



Who we are and what we stand for:

The Dorin Park ethos is encompassed by the values of *Communication, Independence, Wellbeing, Inclusivity and Equality*.

We value **Communication** by; Promoting open and effective communication between families, staff and multi-professional teams; Teaching learners to communicate using speech, words, pictures, symbols, Makaton signs, braille, and body language; Actively listening to learners.

We value **Independence** by; Having clear curriculum pathways tailored to the needs of learners; Preparing for adulthood from EYFS through to Key Stage 5; Having ambitious expectations of our pupils; Tailoring the support each learner needs.

We value **Wellbeing** by; Demonstrating and promoting positive social interaction and positive behaviour support; Teaching learners to understand and communicate their emotions, sensory needs and regulation preferences; Including and supporting learners' families in our school community; Supporting the personal and professional development of the staff team.

We value **Inclusivity and Equality** by; Celebrating learners' individual and collective successes and strengths; Valuing the individual differences and needs of our learners; Understanding that learners learn at different rates and with different support; Ensuring that learners feel safe to be themselves.

Through our school values and vision of '*learning together, growing together*', we aim to prepare our learners to be as independent and confident as possible as they reach adulthood.

Dorin Park provides for pupils aged 4-19 with a range of complex learning, physical and medical needs, and Autism Spectrum Condition. All pupils reside in the Cheshire West and Chester area.

The school is maintained by CWAC LA, and has 151 commissioned places (including 8 at the satellite class, with 171 pupils currently on roll. All pupils have an EHCP, and 39.8% of our pupils access Pupil Premium funding. We have a satellite class at Upton-By-Chester High School and are working in collaboration with the school and the local authority to open a second class. This will enable us to offer provision in both KS3 and KS4. We work in close partnership with the LA to meet the recommendations of the CWAC High Needs Review.

Throughout the pandemic, Dorin Park maintained education both onsite and remotely for all pupils, and put in place a range of measures to ensure adapted EHCP provision was in place to support pupils in their learning and development. 90% of families reported that their child was well supported to access remote learning, and in their emotional wellbeing. Some parents commented on how well supported they were, and that direct access to

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teachers via named email contacts had been a particularly positive strategy. This model has been applied in exceptional circumstances leading to a school closure, for example, a breakdown in the school heating system.

Dorin Park has worked as a strategic partner with local Teaching Schools, and has provided ITT placements, CPD and School to School support as part of these partnerships.

The most recent Ofsted was July 2024. The school maintained its 'Good' grading.

The school believes itself to be Good with Outstanding features, with the drive and commitment to develop the school towards Outstanding.

The quality of education is good because:

INTENT

At Dorin Park, we believe each of our complex learners is entitled to an ambitious curriculum that is personalised and appropriate for them. All learners have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and require modified approaches to achieve their aspirations and goals. Our curriculum reflects the EHCP areas and addresses pupils' individual needs and barriers to learning so that each pupil can develop to reach their true potential. There is a focus on preparing the pupils for adulthood throughout the school.

Post-EYFS, learners at Dorin Park follow one of four learning pathways: pre-formal, informal, semi-formal or formal. The school ensures that there is fluidity between pathways, allowing for a personalised approach that enables learners to benefit from approaches from other pathways and to move between pathways if necessary as they progress.

The pre-formal, informal and semi-formal curricula incorporate the EQUALS Schemes of Work. Staff have a strong understanding of the intent of each curriculum, and have been involved in its development. The progression maps for each subject area demonstrate the coherence and sequence of the curriculum, which enables learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, abilities and independence they need for the next stage of their education.

The learners following the **pre-formal curriculum** have profound and multiple learning difficulties and complex needs, usually working within the Engagement Model. Each of our learners is unique, requiring staff to take a holistic approach centred in a multi-sensory environment around the physical needs, strengths and interests of each learner whilst acknowledging how they best learn. The focus is upon enabling the learners to establish positive interactive relationships with others and to proactively explore the world around them, gaining environmental control skills. All learners are given maximum opportunity to achieve the highest level of independence possible.

The learners following the **informal curriculum** have complex SLD, SLD/Autism usually working within the Engagement Model or Pre-Key Stage Standards 1 -2. These learners have considerable sensory sensitivities that are addressed through their curriculum including therapeutic interventions.

Through their lessons, our learners learn to trust the adults and the adults learn about the learners' abilities and preferred communication approaches, their responses, likes and dislikes. If the learners have not yet built up a repertoire of interests, we can then find objects and activities of interest through the safe and secure adult-child relationship. When these interests have been established, they are used to motivate the learners to communicate, express themselves and develop independence.

