



Curriculum Policy

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Pod81 recognises that this *Policy* is interconnected with other key policies and should comply with them:

- Behaviour and Discipline
- Anti-bullying
- Curriculum
- Equality and diversity
- Health and Safety
- Online Safety

Introduction

Pod81 is an alternative provider for students at Key Stage 3 and Key stage 4 struggling in mainstream education. Many of our students come to Pod81 with complex emotional, physical, social, and mental health challenges.

Many students have SEMH as their primary need. All our staff and stakeholders at Pod81 understand every one of the students is an individual.

Due to individual circumstances, nearly all students attending Pod81 need access to mainstream curricula. Nearly all the students have significant gaps in their overall education.

The curriculum Pod81 pursues to fill those gaps. Pod81 supports all the needs of our students in both coping with education and succeeding in education and social interaction.

Values

At Pod81, we promote the following:

Child's Best Interests

At Pod81, all our preparation, environment, work, curriculum, and support are geared around the best interests of each child.

Child's Right to Education

Many of our students have been referred from mainstream schools and have a history of exclusion and daily struggles. At Pod81, all our staff and stakeholders strive at all times to be inclusive, wherever possible, giving each of our students their right to education.

Respect Views of Every Child

Every child should have their views, feelings, thoughts, and doubts respected. At Pod81, all of our staff will listen attentively and caringly to every student who wishes to express whatever concern they are anxious about.

The student will be taken seriously, and all concerns will be acted upon in the child's best interests.

Clear and consistent principles help students to understand good teaching and learning structures. We aim to practise these principles across the whole teaching and learning environment.

Mission Statement

Pod81's mission statement is to present all students with a broad and balanced curriculum – according to the legal demands of the National Curriculum – that does not disadvantage them from their regular mainstream curriculum. Our motto is:

"Do not train a child to learn by force or harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of genius in each."

We aim to make education and learning amusing but also relevant.

Expectations and Support

- Pod81 has high educational expectations for all its students
- Students are supported at every step of their learning journey
- Pod81 provides a learning environment to encourage student's development in learning
- Pod 81 offers an engaging curriculum rooted firmly in the mainstream curriculum but with rewards and more personalised and specialised learning

Curriculum

There are 2 pathways to the curriculum, and the varying needs of our young people will determine their intended outcomes. For some young people with more complex needs, academic examinations and studying formal courses are not in their best interests.

Pathway 1: Social Skills Curriculum

This pathway is focussed around giving students the social skills and experiences that will prepare them for adulthood, employment and independent living. Social skills are the skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both verbally and non-verbally, through gestures, body language and our personal appearance. Our students will develop ways to communicate messages, thoughts and feelings with others in an appropriate way.

Students will be given opportunities to develop social skills needed for life beyond education and will be focussed on:

- Resilience
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Time keeping
- Punctuality
- Empathy
- Conflict resolution
- Listening

Pathway 2: Qualifications and courses of study. We are in the process of getting accreditation for Sports, Food Tech, Functional skills and Unit Awards.

All aspects of the curriculum promote spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and society, this prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The Pod81 curriculum follows the mainstream curriculum and offers the following:

1. Maths
2. English
3. Science
4. Literacy
5. Reading
6. Food Tech
7. Sports
8. Art
9. Boxing
10. Gym access

- 11. SEMH
- 12. PSHE

[The curriculum shall be heavily influenced by the last two disciplines.]

We realise that nearly all our students have had significant challenges with these subjects in mainstream education. We aim to make them all accessible through a flexible, determined, and exciting approach.

Although PSHE will be delivered as a subject in its own right, it will be embedded deeply in all the subjects. The justification is that our student's social, emotional, physical, educational, and intellectual well-being is at the forefront of our support for our students.

Responsibilities

All staff should be aware of the aims of this policy and know the successful outcomes regarding a student's development in all areas at Pod81.

Curriculum Intent

At Pod81, we aim to provide all our students with access to a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects the mainstream curriculum.

We aim to give our students confidence, the knowledge that they can succeed in the curriculum, and the inspiration to take their skills back to mainstream education.

