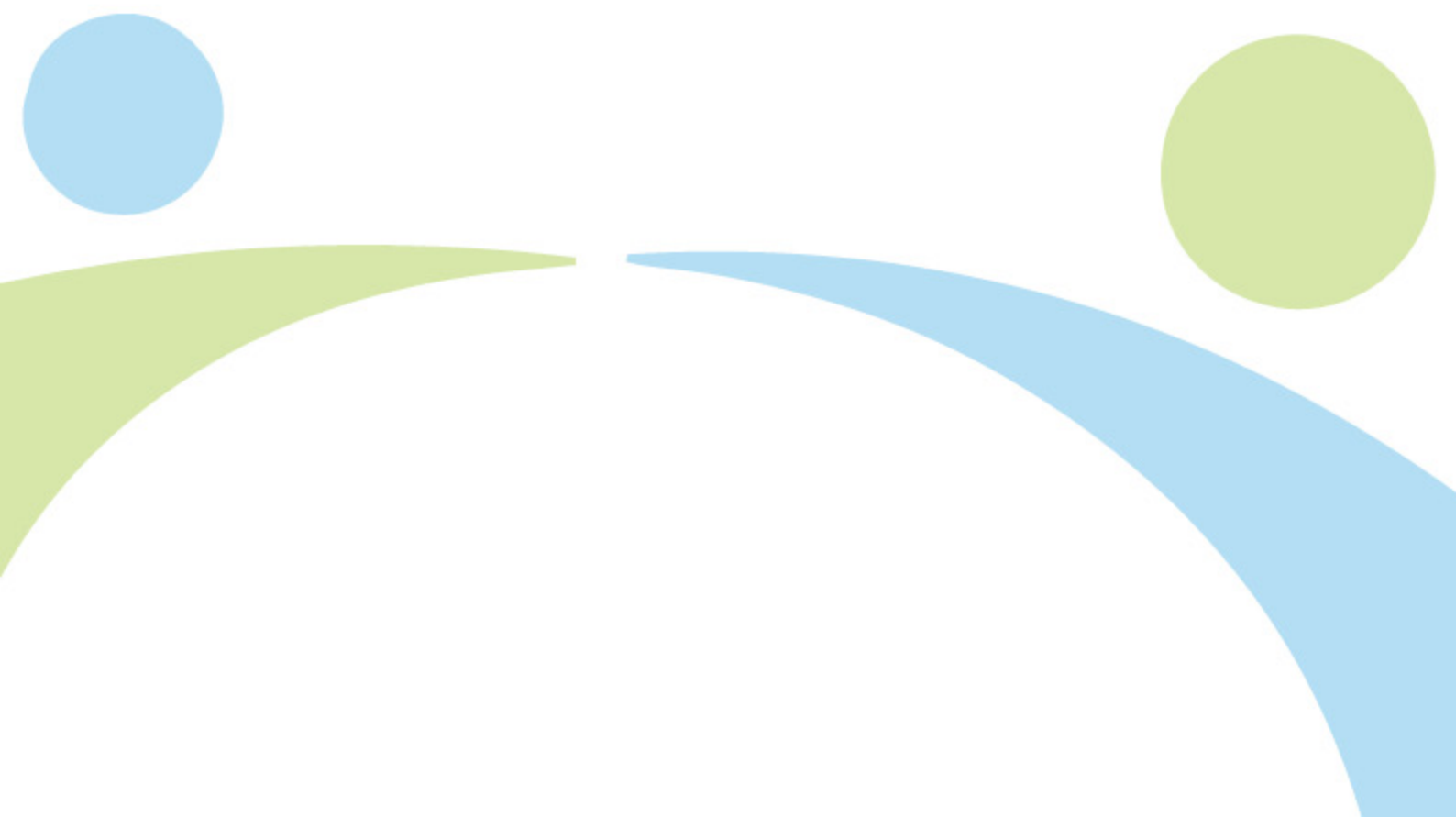




***The Bridge School Curriculum
and Marking Policy***

September 2018

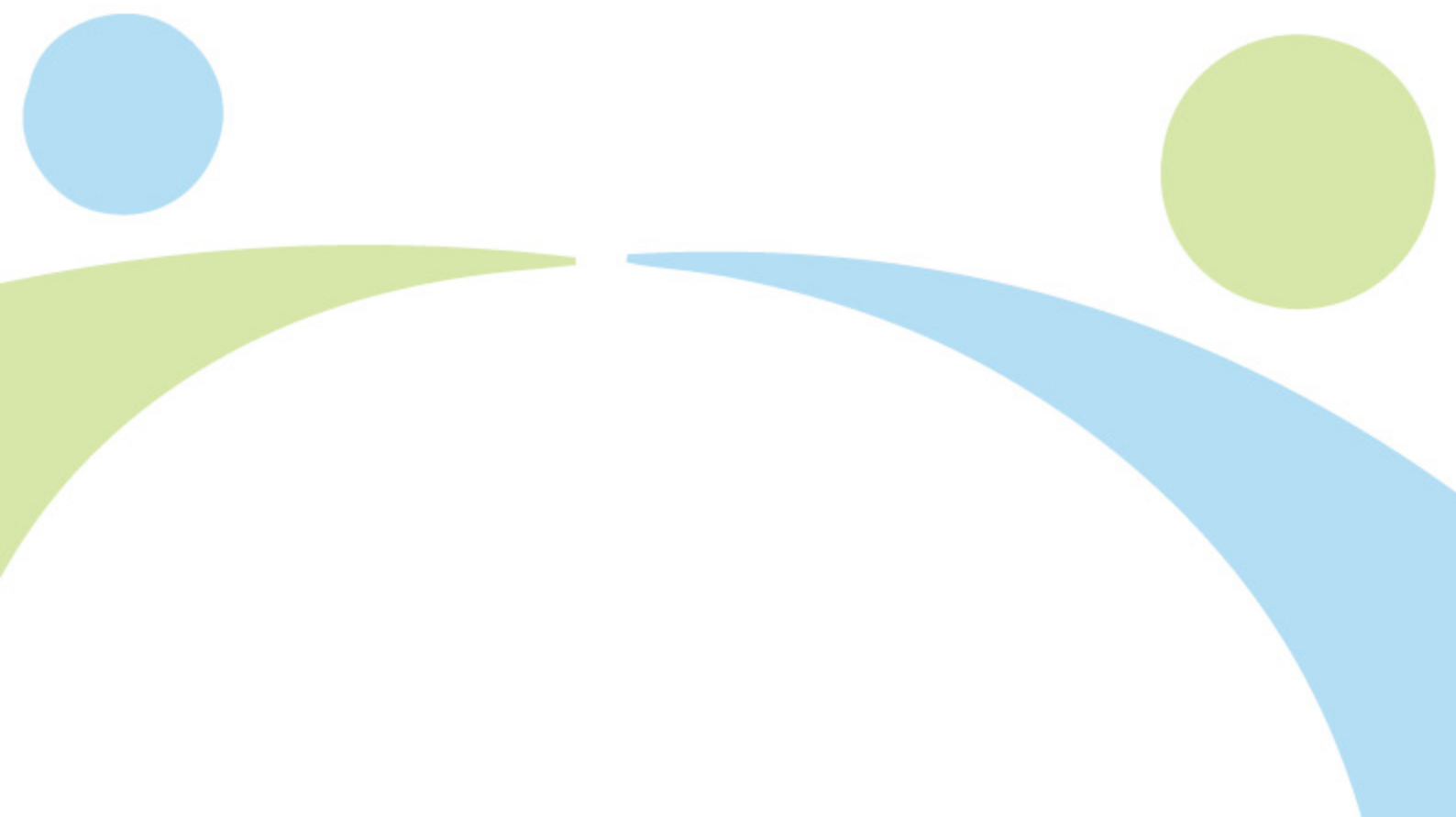


Background / Purpose

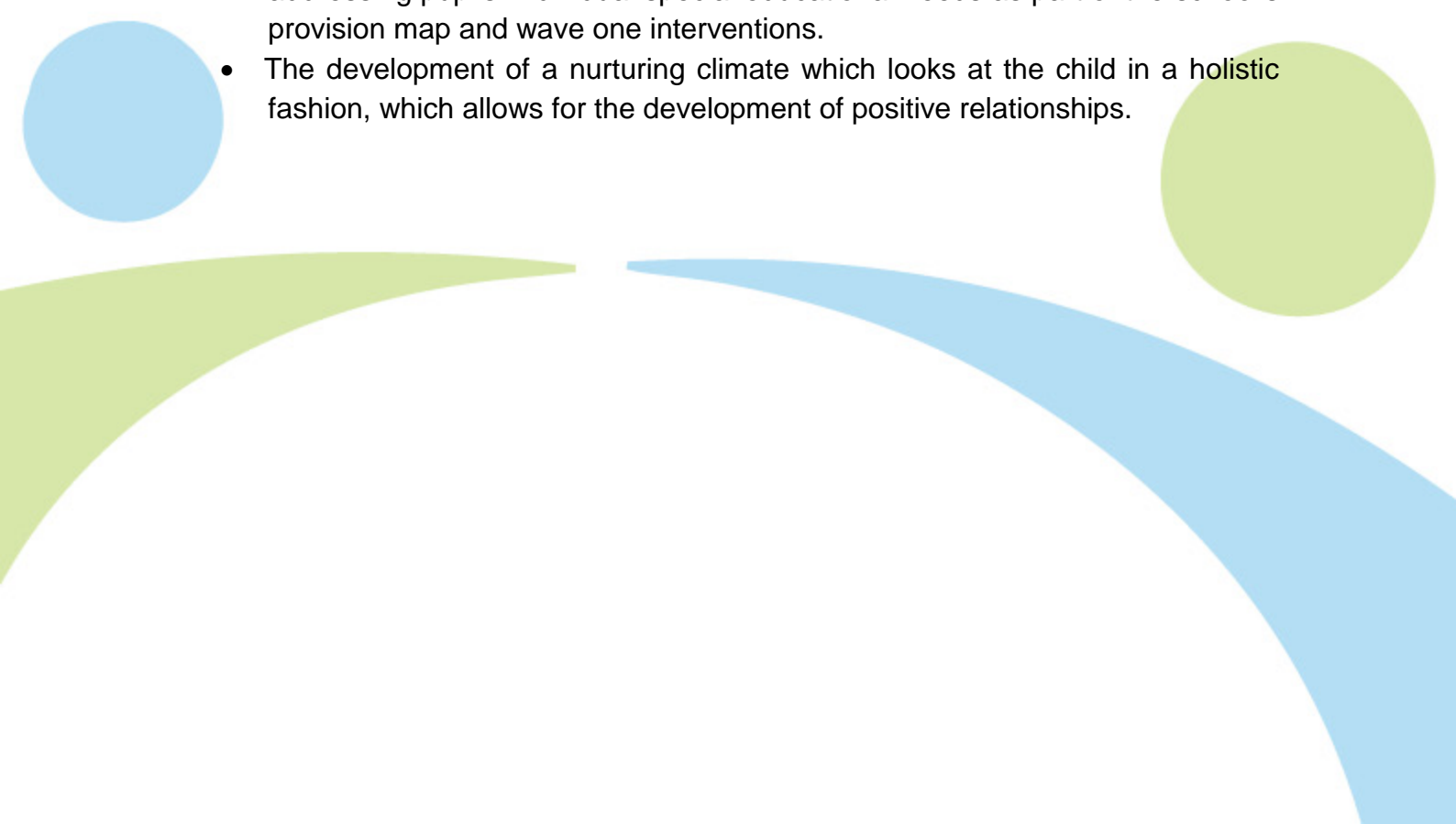
The Bridge School has a nurturing ethos running throughout the school including our approach to teaching and learning. Many pupils entering The Bridge School have experienced difficulties with making educational progress in their mainstream school. It is evident that for some pupils, their individual learning needs have not been met. Many have a low self-esteem in relation to being a successful learner and their behaviour has presented challenges to the support systems in mainstream school. Our aim is to provide a personalised learning experience which effectively responds to the profile of needs of each learner specifically in areas of literacy, numeracy and personal development. Our aim is that our students will develop and apply the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Procedures and Practices

The curriculum available at The Bridge School incorporates both the formal subject and the social, emotional aspects of learning which permeates throughout the school day. The curriculum provides high standards to stimulate the mind and set aspirational learning outcomes. It builds upon skills identified in base-line assessments and supports the special educational needs of pupils and specifically addresses the attitudes, behaviours and learning difficulties which resulted in their subsequent placement at the school. Should a pupil's response to the curriculum indicate that their learning needs may be beyond the scope of mainstream education, the SEND Code of Practice graduated approach is followed. This may include a request for statutory assessment if it is identified that a more specialist provision should be considered to meet the needs of the learner.