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The **semi-formal curriculum** supports a wide range of learners typically working between standards 1 to 6 of the pre-key stage standards in primary. In addition to their severe or moderate learning difficulties, they may also face other barriers to learning such as physical difficulties, medical conditions, social and emotional needs, sensory processing disorder, visual or hearing impairments, communication difficulties. The semi-formal curriculum has a strong foundation of life skills. These skills promote independence and communication skills allowing the learner to make progress to the best of their ability.

Learners on our **formal curriculum** have moderate learning difficulties, alongside associated complexities, such as SEMH, physical and visual impairments. These learners attend our satellite class at Upton-By-Chester High School. Learners access a range of National Curriculum subjects for their Key Stage, modified to accommodate their developmental level and special educational needs. Life skills and independence skills also form a part of the curriculum, in addition to the more traditional formal learning subjects. As the term 'formal' implies, there is a high level of structure. We nevertheless avoid making the formal curriculum too abstract; teachers ensure that learning is linked to practical activities and consolidated and applied in practical sessions. Older learners will pursue accreditation pathways (e.g., Entry Level/Level 1/GCSE as appropriate).

Progression maps for each subject area ensure that teachers know the ambition for pupils in each pathway at each stage of their education journey. These are created and updated by Subject Lead teachers, working collaboratively with focused teaching teams with experience across the school.

IMPLEMENTATION

Curriculum pathways are well led by strategic and operational staff, who, along with Subject Leaders, ensure that consistency of implementation is high, lessons are well planned, sequenced and resourced, and teachers have good subject knowledge, supported by subject and SEND specialist teachers.

Low-stakes learning walks and supportive lesson observations have shown that teachers continually check learners' understanding through questioning, observing and monitoring, with the support of teaching assistants. Teachers have in-depth knowledge of each learner, and know exactly when and how to support each individual's learning journey.

Learners' capacity for embedding and retrieving knowledge is highly variable across the cohort, dependent on e.g., their processing speed and metacognitive skills. Teachers adapt to this, providing a variety of ways to embed learning and show mastery of skills, such as multi-sensory engagement, frequent retrieval practice, low-stakes testing, varying practice, transferring skills to different settings (home/school/community etc.). Where communication skills allow, teachers effectively promote pupil discussion in a variety of subjects.

Demands placed on pupils are personalised to each pupil, taking into account their cognitive ability, SEND barriers to learning such as sensory processing needs, and emotional regulation, which can vary day to day and hour to hour. Teachers maintain their ambitions for pupils whilst dynamically adapting for day-to-day variations.

Teachers are confident in using the bespoke assessment frameworks, and accreditation frameworks, and are effective in the use of Evidence for Learning (EfL) to record and moderate assessment. This assessment and moderation model is effective and manageable for staff workload, and is welcomed by parents who can see the evidence of their child's progress.

The school invests in the learning environment but it is hindered somewhat by the expansion of the school population beyond the ideal occupancy of the building. The school is working in close partnership with the LA to

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remedy this. Individual classrooms are well adapted to meet the needs of the learners, with a small range of subject specialist rooms, and spaces tailored for the SEND of learners. Teaching materials are well matched to curriculum pathways, and leaders invest in developing these as appropriate.

Communication, phonics and reading continue to be a high priority to enable learners to access all areas of the curriculum and reach their potential. Teachers and TAs are trained in systematic phonics and interventions such as See and Learn, and continually support pupils to develop their skills. Formal reading and comprehension assessments are conducted termly, and any disconnection between decoding and comprehension levels are understood in the context of individual learning needs.

Phonics learning starts as soon as pupils arrive in EYFS, where pupils learn to listen, respond and communicate to ensure that gaps in sound processing are understood, and this takes place alongside speech and language assessments from SaLT to baseline learners' expression and comprehension of language.

Teachers consistently model language and vocabulary at the specific level of pupils, to ensure understanding and development of their next steps in learning. Balancing a vocabulary rich environment with the sensory needs of our complex learners is achieved through an in-depth knowledge of pupils and with the support of SaLT and OT teams.

Cultural Capital is embedded throughout the curriculum, allied to the school values.

IMPACT

Evidence for Learning (EfL) shows the consistency of learners' work across the curriculum. Case studies and SEND Profiles show the impact of individuals learning, which is moderated by pathway leads. The Engagement Model monitoring clearly shows the impact of the curriculum on our most complex learners' development.

All pupils leave Dorin Park with the skills and knowledge to take them confidently on to their next step, whether that is a care pathway, college or supported internship, which are all carefully planned for with learners and their families.

Dependent on their curriculum pathway, learners achieve a range of vocational and academic accreditations and qualifications that support them in their destinations beyond Dorin Park.

Typically, our learners on the **pre-formal and informal pathways** will continue to develop their life skills through accessing a bespoke package of activities. There are a range of care providers in the local area that can provide day services for young people. For some learners, a specialist college may be appropriate, so that they can continue to develop communication, independence and life skills.

