Upper School Handbook

A guide to Upper School at Harlow Fields School and College

Contents

Introduction

This handbook has been created by the Head of Upper School, Craig Bailey-Whyte, with the support and consultation of the senior leadership team, Keily Tomlin (Head of Lower School) and teachers. The handbook is created for teachers and visitors of Harlow Fields School and College.

Teachers should use this handbook to support their planning and assessment in all areas of the curriculum within Upper School and ensure appropriate coverage of all curriculum areas.

Visitors can use this handbook to understand how the curriculum offer for Upper School and how this is delivered at Harlow Fields School and College.

Our Vision

The pupils at Harlow Fields School and College have a range of needs and are working at diverse levels; this handbook is designed to explain how within one setting we provide an aspirational curriculum offer that is accessible to all. Due to the diverse needs at Harlow Fields School and College, the fundamental principle is that everything we do is pupil focused, and the pupil is at the centre of all we do.

At Harlow Fields School we recognise that our Upper School curriculum needs to be broad and person centred, with each and every pupil's personal gains, learning and targets being specifically discussed and set with their individual progress in mind. This will look different for every pupil and therefore we take a personalised approach and focus on the development of the pupils in five key areas that relate to their EHCP's. We also believe that every part of our pupil's day provides opportunities for learning and engagement, whilst still respecting the important need for breaks, rest periods, personal care, therapy input and medical needs.

All our sensory and semi-formal pathway pupils are assessed and tracked, using the engagement model and through personal learning targets set during annual EHCP's whilst our formal pathway pupils are assessed and tracked, using Earwig, MAPP and through personal learning targets set during Annual Reviews. One of our upper school classes are also assessed through accredited exam work (where appropriate) in English, Maths and Art.

All professionals, families and teaching teams are involved and contribute to what targets and learning is most meaningful for our pupils. We do not follow a linear path of learning, we do not box our pupils in to a typical expected curriculum, we instead allow the pupil to express their dreams and try to ensure they are supported and when possible, achieved.

How is Harlow Fields School and College organised?

The current classes within each department are as follows:

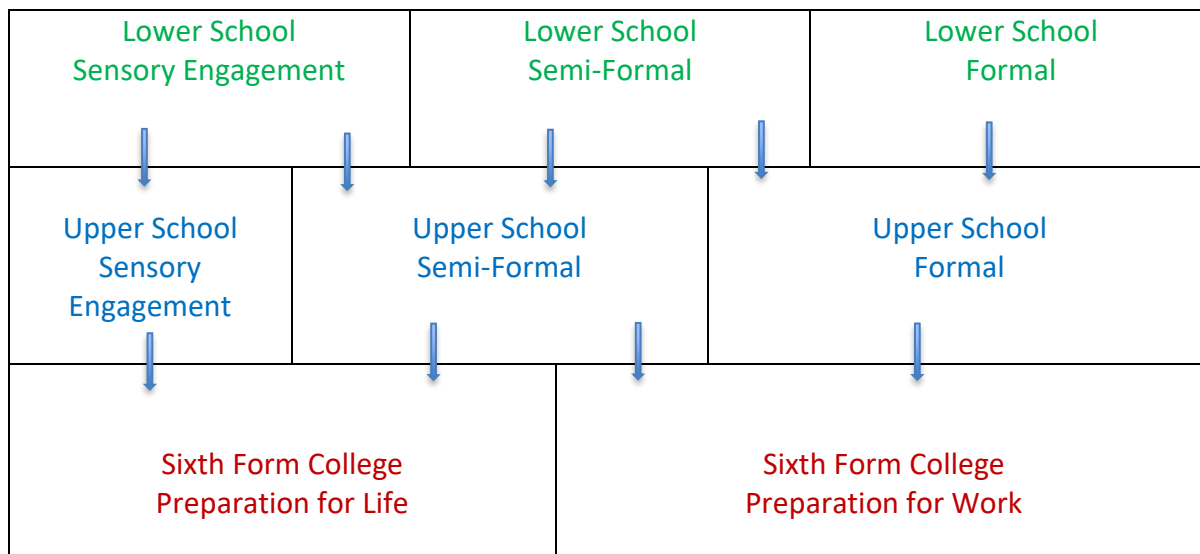| Lower School (KS1/KS2)	Upper School (KS3/KS4)	Sixth Form (KS5)	Specialist
Oak Rowan Hazel Willow Beech Maple Mulberry Sycamore	Lea Stort Avon Orwell Chelmer Thames Roding Colne	Kestrel Hawk Eagle	Blake Morris Dahl

