Management.

Field 1 - Spirit of Place (Genius Loci)

Spirit of Place acknowledges and works with the heritage and uniqueness inherent in the locality of each of our educational provisions. In each provision the landscape, including its geology, flora and fauna, and history of human activity are worked holistically when we develop our situated student curriculums. As such our provisions are consciously prepared educational environments that enable students to build positive relationships to their surroundings. Working with Genius Loci means that students and staff awaken to and connect purposefully with their immediate environment.

Field 2 - Practical Skills

The field of Practical Skills, such as crafts, land-based activities, is designed to support students' cognitive, emotional and physical development. By engaging in meaningful Practical Skills activities in which the student is involved in sourcing the material from the locality, forming it with their own hands, and making an item of service for others the student reconnects to the earth, themselves and others. Through Practical Skills, which embeds functional skills, students develop the capacity to think creatively, solve problems, make enquiries, follow instruction and work independently.

Field 3 - Biodynamic Ecology

The field of Biodynamic Ecology has much in common with organic agriculture. However, Biodynamic Ecology also recognises that each farm and garden is an integrated and interdependent dynamic organism even appreciating the wider more subtle cosmic influences. Biodynamic Ecology adopts an ethical approach to the ecological and social environment, and students engage with a seed-to-table curriculum to celebrate nature's rhythms throughout the seasons. This ensures that students not only eat healthily but also engage with the whole process of food and nutrition in the farm and garden, and at the table.

Field 4 - Therapeutic Education

The journey of the students at Ruskin Mill Trust places an emphasis on facilitating wholeness where there is fragmentation and movement where there is stagnation. The gesture of this transformative process is underpinned by the concept of phasic human development and applied sensory integration. The field of Therapeutic Education works with the progressive stages of human development to assist our students to engage with age-appropriate activities, and restep missed opportunities in their development.

Field 5 - Holistic Support and Care

The field of Holistic Support and Care stands behind the 24-hour educational curriculum and, in particular, the life of students in their residential provision. It is here that students actively engage in home making and, alongside this, the development of basic living skills. The 24-hour curriculum is based on the idea that family life and the challenge of semi-independently living is as much a learning experience and supporting the development of healthy life processes as the activity of developing Practical Skills.

Field 6 - Holistic Medicine

Ruskin Mill Trust offers a range of holistic therapies to support the health of our students. The rationale for working with the field of Holistic Medicine is again in accordance with the whole human being approach. Holistic medicine is a field of specialism and is promoted through collaboration between practitioners, support staff, doctors and nurses.

Field 7 - Transformative Leadership and Management

Ruskin Mill Trust recognises that our students are on a pathway to self-leadership. As a holistic organisation we acknowledge and appreciate multiple intelligences such as emotional and aesthetic intelligence, and situational awareness. To assist in the student journey towards 'self-generated conscious action' our staff are required to consciously role model positive relationships to other human beings as well as their environment. This role modelling, and our educational approach as a whole contributes to our vision that each individual has the potential to shape their own future through experiencing meaningful relationships with universe, earth and people.

5. Planning and Organisation

- 5.1 The learning experiences are carefully planned and structured to ensure continuity and cohesion and that each student is enabled to make the very best progress in the development of their knowledge and skills. Senior leaders and teachers write curriculum plans, schemes of work, medium and short-term plans, in collaboration with the wider staff team, including Craft Tutors, Teaching Assistants, therapists and residential staff. There is joint planning, assessment and review which is driven by the student's needs. The curriculum is delivered through the teaching day, through extended activities within the local community and within the residence for residential students.