Typically, our **semi-formal pathway** learners move onto local colleges, which include:

- Coleg Cambria (Deeside or Northop campuses)
- Cheshire College – South and West (foundation courses)
- Petty Pool College
- Wirral Met College

For some learners, there will be bespoke social care packages that include accessing day centres.

Typically, our **formal pathway** learners will continue their studies by attending a local college. Colleges that learners frequently move on to are:

- Coleg Cambria (Deeside or Northop campuses)
- Cheshire College – South and West
- Petty Pool College
- Reaseheath College

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- Wirral Met College

Another option is a supported internship, where learners follow a work-based training programme with a view to gaining employment upon completion of the internship.

The quality of education is not yet outstanding because:

A small number of staff do not implement the phonics programme consistently well. This hinders how quickly some pupils learn to read. (*Ofsted inspection July 2024*)

Therefore, our development focus for quality of education is:

Auditing and monitoring the delivery of phonics across school.

Providing CPD to staff to ensure consistency in delivering the phonics curriculum effectively.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good because:

Learners show respect to their peers in accordance with their emotional understanding. The school nurtures this respect and understanding through e.g., our diverse and inclusive approach to PHSE and 'The World About Me' curriculum, Zones of Regulation, Culture weeks, and achieving the 'Rainbow Flag' award.

We believe behaviour that can challenge is most often the result of an unmet need, or a difficulty in communicating that need to others. We understand that many of our pupils experience sensory issues and may find particular environments and experiences over-stimulating, frightening or uncomfortable. Adults and peers can be sources of unpredictable actions and sensory sensations; transitions and demands which interrupt routines and repetitive activities (which a pupil may rely on to give a sense of order and predictability to their day) can provoke anxieties which may be communicated to others through behaviours which are challenging in their nature.

We believe that in order to be active and valued participants in society as adults, our pupils need to be empowered to respond to and cope with a range of potential situations and demands. These include:

- Coping with waiting (for an activity, person, event etc.)
- Coping with being told "no" (when something wanted cannot be given or is not available at all, regardless of how long you might wait)
- Coping with doing a non-preferred activity (doing something/going somewhere, even though you would rather not do it at all e.g., as an adult: doing housework, going to the dentist etc.)
- Coping with criticism (when somebody passes judgment on your performance, justly or unjustly, and responding appropriately to this)
- Taking action when the activity/environment you are in becomes too unpleasant to stay there (e.g., consider options when a room is too cold, too hot, too noisy, too crowded)

Our safe, well-ordered environment for learning is enhanced by resources to support learners who have sensory or emotional regulation difficulties. Our successful Zones of Regulation curriculum is supported by the nurture cabins, sensory diet room and self-regulation spaces designed by the Behaviour Team.

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The Behaviour Team including the Team Teach response team effectively support learners in crisis who demonstrate physical aggression toward themselves, staff, peers and their environment. This team meets twice each month to develop strategies for each child, and these are shared with parents in family behaviour clinics.

Our CSSC Behaviour Policy outlines common values shared with our Cheshire Special Schools Consortium partners:

- To develop independence skills for use beyond school life
- To experience valued involvement within the school and in the wider community
- To develop skills necessary to make informed choices, which others will respect, and to communicate these choices to others
- To make and maintain social relationships and friendships
- To continue in the ongoing process of self-discovery
- To reduce incidences of behaviour which adversely impact on one's own physical or emotional wellbeing, or on the emotional or physical wellbeing of others

These are in line with our whole school values of Communication, Independence, Wellbeing, Inclusivity and Equality.

Staff are well trained in line with BILD, PBS and Trauma-Informed Practice, and work closely with our cluster of special schools to develop practice (CSSC). One senior leader has been trained to be a BILD Positive Behaviour Support Coach. All learners have an individual Pupil Passport that is shared with all staff, and transitions with pupils between pastoral groups. Learners who require them have Positive Behaviour Support Plans and identified pupils may have a Dynamic Risk Assessment which is created in collaboration with professionals and parents.

CPOMs is used to record, monitor and gather all behaviour incidents, including derogatory language. Each staff member has access to and is trained to use CPOMs to record any incidents that occur or they witness. Data is collated and assessed on a termly basis. Any incidences of concern are swiftly responded to, and parents involved as needed. Our learners have varying social and emotional skills and need considerable and sustained support to understand appropriate and inappropriate actions and language.

Learners show pride in their learning and remarkable resilience considering their barriers to learning and participation. Learners are celebrated in achievement assemblies and using class-based and school-wide reward systems.

The Behaviour Team work closely with the Family Liaison Officer and pastoral staff to support with any behaviour issues that could/potentially affect a child's attendance and punctuality. Training is delivered to transport drivers and escorts to support with effective behaviour management strategies that support the school's policy and approaches in line with BILD PBS.