What does the Upper School curriculum look like at Harlow Fields School and College?

Upper School Pathways

There are nine classes (including Dahl) in Upper School and whilst pupils are grouped into appropriate pathways, their learning needs are still varied. There are three pathways: Sensory Engagement (see separate handbook) Semi-Formal and Formal. Pathways are fluid as the needs of the pupil change and future groupings are amended based on staff observations and assessments of pupil progress.

Engagement Sensory	Semi Formal	Formal
Blake	Thames	Avon
Morris	Lea	Chelmer
	Colne	Orwell
	Roding	Stort
	Dahl	

Pathway Progression

Lower School Sensory Engagement	Lower School Semi-Formal	Lower School Formal
Upper School Sensory Engagement	Upper School Semi-Formal	Upper School Formal
Sixth Form College Preparation for Life		Sixth Form College Preparation for Work

Sensory Engagement

Refer to Sensory Engagement handbook.

Semi-Formal Pathway

Pupils learning within this pathway focuses on four key areas:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Independence, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical and Sensory

Formal Pathway

Pupils learning within this pathway focuses on four key areas:

- Cognition
- Communication
- Life Skills
- Physical Development

Learning Experiences – Semi-Formal Pathway

Area of Learning	Possible Learning Experiences
Cognition and Learning	Maths and Creative Arts
Communication and Interaction	Phonics, Non-verbal communication, Speaking & Listening, Sensory Stories, TacPac, Literacy, Computing
Independence, Social and Emotional Development	RSHE, RE, Wellbeing, Food Technology
Physical and Sensory	PE, Swimming*, Sensory activities, Physio targets
Personal Development	Individual targets, intensive interaction and ASDAN learning

*where listed in EHCP

Learning Experiences – Formal Pathway

Area of Learning	Possible Learning Experiences
Cognition	Maths, Science and Creative Arts
Communication	Speaking & Listening, Literacy, English and Computing
Life Skills	RSHE, RE, Wellbeing, Food Technology
Physical	PE, Gross and Fine Motor and Physio targets
Personal Development	Individual targets, ASDAN including learning around work/employment

Within the above, pupils will have the opportunity to take part in a variety of different learning experiences. These can be found on the T-Drive/Planning/Planning 2024-25