The curriculum at The Bridge School will be built around the following components:

- A combination of thematic approaches and discrete subject teaching and learning.
 - Flexibility in the use of curriculum.
 - Provision of a range of curriculum pathways leading to success at 16 and beyond.
 - Development of learning and personal skills based on well-established principles and practice that focus on developing self-esteem, confidence and emotional literacy.
 - Consistent practice in relation to ethos, standards, expectations and approaches.
 - Learning experiences which include a diverse range of delivery methods which are informed by a rigorous assessment process.
 - Close collaboration with other schools, agencies and services in the Local Authority, for example, Child and Adolescence Mental Health Services; Youth Offending Service; Paediatric Health care; Educational Psychologists; Education Social Work Service and Children's Social Care.
 - A constant process of monitoring, evaluation and review to ensure curriculum appropriateness and challenge.
 - A culture which celebrates effort and success.
 - Learning experiences which are planned with securing pupil engagement as a priority.
 - Learning experiences which are also planned to support the school in addressing pupils' individual special educational needs as part of the school's provision map and wave one interventions.
 - The development of a nurturing climate which looks at the child in a holistic fashion, which allows for the development of positive relationships.
- 

Key Stage 3 learners are taught through innovative teaching styles and curricula designed as a reflection of the students' needs at this point in their educational development. The Bridge School has two Nurture Groups, both led by a teacher and teaching assistant. Taking a lead from both The Nurture Network and the research around the Secondary National Strategy low-attainers programme, The Bridge School delivers a curriculum which offers a structured, yet more flexible timetable. Teaching follows a thematic approach based on innovative organisation of the curriculum so that the specific needs of pupils are better met.

New concepts are delivered through one topic ('the big picture') each half term, and enable the learner to acquire and demonstrate new skills. Built in to the curriculum is learning time off site, and time to address personal and social skills such as independence and interacting with others. Both Reading Plus and Rock Star programmes are used daily to support progress in English and maths. English and maths have a great emphasis placed upon them. They are core strands of knowledge and skill used throughout learning and development, as well as the wider curriculum.

Nurture groups are founded on evidence-based practices and offer a short-term, inclusive, focused intervention that works in the long term. There is great emphasis on language development and communication. Nothing is taken for granted and everything is explained, supported by role modelling, demonstration and the use of gesture as appropriate. The relationship between the two staff, always nurturing and supportive, provides a role model that children observe and begin to copy. Both nurture classrooms have kitchen areas, and food is prepared and shared at 'breakfast' or 'snack time' with much opportunity for social learning, helping children to attend to the needs of others, with time to listen and be listened to. As the children learn academically and socially they develop confidence, become responsive to others, learn self-respect and take pride in behaving well and in achieving.

The six principles of nurture group classrooms:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

The Boxall Profile assessment tool is the perfect framework for learners who stay long term, or for those students whose referring schools use Boxall too. The Readiness Scale is used on a regular basis to assess, and inform target setting, with regards to a learners personal and social skills. Neither tool is a quick fix, however coupled with the use of 'solution circle' and daily 'check in and out time', staff gain a greater understanding of the development of individual children and are able to focus

on both growth, more appropriate teaching methods and intervention programmes. Primarily young people attend The Bridge School with the hope that they would be able to reintegrate back into a high school, having developed the correct social and emotional skills to make the placement last.

Learner Passports, with personalised targets, are written in conjunction with the learners' keyworker. All KS3 learners receive 1:1 keyworker support and a bespoke development programme to enable the young person to move to their long term educational placement. The statutory assessment process may be a part of the graduated approach for some learners. For these young people in our care, some may transfer to identified schools that will better meet the long term needs of the individual. All young people will receive a planned programme of support and a transition package to their new school placement.

The KS4 Curriculum Offer

Key Stage 4 learners, whilst on site at The Bridge School, engage in a mixture of core subjects and vocational accreditation. Learners have the opportunity to access a minimum of three English, maths and science lessons per week, which are delivered by specialist teachers. The aim is that all learners will achieve accreditation in core subjects (GCSE and/or entry level). Unit 37 is The Bridge School's own vocational centre and is managed by the school SLT team. Unit 37 delivers a range of vocational qualifications, including mechanics, construction, painting and decorating, and hair and beauty. Each Key Stage 4 learner can access up to five full days of education within The Bridge School, Unit 37, Alternative Provision and 1:1 tuition. Each external provider is Quality Assured by the Assistant Head in charge of Alternative Provision and Key Stage 4.

When arranging Alternative Provision careful attention is given to each provider and how they will support each individual learner, allowing them to develop their competencies within SEMH and make progress toward accreditation. All learners follow a totally bespoke timetable that is tailored to their needs and interests. The aim of each bespoke timetable is to allow all learners to gain opportunities to either improve outcomes within core subjects or to gain additional qualifications.