No fixed term exclusions occurred in 2024-25.

There is a culture of respect and acceptance amongst staff and pupils. Staff, pupil and family wellbeing is a high priority, and a comprehensive staff wellbeing policy is in place. The Headteacher is a qualified Mental Health First Aider. Behaviour clinics have promoted a positive communication tool between staff and parents – this has encouraged understanding of challenging behaviours in both environments and supported the wellbeing of both staff and families.

Behaviour and attitudes are not yet outstanding because:

A whole school approach needs to be embedded to support emotional regulation with sensory intervention.

Therefore, our development focus for the area of pupils' behaviour and attitudes is:

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Ensuring that self-regulation is supported, encouraged and resourced appropriately.

Provision and outcomes for pupils' personal development are good because:

Personal development holds a high level of importance in the Dorin Park curriculum, and is taught through 'My Independence', 'My Play and Leisure', and the Life Skills curriculum. Families also identified this as a top priority in a survey of their views.

The My Independence curriculum prepares pupils for life beyond Dorin Park, and maps out the learning pupils access from EYFS up into 6th form, with the ambition for all pupils to reach the highest possible level of independence before they move on to the next stage in their education. Cultural Capital is embedded in the life skills curriculum and is enacted through our school values.

All pupils access a wide range of personal development learning opportunities ranging from community visits, residential educational visits, food technology and hygiene, enterprise projects, travel training, and shopping skills. The My Independence curriculum links to learners' EHCPs and is tracked on Evidence for Learning (EfL) to ensure that all pupils are progressing towards their desired outcomes. Pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5 work towards Life Skills accreditations where appropriate, and younger pupils are celebrated in weekly achiever assemblies which include a school-values linked challenge and award each week.

Pupils access the two Forest Schools areas through 'My Outdoor Learning' lessons led by Outdoor Learning lead staff. All Primary pupils also access the school swimming pool weekly to support their physical development and dressing skills.

Learners access a range of lunch-time clubs such as sing and sign, Lego, dance, craft clubs.

Being part of the wider community is important to us, and many pupils take part in cluster events and sports competitions each year, achieving a range of awards such as the Gold School Games Mark. The school has also won local Panathlon competitions for e.g., Basketball and New Age Curling.

The school works in partnership with Coleg Cambria, with Key Stages 4 and 5 pupils accessing lessons on their site to develop confidence in attending colleges in the future. We have developed a working partnership with Upton-by-Chester High School, and have a Satellite class on the school site. This commenced in September 2024 with a view to a bespoke, 2 class provision being built by 2026.

Our pupils are taught to respect, understand and appreciate people's differences, through their lessons in PSHE, RSE, My Communication and The World About Me. The school gained the Rainbow Flag Award. The school demonstrates having a diverse and inclusive environment and learners are encouraged to celebrate their own differences and feel valued by their peers.

Learners in Year 6 and above have the opportunity to represent their class as part of our Pupil Council. This council enables pupil voice to be heard and responded to about lunchtime menus, playground equipment and construction, the way we celebrate learners through house points and assemblies, and their views on school more generally. Learners experience the chance to function as positive, participatory citizens through the council and through our community visits and fundraising and celebration opportunities.

Careers education at Dorin Park supports our young people as they transition to college, supported internship, apprenticeship or employment. Careers and college options are introduced in Key Stage 2 through the Personal,

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Health, Social and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) programme. Introducing the college and careers options early encourages our learners to see moving on from Dorin Park as a positive thing, the next step to becoming an adult.

At Key Stages 4 and 5, careers education takes on a more focused role. We work closely with the Young People's Service (YPS), to ensure that all of our learners are given the opportunity to ask questions, share worries or concerns, and develop links to colleges. As part of taught lessons, learners are supported to identify their skills and the lessons that they enjoy in order to find potential college courses or areas of study. All learners are supported to develop realistic life goals that will be achievable (we talk about the need to have GCSEs and a university degree for some careers).

There are opportunities to visit colleges and participate in weekly lessons for some pupils; this removes some of the worry surrounding college as they become familiar with college layouts and college communities. In addition to identifying potential paths to college, learners receive teaching in skills such as preparing for interviews, being interviewed, basic first aid and CPR, job/college applications and writing CVs.

Alongside taught careers and work skills lessons, working in partnership with the CWAC PLEDGE team, learners in Key Stages 4 and 5 also have access to workplace experience and education that helps them to identify areas of interest and the expectations of working life. According to pupil need, providers are invited into school to talk to pupils about courses and careers on offer.

Personal development is not yet outstanding because:

The new RSE curriculum needs to be embedded.