Semi-Formal Pathway

What is it- Intention	How we do it- Implementation	Why we do it- Impact
Independence, Social and Emotional Development: Development towards Personal Learning Targets Understanding of emotions Understanding of others Developing independence	Personal Care Feeding Hygiene Social and Emotional development such as RSHE, RE, Wellbeing Food Technology Sharing ideas (where appropriate) Taking Turns Completing activities with peers and adults Playing games together Personal Learning Targets linked with EHCP	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with an understanding of their emotions, an opportunity to have explored different foods, their individual personal care needs being met and an understanding of how to be social in their own ways appropriate to their needs
Physical and Sensory: Development of fine and gross motor skills. Sensory needs being met	Physical Development/PE sessions Sensory activities Sensory stories TacPac Swimming Physio targets Personal Learning Targets linked with EHCP Laughter Specialists	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with their fine, gross and sensory needs being developed and met in preparation for the next stage of their education at Harlow Fields College.
Communication and Interaction: Development of Literacy skills	Phonics, Non-verbal communication, Speaking & Listening, Sensory Stories, TacPac, Literacy Computing Personal Learning Targets linked with EHCP Speech and Language	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with the communication and interaction skills needed for them to be successful in Sixth Form including completing accreditation work.
Cognition and Learning: Development of Maths Skills Development of creative art skills	Twice Weekly Maths sessions Personal learning targets linked with EHCP Creative arts such as music and art linked into other lessons or taught as a standalone lesson	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with a range of skills linked to maths which help prepare them for accreditation work at Harlow Fields Sixth Form
Personal Development Development of: Self-help skills Personal Hygiene/care Social and emotional regulation Keeping safe British Values	Community visits. Wellbeing activities Physiotherapy Intensive Interaction Speech and language Pets therapy. Laughter Specialists ASDAN – Supporting Aspirations Personal Learning Targets	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with a range of life skills experiences that will prepare them for further education at Harlow Fields Sixth Form and the wider community

Formal Pathway

What is it- Intention	How we do it- Implementation	Why we do it- Impact
Life skills: Development of: Life skills Home management skills Relationships, health and wellbeing Team working skills development of an understanding work and job skills Transition to 6th form	ASDAN – Exploring aspirations Work experience – where appropriate RSHE RE Wellbeing Food Technology Personal Learning Targets Travel Training PET Therapy	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with developing life skills in a range of areas, strategies to support wellbeing, developing ability to/working as a team. Coping with transitions from practical method of transition days to 6th form. This is then further developed in our 6th Form
Physical Development: Development of gross and fine motor skills	PE Physiotherapy After School Clubs Fine and Gross motor skills	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School will experiences in a range of sports and activities. Pupils will have developed fundamental, gross and fine motor skills. This is then further developed in our 6th Form
Communication: Development of Literacy skills	Speaking & listening, Literacy English Computing Non-verbal communication Twice weekly English lessons Personal Learning Targets linked to EHCP Speech and Language	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with functional skills in communication, reading and writing and ICT. We aim to give our pupils (where appropriate) the opportunity to complete English at Entry Level in Year 11. This is then further developed in our 6th Form
Cognition: Development of Maths, Science and Creative Arts	Twice weekly Maths sessions Personal learning targets linked with EHCP Maths sessions twice a week Enterprise Day Pupil School Fete Weekly science lesson Music lessons Music assembly	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with functional skills in a range of maths skills. We aim to give our pupils (where appropriate) the opportunity to complete Maths at Entry Level in Year 10 and 11. Pupils to experience listening to music, singing, signing and performing using body percussion. This is then further developed in our 6th Form
Personal development Development of: Self-help skills Personal Hygiene/care Social and emotional regulation Keeping safe in the community and online British Values Rights and Responsibilities	Community visits. Wellness activities Individual targets, ASDAN (Exploring Aspirations) including learning around work/employment Travel Training Physiotherapy Speech and language Pet Therapy Mental Health Support Team	Pupils leave Harlow Fields Upper School with developing/the ability to manage a range of social situations, the skills to participate in the community and the awareness to keep themselves safe in the community. This is then further developed in our 6th Form

How is Upper School curriculum evidenced and assessed?

Paperwork and Evidence:

Each week teachers will record two entries* (Starting January 2025 after a review of assessment in the Upper School) on Earwig from two of the following five areas. This can be collectively as a class or per pupil.

Semi-Formal Pathway	Formal Pathway
Cognition and Learning	Cognition
Communication and Interaction	Communication
Independence, Social and Emotional Development	Life Skills
Physical and Sensory	Physical
Personal Development	Personal Development

* one entry for accreditation class due to work towards exam accreditation

Accreditation:

Pupils (where appropriate) will complete accreditation towards Entry Levels in Years 10 and 11 in Maths, English and Art. In English and Maths progress is tracked on spreadsheets (beginning January 2025 due to an assessment review) that shows a baseline and actual result in the different areas of the exams. Whilst in Art, a portfolio of evidence is created. We currently use the following exam boards, AQA for English and Maths and OCR for Art

Annual Reviews:

Annual reviews and pupils' five Personal Learning Targets (PLT's) will link to the core areas above. This is where we ensure we are being aspirational for our pupils, aiming to set high expectations that are achievable, meaningful and progressive.