- 5.2 Our curriculum is informed by *'The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum'* edited by Martyn Rawson and Tobias Richter but is adapted to ensure the individual needs of the children are met.
- 5.3 We are committed to working with Steiner's developmental insights:
- Each child is a unique individual with his or her own path in life;
 - The teachers' aim to remove the obstacles to this path and to support the emerging human beings in our care in developing inner freedom within a healthily functioning body endowed with a rich and coherent feeling life, so as to enable them to make their contribution to society while at the same time unfolding their own human potential;
 - Artistic rendering by the teacher of lesson content enables all students to access the subject offered with enthusiasm and understanding, regardless of ability;
 - Lesson content mirrors the student's developmental stage. This requires knowledge of what lives within the children and constant flexibility, more so in this special school context where children's development is often not commensurate with their chronological age. The teachers set expectations which are appropriate for the individual student's ability and developmental stage;
 - Lesson content is always related back to the human being in a moral and inspiring manner;
 - The students' motivation arises from enthusiasm rather than ambition or fear;
 - Education addresses the development of thinking, feeling and the will as equal and integrated partners.
- 5.4 Each student has an Individualised Education Plan that is linked to objectives in their EHC plans and personal aspirations. Senior leaders are responsible for monitoring the planning and delivery of the curriculum. This monitoring is organised into an annual cycle of lesson observations, learning walks and evaluation, which informs training and development as well as outlining any changes to the curriculum and the planning and provision of resources.
- 5.5 The curriculum can be accessed on different levels according to each student's need, previous experience and level of attainment. Students have needs arising from Asperger's syndrome, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Attachment Disorder, mental health and other learning difficulties. Students experience barriers to learning related to cognition and learning including memory; communication and interaction; language and concept development; flexibility of thought; sensory processing; social awareness and behaviours associated arising from their conditions.
- 5.6 The curriculum and teaching and learning approaches used are designed to reduce barriers to learning and ensure good progress and positive engagement. It is the expectation that all students will access the curriculum and attend lessons in order to fulfil their potential.

6. Daily Timetable

- 6.1 The school day begins at 9.00am with welcoming and an opportunity to have some breakfast and/or a warm drink. This is followed by animal care for all students to provide a grounding activity and an opportunity for staff to carry out dynamic risk assessments on students' availability to learn.

All KS2 and KS3 students have a timetabled Literacy and Numeracy session before their Main Lesson which focuses on the termly theme and could be Science, Aesthetic & Creative or Human & Social.

In the middle of the day the children and staff will have their lunches together in the Dining Room.

Throughout the afternoons the curriculum focuses on PSTE which is the central theme in the Ruskin Mill Trust values and ethos. This approach will form a significant percentage of the student's curriculum and have a positive impact on their physical development as well as their mental wellbeing whilst developing their skills across a range of areas. Engagement in PSTE helps students to overcome previous barriers to learning, to become skilled through doing purposeful activities and to contribute to the community.

Each day will end with a short period of reflection with staff and students discussing the events of the day, the positive learning celebrated.

6.2 The Main Lesson theme typically runs for three to five weeks (a term) and may be Maths / Geometry, Science, Geography, Botany, Practical Farming or History orientated. Literacy is incorporated in the whole curriculum as well as being delivered discretely. Within the session there will be cross curricular work, so that for instance in a non-mathematical Main Lesson there will be some maths practice, Brain Gym type activities in the Rhythm time, literacy practise in characterising geographical features and opportunities to look at scientific references in the main content of the lesson.

6.3 The students at Clervaux Garden School will all take part in-

Textiles – carding/ spinning/ dyeing/ weaving/ felting/ knitting/ embroidery (all-natural products and using wool from the Trust's own flock of sheep).

Pottery – students will dig for clay on site, clean the clay using sand, make slip, make dyes and design and make a range of clay objects. The pots will be fired on site in our kiln and finished by painting.

Green woodwork – students will source their own green wood from the school site and be taught how to use tools safely to prepare the wood before using peddle powered lathes to turn useful objects.

Metalwork – students will learn how to fashion metals using traditional tools and a blacksmiths forge.

Biodynamic horticulture – students will be involved daily in the tasks necessary to maintain a garden environment where seasonal work is required to produce healthy crops and vegetables.

Animal husbandry – students will be involved daily in the care of the animals on site.