Therefore, our development focus for pupils' personal development is:

All learners to be prepared and empowered with the knowledge and understanding to move safely into adulthood.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good because:

Leaders use the SEF and SDP to show their vision for the development of Dorin Park, and the high-quality curriculum it provides to pupils, tailored to their needs. The leadership team has worked in partnership with stakeholders to determine the strategic vision of the school, and there is a strong shared commitment to ensure that all pupils continue to access a high-quality education with the values of *Communication, Independence, Wellbeing, Inclusivity and Equality* at the heart of what we do.

The DPS curriculum has been consistently implemented across the school, based around the EQUALS schemes, alongside a structured bespoke assessment system recorded through Evidence for Learning. The curriculum has been adapted and tailored to pupils' needs, and is led by strategic pathway leads (senior and middle leaders), and managed by pathway lead teachers. Each pathway has its own assessment frameworks mapped to the needs of learners, and these inform the EHCP Outcomes and SEND Profiles of each learner. Over the year, teachers have participated in CPD on different subjects, interventions and learning and assessment strategies, including understanding barriers to learning. A strategic three-year CPD plan is in place, and one middle leader is in the process of completing their NPQSL. Two senior leaders have recently completed the NPQH qualification and 2 Senior leaders have completed the NPQSL qualification.

Due to internal recruitment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, along with the retirement of an assistant Headteacher, a new leadership structure is now in place. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) consists of the

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Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and 2 Assistant Headteachers and a School Business Manager. There is also a new team of Middle Leaders in place who each lead on one of the four pathways.

Assessment, monitoring and moderation through Evidence for Learning and using the SEND Profile ensures that leaders are aware of pupils' learning journeys, and whether pupils are meeting their long- and short-term outcomes over time. Low-stakes learning walks and lesson observations have commenced to identify good practice and areas for development. Learners who are not on track to achieve outcomes or accreditations are supported with additional teacher/TA time. If the child's barrier to progress is due to communication or emotional difficulties, SaLT or the behaviour team may become involved to support the child. A specialist complex need HLTA supports pupils with Visual Impairment to access their learning effectively and develop mobility and independence skills. Staff are well trained in interventions and strategies to support learning, and in their subject and SEND specialisms.

Leaders have strong relationships with learners and families, and know their individual strengths and needs, supported by the Safeguarding Leads and the Family Liaison Officer. The school has a strong PTA, who work closely with leaders to bring enrichment opportunities to school via fundraising and community activities. 87% of parents/carers feel that their child makes good progress with the other 13% of parents selecting 'Don't know' and 100% of parents/carers feel that their child is safe and happy at Dorin Park (Survey Sept 25).

Parents are regularly offered supportive opportunities to engage with leaders, governors and other parents such as coffee mornings with focus speakers/training, transition meetings, and progress meetings. The Headteacher has an open-door policy, which parents have responded to positively. Parents are regularly offered opportunities to engage in on-site events/celebrations such as Harvest and Easter celebrations, sports day and 'come and learn' sessions.

The leadership team has engaged with staff in a variety of ways to understand the strengths and needs of the school, and has a good understanding of the pressures facing the team. This engagement resulted in a number of changes to reduce workload such as streamlining administrative tasks, reducing the quantity of paperwork around assessment, giving clear plans, expectations and timelines for tasks, use of an online calendar, and daily swift virtual briefings to improve communication pathways. Leaders have adopted an open-door policy and systems around swift leadership responses to incidents and queries, ensuring all staff have the support they need. Governors hold focus groups with teaching and support staff to understand their needs and workload, and the curriculum developments underway, which then ensures they can give appropriate support and challenge to the leadership team.

Staff are managed realistically and constructively by leaders. A clear structure to line management and appraisal is understood by the whole team. Leaders have implemented a reduction in planning workload through investment in curriculum and physical resources. More supportive approaches to leave of absence, absence management and the ability to work from home in PPA time have shown staff that they are valued and trusted. Bullying and harassment are not tolerated, and any individuals are addressed by leaders. Parents are spoken with directly and visible support is given to staff, including SLT attendance at parent meetings.

Governors understand their role and are effective in carrying out their three principal functions. They connect with school stakeholders frequently throughout the year to ensure they know and understand the school well. Governors are allocated to focus groups aligned to the SDP, and are adept at asking strategic questions to support and challenge leaders at all levels. Governors are committed to their own development, showing a high level of attendance at governor meetings and CPD. Governors assess their skills and knowledge each year and seek to ensure the board maintains its strength and commitment. In 2022, Governors won the CWGA 'Governing Board of the Year'.

Governors are supported by the Headteacher, School Business Manager and Clerk to Governors who ensure that all statutory duties are addressed throughout each year, and that compliance is maintained at all times.