ASDAN

Both the Semi-Formal and Formal pathways complete an ASDAN certificate which is part of the My Independence courses that ASDAN offer. The Semi-Formal pathway completes the Supporting Aspirations certificate, and the Formal pathway completes the Exploring Aspirations certificate. These are internally moderated by staff (beginning 2025) to award the pathway and module certificates and the complete course certificate is awarded following external moderation.

Tracking Learning:

PLT's that are set during the Annual Review will be tracked and evidenced using earwig which will monitor and record videos, pictures and written observations of progress towards each pupils' five personal learning targets. This will be completed once per term, but teachers will also capture evidence and learning through the five core areas weekly (as above) and any outstanding progress or special achievements will also be recorded through earwig. This is an online recording and tracking system that is shared with families and parents, therefore showcasing all our young people achievements, including at home.

We also monitor and track achievement levels for every post on earwig, this gives a clear picture of achievement, whether it be above expected, expected or below expected.

For pupils on the semi-formal pathway, the engagement model observations will be completed at the beginning and end of each term. Each pupil will be evaluated using the engagement model to show progress including maintenance of skills.

Earwig:

Earwig is an application designed to evidence learning, make assessments and track progress. At HFS, Earwig is currently used for evidence only capturing achievements towards lesson objectives, celebrating personal learning targets, and showcasing moments of personal accomplishments. Earwig is used to record work with other professionals linked to their EHCPs or personal learning targets. Evidence is then presented in a clear and structured timeline for any class, individual pupil, or area of learning across the school. Earwig is personalised to each school dependent on which evidence needs to be tracked.

For those working on the Engagement Model, it is a key tool to use as evidence and assessment should be based on observations of pupils. Targets are individualised to each pupil and capturing photos or videos provides clear evidence of learning. Earwig has been designed for HFS to track the 5 areas of engagement linked to the Engagement Model: Exploration, Initiation, Anticipation, Persistence and Realisation. In each record of evidence, teachers can highlight which area of engagement was shown by the pupil based on observations.

Engagement Model

As stated by the DFE, at HFS we follow and assess based on the engagement model approach which 'is the single best predictor of successful learning for children with learning disabilities (Lovannone et al., 2003). Without engagement, there is no deep learning (Hargreaves, 2006) effective teaching, meaningful outcomes, real attainment or quality progress (Carpenter, 2010). There are 5 areas of engagement model which identifies and celebrates all pupils' progress, including more typical linear and lateral progress, the consolidation and maintenance of knowledge, skills and concepts and the prevention or slowing of a decline in pupils' performance, whilst recognising that a minority of pupils may have a regressive condition.

The model recognises that engagement is multi-dimensional and breaks it down into 5 areas that allow teachers to assess:

- How well their pupils are being engaged in developing new skills, knowledge and concepts in the school's curriculum.

- How effective the special educational provision is in empowering their pupils to progress against the agreed outcomes in their EHC plans and how effectively pupils are engaging with and making progress against these plans.

- Pupils' achievements and progress across the 4 areas of need of the SEND code of practice (communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, and sensory and/or physical needs)

The 5 areas of the engagement model are:

Exploration: This shows whether a pupil can build on their initial reaction to a new stimulus or activity; for example, whether they display more than an involuntary or startled reaction to the activity. Additionally, the pupil may be interested in and curious about the stimulus or activity; for example, they may notice it or reach out to it. Exploration becomes more established when the pupil is still responsive to the same stimulus or activity when it is presented in different contexts or environments, for example, a different time of day, a different place or with different people. Exploration is important in identifying which stimuli or activities interest the pupil and motivate them to pay attention and investigate them further, so that they can develop new knowledge and skills.