To achieve this intent, we aim to provide the following:

- **An engaging curriculum** – All the subjects hitherto stated should be written and delivered in such a manner that they are accessible and engaging to all students.
- **A rewarding curriculum** – All the subjects hitherto stated should be written and delivered in such a manner that rewards student engagement and not just student success.
- **A challenging curriculum** - All the subjects hitherto stated should be written and delivered in such a manner that aims to challenge students to 'make that extra step' to success.
- **A personalised curriculum** - All the subjects hitherto stated should be written and delivered to reflect each student's *Positive Support Plan*.
- **A successful curriculum** - All the subjects hitherto stated should be written and delivered in such a manner that gives the students knowledge and confidence to take their learning back to mainstream education.

Timetable

The Pod81 timetable is designed and structured to ensure National Curriculum requirements and provide measures to elicit student engagement and support. As far as possible, we have provided a clear and consistent curriculum.

Most of the students attending Pod81 have a very negative view of the school timetable and the subjects. Most reject outright all attempts for them to follow the traditional timetable.

Pod81 recognises that each student attending a particular day of Pod81 will have come from environments unknown. A student may have been in an altercation with a family member, not slept for half the night etc. It's impossible to foresee from what context each child arrives at Pod81.

Therefore, although one student may be willing, say, to study English first thing on a Monday morning, another student, on account of the troubling context they have come from, will refuse to undertake any work whatsoever, no matter how excellent the work and learning materials are. Forcing the student to undertake English first thing on a Monday morning only sets up the student to fail. Another tactic is needed.

Pod81 aims to assess the mood of each student daily and will practise catching the student in a good mood for working. This has a better chance of success than the traditional approach. Pod81 wishes to try to remove the student's loathing of learning subjects. In addition, Pod81 will make the learning fun, short, and engaging.

Pod81 is open to schools four days a week. Days determined by the referring school.

There will be an increased focus on communication, speaking, listening, and student engagement in each subject. Social thinking, speaking and listening, and the skills inherent in those disciplines should be at the heart of Pod81's curriculum.

The timetable and curriculum will be differentiated according to each student's Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

English

Language Skills

Students are encouraged to improve their communication skills through speaking and listening skills, including descriptive, exploratory, and persuasive talks. They will be encouraged to discuss and debate in a meaningful and socially acceptable way.

Reading

In nearly all English sessions, students will be encouraged to read. The aim is to get the students wanting to read the subject matter and to move towards progress.

Comprehension

Once students have read the content matter, Q&A with deepening emphasis on description, explanation, and analysis should be employed.

Phonics

Phonics should be employed by all teaching and learning staff to help students speak and understand words at Tier 1 and Tier 2.

Writing

Students will have 1:1 support with writing. They will have handwriting, computer typing, and Google Voice-Typing opportunities.

Mathematical

Mathematical concepts and the teaching and learning of these shall use, wherever possible, instances where the students learn with both their eyes, minds, and hands, e.g. measurement, will be done with environment settings, tape measures and calculators.

Science

Students shall study biology, physics, and chemistry through subject matter that reflects issues at home and the student's social environment, such as fast food, drugs, sex, crime etc.

Design & Technology

Students will undertake studies in food technology.

Physical/Sport

Students will undertake sports activities

Art

Students will be encouraged to be more creative in artistic expression through various techniques such as two-point perspective, isometric drawings, etc.

PSHE

Students will study various human and social scenarios that reflect the student's home and social environments. Students will learn about British values, tolerance, cultural values, behaviours and social interaction.

Depending on each student's needs, intervention strategies can be employed in all subjects to facilitate confidence and learning.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are essential to students' success at Pod81. All staff should:

- Have training on how to deliver the curriculum so that it supports each student's *Positive Behaviour Support Plan*.
- Be consistent across all stages of KS3/KS4. Nearly all the students have gaps in their education, which will support them and not compromise them. In addition, team learning will be supported.
- Possess high expectations of student learning.
- Receive training on how to make subject matter entertaining whilst still being instructional.
- Be positive in their approach to delivering the Pod81 curriculum successfully.
- Encourage students' confidence that it is 'okay' to ask for help, which is normal and not shameful.
- Ensure eye contact is established when delivering a point of learning and not muttered without critical importance.
- Give regular verbal prompts and praise given at every opportunity
- Break learning down into manageable and engaging parts
- Emphasise at times and opportunities essential keywords and understanding of them.

- Refer consistently to wall displays and keywords
- Not only communicate with students through language but interact with them and their learning.