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Safeguarding remains effective. The DSL and Safeguarding Team are well trained and experienced, and provide training and updates to all staff and governors, ensuring that staff know their roles and responsibilities in ensuring children are protected both in school and at home. Relationships with the SCP and local Social Care and Early Help Teams including TAF advisors are strong and effective, with referrals made in a timely manner to support children and families. Recruitment procedures conform to Safer Recruitment and at least one member of any recruitment panel is trained in this.

Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because:

The new structure of Middle leaders needs to be embedded. The impact of each pathway, curriculum and pupil progress needs to be monitored to ensure effectiveness.

Therefore, our development focus for leadership and management is:

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum through the Senior and Middle leader structure. To embed Skills Trackers for the more able semi-formal learners to capture evidence of progress in subjects, beyond the pupils' SEND profile targets.

The effectiveness of EYFS provision is good because:

INTENT

The curriculum for Foundation Stage learners is based on the seven areas of the statutory framework, but centres on the development of communication and independence skills. Most learners enter school without a formal communication method, and are reliant on adults to meet the majority of their needs. The curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of all learners, as set out in their EHCP, and allows them to reach their long- and short-term outcomes. It is enhanced through Outdoor Learning provision and physical development sessions to target mobility and sensory needs (swimming, sensory circuits, rebound therapy, community visits). Foundation stage pupils are included in a variety of whole school learning experiences to develop cultural capital, such as Culture Week, Arts Week and religious celebrations.

The curriculum demonstrates an ambitious progression, but allows for pupils to progress at their own rate. MTPs ensure coverage of the curriculum is varied and motivating, and delivered in a multi-sensory way, with additional interventions to meet specific needs of learners with e.g., VI. It provides learners with the foundations of learning they need to progress to the pre-formal, informal or semi-formal curriculum in Key Stage 1.

Learners arrive at different stages of understanding of language, listening and attention skills, and therefore initial phonics learning centres around understanding of sound and language allied to expressive and receptive communication. Once pupils are secure in their identification and understanding of a variety of sounds (including responding to their own name), they progress onto our Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, alongside communication and attention development through e.g., Attention Autism Therapy, See and Learn, and Speech and Language Therapy interventions.

Staff are diligent in their commitment to supporting learners to meet their potential, and this commitment is shared by parents and governors. All learners arrive with an EHCP, and the needs and outcomes from these influence the

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curriculum and provision tailored to each child. Staff create each learner's SEND Profile to map out their strengths, needs, individual provision and progress.

IMPLEMENTATION

To implement a meaningful curriculum for our learners, all who start at the earliest stages of communication, a total communication approach is used, enabling all learners to engage at their own level. Speech, Makaton, visual symbol or photographic supports, objects of reference, PODD/Communication Books and VOCAs (Voice Output Communication Aids) are used alongside Colourful Semantics and chat mats. Staff know each child's level of understanding of language (using the EYFS framework) and speed of processing, and tailor their interactions and instructions to ensure pupils understand and can respond appropriately.

Staff are well trained in a variety of communication strategies and in systematic phonics to ensure consistency. Learners are regularly assessed by teachers and Speech Therapists who engage with parents to provide training and resources to support their child to succeed. Reading books, where appropriate are matched to pupils' phonics ability.

Texts are thoughtfully chosen based on learners' interests, ability and understanding, and are delivered in a multi-sensory way, bringing the story to life and supporting vocabulary development. Chat mats, visual symbols and Makaton further support comprehension and vocabulary. The reading area is inviting and staff model interest in books, reading aloud frequently and encouraging learners to engage.

Frequent early mathematical experiences are woven into the continuous provision in EYFS, and are targeted each day in group and individual focused activities, all in a multi-sensory way, using concrete resources to encourage engagement. Skills progression is built into the planning and assessment framework to support learning and readiness for Key Stage 1.

Less experienced/skilled staff are mentored and access a range of high quality CPD opportunities led by specialist teachers. The school nurse, SaLT, OT and Physiotherapists train staff to support learners' complex needs. Teaching staff are supported through the appraisal process, and TAs go through a supervision process to ensure pupils get the quality of support they need.

Our learners' capacity to transfer knowledge from short-term memory to long-term memory, and to then use this knowledge to inform further learning, can depend on a range of factors and can take a substantial amount of time. Their learning profiles can be 'spiky', for example rote counting to numbers beyond 100, but not understanding what the number names relate to, or being able to say many words as part of an echolaic expression, but not using words in the appropriate context. This requires revisiting learning opportunities frequently in a multi-sensory way and supporting frequent retrieval practice until a child can demonstrate that they have retained the skills and knowledge, and are able to move on to their next steps in learning.

Learners are assessed using the EYFS baseline, and against their EHCP outcomes, which are informed by our bespoke assessment framework. Evidence is recorded using Evidence for Learning, shared with parents and routinely moderated. This method is effective and efficient for the EYFS team.