Realisation: This shows how the pupil interacts with a new stimulus or activity or discovers a new aspect of a familiar stimulus or activity. They will display behaviours that show they want more control of the stimulus or activity, for example by stopping it or trying to make changes to it. The pupil will often show what familiar adults consider to be 'surprise', 'excitement', 'delight', 'amazement' or 'fear'. 11 Realisation becomes more established when the pupil uses the newly developed skills or knowledge in new ways and in different contexts or environments. This is important as it can keep the pupil excited in their education and prevents an activity from becoming routine.

Anticipation: This shows how much the pupil predicts, expects or associates a stimulus or activity with an event. They may anticipate that a familiar activity is about to start or finish by interpreting cues or prompts such as auditory (what they hear), tactile (what they feel) and visual (what they see). Anticipation becomes more established when the pupil shows awareness that a familiar activity is about to start or finish, even when cues and prompts are reduced. Anticipation is important in measuring the pupil's understanding of cause and effect; for example, if they do this, then something will happen. This prepares the brain and helps with the pupil's memory and sequencing.

Persistence: This shows whether the pupil can sustain their attention in a stimulus or activity for long enough that they can actively try to find out more and interact with it. Persistence becomes more established when the pupil shows a determined effort to interact with the stimulus or activity. They will do this by showing intentional changes such as changes in their gaze, posture, and hand movement. Persistence is important so that the pupil maintains an activity long enough to develop, reinforce, and apply their skills or knowledge so they can achieve their desired outcome.

Initiation: This shows how much, and the different ways, a pupil investigates a stimulus or activity to bring about a desired outcome. The pupil will act spontaneously and independently during a familiar activity without waiting for direction. Initiation becomes more established when the pupil shows they understand how to create an impact on their environment to achieve a desired outcome. Initiation is important to establish how well the pupil is developing independence, which is required for more advanced progression.

At HFS each engagement model pupil will have a working document that reflects how they present to each of the above areas of engagement. This is then used to track progress using the 5 areas and a above expected, expected or below expected traffic light system. Teachers will also complete half termly observations based on pupils personal learning targets as set in their EHCP's.

Appendices

	Engagement		Formal
Learning Characteristics	• Pre-intentional to emerging intentional communication • Reactive and responsive contextual awareness • Emerging social awareness • Sense of self by responses to sensations including hunger, pain, heat etc • Needs time/space to process stimuli • Early problem-solving skills • Learnt responses in familiar routines • Beginning to develop joint attention		• Meeting most of the pre key stage standards • Developing levels of independence, social awareness and communication skills • Encouraged to self-evaluate and reflect • Maintaining, retaining, and generalising some skills • Developing confidence • Some understanding of basic abstract concepts • Applying some skills and knowledge • Communication skills • Self-evaluative • Emerging understanding of abstract concepts
	Sensory Engagement	**Semi-Formal**	
	• High levels of physical and/or medical needs • Sensory impairments • Multiple learning difficulties	• Persistent difficulties with social interaction and communication • Repetitive patterns of behaviours • Restricted interests and activities • Difficulties with sensory processing	
Approaches to Learning	• Multi-sensory learning experiences • Familiar routines and repetition • Turn-taking experiences • Visual/tactile/sensory cues (photos, music, smells, textures) • Experiential learning • Extended processing time • Intensive interaction • Active exploration • Personalised communications systems • Physical development and postural management • 1-1, independent paired, and group experiences	• Structured teaching systems • Familiar routines and repetition • Visual timetables and schedules • Self-regulation strategies • Structured exploration • Turn taking experiences • Personalised behaviour support • Clear physical structure within the environment • Personalised communication systems • Visual supports (photos, PECs) • Self-regulation strategies • 1-1, independent paired, and group working	• Builds prior knowledge. • Visual supports (symbols, written) • Now and Next strategies • Timed activities • Self-regulation strategies • Embedded - personalised communication systems including Makaton, PECS • 1:1, Independent, paired and group working • Supported purposeful peer interactions • Emerging problem solving skills • Emerging recognition of self and peer achievements • Repetition and consolidation of learning • Application and generalisation of skills