7. Key features of the practical skills therapeutic curriculum (PSTE)

- PSTE adopts a “descent into matter” approach that allows the student to experience processes from beginning to end (for example the production of food from seed to table). This enables each student to become part of the school environment as well as the wider community and society as a whole. In addition it helps students experience the processes that connect them with the earth and the universe.
- The inclusion of land work in the curriculum promotes the development of physical, emotional and reflective capacities and has a positive impact on the mental wellbeing as a whole.
- The development of social skills through problem solving and teamwork.
- Student’s engagement with the land as a living organism helps transform their physical, emotional and spiritual constraints and difficulties into new competencies and capacities.
- The residential setting provides an environment of acceptance, rhythm, warmth, nourishment, trust, constancy, culture and enjoyable recreational experiences with others. Day and residential experiences will complement and enhance each other through effective planning between teaching, therapy and care staff.
- The curriculum supports each student’s transition into the next stage of learning including work experience and the practical application of literacy and numeracy as well as many of the transferrable skills acquired.

8. Key features of the therapeutic curriculum

- 8.1 Therapy forms an integral part of the individual bespoke curriculum package of each student.
- 8.2 Speech and language therapy, Eurythmy (movement therapy developed out of anthroposophical insights), Massage and Occupational Therapy are available, as are other therapies (e.g. Art Therapy) on arrangement if appropriate and considered beneficial.
- 8.3 Therapies such as massage and movement therapy help the student to establish a healthier relationship to their own body and supports their healthy development. They also address development delays in their physical roots.

9. Core Curriculum

- 9.1 Clervaux Garden School recognises that in order to prepare students for life in Modern Britain they must be word rich and number confident. To this end, the Numeracy and Literacy curricula reflect the National Curriculum in English and Maths to ensure as broad an education as possible is provided, and that our students are given the same opportunities to flourish in these disciplines as their peers in the mainstream sector.
- 9.2 Clervaux Garden School also provides a Science curriculum which mirrors the National Curriculum to ensure that our students gain the same scientific understanding of the world as their peers in the mainstream sector. All key areas of science, including concepts such as evolution and climate change, are taught to ensure students’ understanding reflects the most modern scientific beliefs.

9.3 Clervaux Garden School uses two literacy intervention programmes to support students whose literacy levels need extra focus: the Read, Write, Inc Phonics Programme and the Rapid Plus Reading Scheme.

10. The Clervaux 100

10.1 The Clervaux 100 is an Enrichment Curriculum which has been devised with input from staff across the Clervaux Trust and those in the Trust's Adult Social Care element who have in the past benefited from instruction and therapeutic time at the site on which Clervaux Garden School now stands.

10.2 There are 100 experiences and opportunities which we as a community feel all young people should have the right to experience during childhood. These fall under the broad headings of: Explore, Adventure, Enquire, Engage, Create.

10.3 Progress through the Clervaux 100 can be made at any time and forms part of the 24hour curriculum which will be provided by the Children's Home and residential provision.

10.4 Progress will form part of the termly assessment cycle.

11. Post 16 provision

11.1 Post 16 students continue to be involved in planned learning consisting of core and foundation subjects. As within primary and secondary provision students follow an individualised learning programme based on their individual needs as reflected in their Individual Learning Plan.

11.2 Students work with Pathways Coordinators to plan their individualised post-16 provision. The curriculum provides educational opportunities planned through individual and class timetables. These opportunities are based within school as well as other educational establishments and the wider community through formal classes, workshops, craft workshops, individual activities and experiences. Opportunities further afield are also provided, where appropriate and integrated into different subject areas. All aspects of programmes are supported and facilitated by our multi-disciplinary team.

11.3 The aim of the Trust is to support students growing into adulthood and raising their aspirations by placing an emphasis on them developing independence knowledge and skills to prepare them for life in the wider community.

12. Accreditation

12.1 In KS4 and post-16 the student's individual needs, skills and future education are considered in the development of their curriculum; in addition to the curriculum students will follow an individual accreditation pathway depending on their individual learning needs.

12.2 A range of accreditation, academic and vocational is offered; typically for each student there will be a mixture of GCSE's, vocational qualifications, functional skills, PSHE and independent careers advice; in addition to the holistic offer which helps to develop the emotional and social skills of each individual student.