The learning environment is adapted to meet the complex needs of learners, and the ECERS (Early Child Environment Rating) audit tool is used to review this. There are areas for sensory stimulation, and areas that are pared back for pupils who can become over-stimulated. Indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced and accessible and motivating to all learners, some with more support than others. Short and long-term planning is child-centred and informs the environment each day. In addition to the classroom and outdoor play area, learners have access to the light room (sensory space), Forest School and Adventure play area, swimming pool and school hall, and withdrawal spaces for small groups.

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Staff interactions with learners are critical in developing healthy and supportive relationships. SSTEWS (Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Wellbeing Scales) audit is used to assess and develop the adult interactions with pupils, and staff are supported to develop their knowledge e.g., through Trauma-Informed Practice and Positive Behaviour Support CPD. Staff introduce the Zones of Regulation curriculum to support learners' understanding and regulation of their emotions, and use a Positive Behaviour Support model in line with whole school policy.

IMPACT

Learners move on to Key Stage 1 at varying levels of phonic and language comprehension, and mathematical understanding. Depending on their cognition and skills, they enter a pre-formal (PMLD), informal (complex SLD) or semi-formal (SLD) pathway, where they access a curriculum that can meet their individual needs and support them to develop their strengths as early learners. Learner progress is shown across their Evidence for Learning 'learning journeys', and clear reporting against Characteristic of Effective Learning and the seven areas of the EYFS framework is given to parents and supports Key Stage 1 teachers to plan next steps.

Learners' vocabulary and understanding of language develops over their time in EYFS, assessed and monitored by SaLT, the Communication Lead and EYFS Lead. Some learners leave EYFS as emergent readers, and go on to develop fluency over their time in Key Stages 1 and 2. Other learners take a longer time to gain communication and reading skills, but we remain ambitious for them to reach their individual goals. Learners are supported to develop communication strategies including using their voice alongside Makaton, chat mats and VOCAs providing a total communication environment. Pupil SEND Profiles and their Evidence for Learning Journals show the progress each child makes from their starting points. Case studies are available to demonstrate this.

Pupils show curiosity and engagement in learning opportunities designed for their interests, needs and abilities, developing their attention skills over time with interventions such as 'Attention Autism' in preparation for moving into Key Stage 1. Staff model high energy, focus and enthusiasm throughout the day to maintain pupil engagement.

Through careful teaching of social skills and emotional and sensory regulation strategies, learners start to learn to manage their own feelings and behaviour, which is a life skill taught throughout school. Case studies and Evidence for Learning demonstrate this progress.

Learners leave EYFS ready to join the most appropriate pathway for their needs, and transition well into Key Stage 1 classes, showing confidence and interest in their new classes when engaging in the transition process (see our website's [Transitions page](#)).

EYFS provision is not yet outstanding because:

The EYFS dept has had a significant increase in intake of pupils with sensory processing needs, and is further refining practice to meet the holistic needs of this cohort.

Therefore, our development focus for EYFS provision is:

To integrate the consistent use of sensory processing support for all pupils into continuous provision and daily routines.

The effectiveness of 6th form provision is good because:

Dorin Park School Self-Evaluation Summary – Sept 2025

The schools' curriculum for 6th form is strong and written collaboratively with teachers, who know their subjects well. Learners in 6th form are taught in 3 pathways, depending on individual ability and need. Subject specialists deliver the curriculum where appropriate and lessons are tailored to allow learners to make progress towards their individual EHCP targets. Appropriate accreditations are offered to all learners to complement the curriculum. Teachers are aware of the different expectations in each pathway and the likely destination for each pupil on entry to the 6th form. CPD is offered to ensure that all teaching and support staff are confident in delivering and supporting lessons. Regular pathway meetings allow staff to discuss and share good practice.

The curriculum and accreditations are reviewed yearly so that provision remains appropriate and of high quality to meet the needs of the learners. Learners are offered a range of challenging courses from Pre-Entry Level up to Level 2 in order to support and offer a challenging curriculum. Learners also work towards bespoke EHCP targets that are set to offer challenge to each individual pupil.

The curriculum in 6th form is designed to allow the learners to acquire the skills, knowledge and qualifications they will need to access college or employment in the future. Typically, learners will access a course at the next level following the end of Key Stage 4. For example, a pupil who achieves Entry Level 1 English at Key Stage 4 will access an Entry Level 2 course in 6th form.

Pathway leads monitor the curriculum. Targets and accredited courses are designed to allow learners to acquire the skills they need to progress to college or employment. Coursework is moderated both in-house and via exam boards as part of the certification process.

Behaviour and attitudes towards learning is consistently high. All accreditation work has been completed in 2024-25 as planned. Learners take pride in their work and contribute well to lessons.

Learners show respect to others. Our student council has representatives from 6th form who take pride in their role. The school values and behaviour expectations are referred to as required to refocus learners.