Interventions and Strategies

Below is a table that explains some of the interventions, strategies or adaptive teaching that is used across upper school. It gives a brief explanation of what it is, what it looks like and why we do it.

What is it?	What does it look like?	Why do we do it?
Attention Autism	Stage 1- Bucket activities- Focus Stage2- Attention building- sustain. Stage 3- Interactive game- shift Stage4- Table activities- transition	To increase attention skills and encourage communication. This style can also be used as a teaching/lesson structure.
Reflexology	Staff using the functional reflexology rainbow by Lorraine Senior. Different techniques used on the hands and feet.	Can help calm and regulate pupils. Reinforces positive touch and helps build relationships.
Sensory Stories	Stories with interactive elements that show objects of reference, bring stories to life and engage pupil's senses.	Helps reinforce pupils understanding of stories/words and encourages engagement.
Intensive Interaction	Playful interactions led by the pupil. Working on early interaction skills.	To encourage interactions and eventually more intentional communication.
Sensory Circuits	1. Alerting 2. Organising 3. Calming	Gives pupils sensory input to help them calm and focus.
Sensory/Messy Exploration	Children exploring and playing with sensory items such as food, sand or water.	Helps develop exploration and early play skills. Gives sensory input which helps pupils focus and regulate.
Offering of Sensory Items	Children wearing ear defenders, chewing a chew or eating different textured food.	Helps to filter or provide sensory input to help pupil regulate. Hopes to prevent sensory overload.
Structured Teaching (TEACCH)	Individual teaching timetables, workstations or booths, work packs, red and green trays. Highly structured routine.	By making the environment predictable it makes pupils feel secure. Ensures pupils are continuously moving on to the next activity. Help

		anxious pupils feel more secure.
TACPAC	Music and touch using various pieces of equipment.	TAPPAC creates sensory alignment and helps people of any age who have sensory impairment, for example, visual impairment, developmental delay, complex learning difficulties, sensory processing disorder or limited pre-vernal levels of communication.

Skills Taught During Lunch Break

One of the best times to teach important skills like manners, motor skills or social interaction skills is during the lunch break. It is a daily routine that all pupils participate in, providing consistent opportunities for practice and improving skills. The lunch hall setting allows for social interactions and the development of important social skills. Teaching skills during lunch can promote independence and empower pupils to take ownership of their own needs and actions. Although the specific skills to teach may differ based on individual pupil need, there are foundational skills that are valuable for all pupils. Including:

- Asking for Help - Encouraging pupils to seek assistance when faced with challenges such as opening containers or cleaning up spills.
- Opening Containers - Assisting pupils in developing motor skills by teaching them how to independently open containers like lunch boxes, drink cartons or snack packages.
- Use of Utensils - Guiding pupils on using utensils, which will foster self-feeding abilities.
- Waiting in Lunch Line - Educating pupils on the etiquette and steps involved in going through the lunch line, such as patiently waiting their turn and adhering to instructions.
- Holding the Tray or Lunch Boxes - Helping pupils enhance their motor skills and coordination by instructing them on how to carry their trays and lunch boxes.
- Sitting Posture - Teaching pupils the importance of sitting in their seats properly for promoting good posture and space awareness at the table.
- Socialising with Friends - Engaging in conversations with friends at the lunch table, encouraging social interactions and conversation skills among pupils as well as playing together (where appropriate) on the playground
- Using Kind Hands - Emphasising boundaries and personal space by teaching pupils to place/use their hands appropriately.