

## Academic Year 20-21

As we prepare for our pupils returning to school we are aware that each child will not access the curriculum at exactly the same point at which they left it on the day that school closed. Whilst we provided personalised support during phased reopening and home learning, there has been a marked disruption in the lives of our pupils. This disruption experienced during the pandemic will have caused issues around attachment, anxiety and mental health. For some families the challenges of Covid-19 and lockdown will have increased resilience but for many of our pupils' families the challenges will have increased vulnerability.

In order to support our pupils to return to school we have provided a summary below of both our approach and the thinking behind it. We hope that this approach will support the well-being of all pupils in school as they begin their re-engagement with learning.

## Holbrook School for Autism – A Recovery Curriculum

We always put the child's well-being at the centre of our thinking at Holbrook School for Autism. We acknowledge that our pupils will have had different experiences during lockdown. However, the common thread running through the experience of lockdown is the loss of routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom. These *losses* can trigger anxiety in any child and an anxious child cannot learn effectively. With this in mind, we have thought about the most effective way to support our pupils' ability to learn. Our approach will encompass and support the academic expectations for our pupils.

## What is our approach?

Professor Barry Carpenter has developed the *Recovery Curriculum*, as a response to the losses described above. It is a way for schools to help children come back into school life, acknowledging the experiences that children have had. We strive for our pupils to be happy, feel safe and able to be engaged in their learning. We believe that the best way to achieve this is to acknowledge the importance of helping them back into school life using the following *5 Levers*.

**Lever 1: Relationships** – we can't expect our students to return joyfully, and many of the relationships that were thriving, may need to be invested in and restored. We need to plan for this to happen, not assume that it will. Reach out to greet them, use the relationships we build to cushion the discomfort of returning.

**Lever 2: Community** – we must recognise that curriculum will have been based in the community for a long period of time. We need to listen to what has happened in this time, understand the needs of our community and engage them in the transitioning of learning back into school.

**Lever 3: Transparent Curriculum** – all of our students will feel like they have lost time in learning and we must show them how we are addressing these gaps, consulting and co-constructing with our students to heal this sense of loss.

**Lever 4: Metacognition** – in different environments, students will have been learning in different ways. It is vital that we make the skills for learning in a school environment explicit to our students to reskill and rebuild their confidence as learners.

**Lever 5: Space** – to be, to rediscover self, and to find their voice on learning in this issue. It is only natural that we all work at an incredible pace to make sure this group of learners are not disadvantaged against their peers, providing opportunity and exploration alongside the intensity of our expectations.

The Recovery Curriculum will inform our personalised planning for our pupils. All of our learners will need a holistic recovery, all will have a personalised approach to support their needs. We will work in close partnership with parents, carers and agencies to support our pupils to transition back to school successfully.

### What does this look like for our pupils?

To help us support our pupils with this, our recovery curriculum will focus on four areas of personalised *My Plans*:

- *My Communication* - Supporting me to build positive relationships with others.
- *My Feelings* - Supporting me to manage my feelings and behaviour.
- *My Thinking* - Supporting me to enjoy and achieve.
- *My Body* - Supporting my physical health and wellbeing.

Learning in sessions will link to previous and current topic learning and pupil's key interests and motivators. Pupils will have missed out on many opportunities being at home that they are naturally exposed to at school such as peer interaction, active opportunities and experiences that develop their cognition and learning and these will be built into each day to support pupils to have a broad range of opportunity, experience and fun.