13. Special Educational Needs

13.1 Ruskin Mill Trust specialises in providing education to young people who have severe and complex needs, communication and interaction difficulties and social and emotional and mental health needs. Ruskin Mill Trust aims to enable all young people to develop their skills

and abilities. The Trust seeks to ensure access to the curriculum through differentiated approaches, therapeutic strategies and personalised programmes that take into account the needs of individual students' and their strengths

13.2 Differentiation is implemented by various methods in lessons in all subjects:

- Each lesson having a multi-sensory approach; with visual, aural and kinaesthetic components;
- Keeping a rhythmic and balanced lesson;
- Ensuring a variety of activities – from listening to doing;
- Ensuring a child-centred approach ie. responding to each child as an individual;
- Allowing freedom of response to a lesson so that students can produce very different work to reflect what they have learned;
- Ensuring there are tasks ranging from simple to complex, to allow for different abilities;
- Using open-ended questions, so there is no wrong answer;
- Sometimes explaining first and demonstrating afterwards, or demonstrating first and explaining afterwards – allows for different learning preferences;
- Structuring work so that some students can be set lower or higher targets and then helped later on if necessary;
- Grouping text on the blackboard in different colours for different groups of students to undertake appropriate tasks;
- Encouraging the more able to help their peers;
- Using recall, both at the end of the lesson and at the beginning of the next, to anchor information;
- Each lesson containing different tasks; for example, writing, listening, speaking, drawing, observation, dictation, reading, questioning. The content is differentially approachable;
- Encouraging discussion, exchange of news and reworking with others.

13.3 Each differentiation method is systematic, simple and inclusive. Each child is helped to contribute in his or her own way to the creation of the whole picture. However, we all recognise that many children in the context of their normal lessons will need an individual approach in particular areas of work and therefore teaching assistants will work alongside the teachers in the classrooms.

14. Extended learning

14.1 The formally delivered curriculum is enhanced by craft sessions, school visits and visitors to school that are planned for enrichment purposes. This may include culture immersion days, health, ecological or religious/spiritual activities. The aim of such events is to broaden student's experience as well as giving them an opportunity to apply their skills in varied situations.

15. Cross curricular links

15.1 Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, PSHCE, IAG in relation to careers and future education placements and issues related to SMSC are all delivered as cross-curricular strands, highlighted in a wide range of activities, as well as in discrete lessons when appropriate.

16. Staffing and resources

- 16.1 The school team consists of senior leaders, administrative team, teaching staff, craft teachers, teaching assistants; the school also can call on the support of staff throughout the Ruskin Mill Trust such as Occupational Therapists, Eurythmy Therapists, Massage Therapists and Speech Language and Communication Therapists and other staff who support the running of the school.
- 16.2 The residential team consists of the Care Manager and Residential Support Workers.

17. Working with parents/carers

- 17.1 We encourage parents/carers to attend Statutory Annual Review/EHCP meetings. Parents/carers are provided with updates on progress in the termly report that comments on all areas of the curriculum and also includes learning targets for the term ahead. Schools also hold Parents Evenings/Days to give an opportunity for dialogue between students, parents/carers, education staff and care staff.

18. Impact and Review

- 18.1 Ruskin Mill Trust will review the curriculum annually to ensure it meets the needs of all students.
- 18.2 A Curriculum and Progress Review is held with each teacher at the end of each term to ensure an appropriate curriculum is being delivered which meets the needs of each individual student.

19. Research Base

- 19.1 Research is one of Ruskin Mill Trust's charitable objectives and as such is central to the development of the curriculum. As a result of external and internal research on the pedagogic value of land-work including food growing and craft, rooted in natural materials, the unique education offer of Ruskin Mill Trust has been defined by the term Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE). PSTE is used as a both method and vehicle for delivering curriculum and a framework to provide a robust education for learners. The trust, through the Hiram Education and Research Team, has a dedicated team of local coordinators who work to continually develop our staff in all statutory, mandatory and also in the key area of methods training as part of their practice. Furthermore we have a designated research facility, the Field Centre, where a space for living research is held. Through operational training combining living research and human developmental themes, PSTE methods create a pragmatic, student centred education for students at CGS. Through the aforementioned action research we develop the transformative educational method not only for our learners and staff but also members of the wider community through courses available to the public as well as cultural events.