Dorin Park has strong links with local colleges. The Deputy Headteacher attends termly CWAC Post 16 College meetings alongside other CWAC settings to ensure that we are up to date with employment and training priorities.

In 6th form, learners have the opportunity to access their local community through visits, work experience and links with college. The curriculum is designed to ensure that learners are prepared for transition to college, employment and supported living where appropriate. It has a strong focus on life skills and practical learning to equip our 6th formers with the skills and knowledge to be as independent as possible. We make use of Pupil Premium to ensure that disadvantaged learners can access the same opportunities as their peers. The school Curriculum Statement (see our website's [Curriculum page](#)) gives detailed information about the curriculum.

Teachers skilfully present information and demonstrate skills to learners, differentiated to their strengths and needs. They use adaptive teaching during lessons to best support and challenge the pupils. Lesson observations monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and moderation of LTPs and MTPs using Evidence for Learning.

Due to the complex nature of our learners, staff are confident in delivering differentiated lessons. All staff are confident in supporting the individual needs of the learners as per their EHCP plan.

LTPs and MTPs are used to plan for the delivery of lessons that scaffold learning and allow learners to build and retain knowledge. Lesson observations are used to assess that learning is matched to planning. This is evident through Evidence for Learning, in learners' work, and in Case Studies. Evidence for Learning (EFL) is used across school to monitor and assess progress towards each learner's EHCP targets, and their accreditations. This allows pathway leads and senior leaders to monitor the effectiveness of assessment and teaching and learning.

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Assessment has been streamlined to ensure that it is both effective and does not create unnecessary burdens on staff workload. Evidence for Learning is an assessment system that is used in both 6th form and across school.

Classrooms are adapted to meet the needs of learners. Where appropriate, subject specialist bases are used to deliver lessons. In other lessons or where learners are class based, the environment is carefully thought out to offer the best possible learning environment.

Where resources are not available onsite, such as a fully equipped gym, learners will access these offsite with school staff as part of their planned curriculum.

Learners' prior knowledge and attainment from Key Stage 4 is considered so that an appropriate and ambitious curriculum and challenging accredited courses are put in place. Learners' progress is monitored through moderation meetings, Evidence for Learning and Annual EHCP Reviews. An accreditation plan is used to see the spread of accreditations across Key Stages 4 and 5. Achievement in accredited courses is recorded and shared with the local authority and future settings as requested. In 6th form, there is a focus on life skills and functional learning to allow the learners to gain the skills and knowledge they need to access college, employment and their local community.

CWAC Young People's Service (YPS) may be available support learners from Year 9. From this point, transition to college or employment is discussed at each Annual Review meeting. The curriculum in 6th form helps to prepare the learners for the next stage of education or employment with careers lessons, college link courses, work experience, offsite PE and life skills activities in the community. Individual interests, ambitions and abilities are discussed and learners and their families are advised of possible options. The Careers Lead works with the CWAC PLEDGE and Enterprise Co-ordinator to ensure all pupils have access to careers support and opportunities.

Pupil voice is captured for every Annual Review, where possible. One focus of the curriculum in 6th form is about developing the highest possible level of independence, which is taught by delivering lessons in the local community, attending work experience or college link courses. Learners and their parents are advised of transition events led by the local authority. Where appropriate, relevant professionals will come to school to talk about careers or college.

The school attendance officer monitors attendance and punctuality, supported by the Deputy Headteacher. Any concerns are raised with the EWO and support is put in place with the aim of improving attendance and punctuality, although this is a rare occurrence as learners have high rates of attendance and punctuality.

Anxiety about moving on to the next setting can affect learners in 6th form. Learners are supported in the first instance by their pastoral team. The school Behaviour Team also support as required. Learners are prepared for this change through the curriculum in lessons such as careers, work experience, college link courses and lessons in the community.

6th form provision is not yet outstanding because:

Local PLEDGE and Enterprise Co-ordinators would like to further develop the offer of businesses engaging with the school.

Therefore, our development focus for 6th form provision is:

Using Compass+ to develop careers and work experience opportunities, ensuring all pupils have excellent opportunities in partnership with local services and businesses.

The overall effectiveness of the school is good because:

Dorin Park School Self-Evaluation Summary – Sept 2025

All areas are at least good with the potential towards outstanding.

Pupils leave our school ready for their next stage of education, training or community involvement.

The curriculum is ambitious and progressively maps skills for Preparation for Adulthood.

Staff support pupils expertly with care and attention to individual needs and personalised strategies.

Senior leaders listen to pupils, families, staff and governors, and adapt to the changing needs of all stakeholders.

Governors perform their duties with knowledge and understanding of the short-term strategic direction of the school, and take their role seriously with due regard for their responsibilities to all stakeholders.