Each learner is supported throughout Key Stage 4 with CEIAG which promotes learners to become engaged with their choices at Post 16, our CEIAG package includes 1:1 sessions, extended or block work experience and career/college events.

When appropriate every effort is made to reintegrate learners back into mainstream education, however when this is not a suitable option, school staff work closely with parents, carers and post 16 providers to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to engage in a challenging and needs led post 16 pathway.

Marking

At The Bridge School marking is meaningful, manageable and motivating, and most importantly central to learner progress and attainment. Written responses offer a key way of providing feedback to pupils and helping teachers assess their pupils' understanding. However, the 2016 report of the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group noted that written marking had become disproportionately valued by schools, unnecessarily burdensome for teachers and that quantity of feedback has too often become confused with the quality. The group noted that there is no 'one size fits all' way to mark, instead recommending that all marking should be driven by professional judgement and be 'meaningful, manageable and motivating'.

At The Bridge School instead of writing extensive comments, we use a series of annotations, coding and highlighting, followed by a comment on the strength of the piece and some improvements. This saves time when marking and also gives the learner the tools to critique their own work and discuss during the following lesson. Each learner is encouraged to look critically at their work and make their own improvements. This develops their critical thinking skills, their independent learning and then enables them to act on the feedback.

Learners at The Bridge School experience different styles of marking and feedback from individual teachers. We believe that teachers should use their own professional judgement and vary styles to support closing the gaps and ensuring most progress is made.

Deep marking involves:

- Highlighting the strengths in pupils' work using a yellow highlighter.
- Highlighting areas for improvement in green.
- Annotating using biro in the margins.

At the bottom of the piece, give the pupils:

- 1) **Comment or WWW** (what went well) – something positive linked to your yellow highlighting.
- 2) **Target or EBI** (even better if) **or Improvements** – an area of improvement linked to green highlighting.
- 3) **SPaG** (spelling, punctuation and grammar) target? This is often highlighted in a different colour. We do not want to give implicit authority to learners to continue to make the same SPaG mistakes.
- 4) **Action or Next Steps or DIRT** (Directed Independent Reflective Time – we refer to this as Action or Next Steps). Learners are required to respond to marking and the targets that teachers have set. It is important to give learners enough time to reflect on and improve their work.

What does Action / Next Steps / DIRT look like:

This could involve pupils:

- Learners helping themselves to relevant worksheets in order to focus on particular weaknesses (worksheets should be differentiated). English uses an 'Action Station' for independent learning.
- Maths uses differentiated starter activities based on mini assessments, whilst science uses exam questions combined with feedback sheets.
- Learners going through their work and correcting mistakes.
- Learners re-drafting a section of their work once a weakness has been addressed; responding to questions which teachers have asked at the bottom of their work to encourage 'deep thinking'.

Where a 'whole class' issue has been identified, a 'whole class Action lesson' can be delivered. However, over the course of the school year, feedback should be as focussed and as relevant to the individual as possible.

The marking of Action / Next Steps / DIRT:

Action work should be marked promptly. Action work where a target has been met, can be 'ticked off', but this does not mean that this target cannot be revisited in later pieces of work. Learners should start their next significant piece of work with a reminder of their most recent personal target.

Feedback:

Feedback is specific information given to the learner about their performance relative to learning goals. It should aim to (and be capable of) producing improvement in students learning. Providing effective is challenging. Research suggests it should be specific, accurate and clear (e.g. "It was good because you..." rather than "correct this..."); compare what a learner is doing right now with what they have done wrong before (e.g. "I can see you were focussed on improving X as it is much better than last time's Y..."); encourage and support further effort and be give sparingly so that it is meaningful.

Recording targets and progress:

As well as the teacher's own record, learners should take responsibility for filling in the progress sheets on the inside cover of their exercise books.

Governance – Management Committee

The school's Management Committee play a significant role in assuring accountability for the effectiveness and quality of the curriculum. This achieved at two levels: -

Level 1: An individual from the Committee will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating provision; this individual member will provide practical support at the school level, which can then be fed back to the whole Management Committee.

Level 2: The whole Management Committee challenges the Headteacher about the overall effectiveness, in relation to specific areas such as finance, staffing and student outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The appropriateness of the curriculum will be measured against the school as a whole entity and for each individual student. Judgements will be made by all staff and will be reflected in the schools self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. The school will liaise with its partners to secure an external impression on the curriculum; key partners in this process will be our pupils, their parents, other educational providers and commissioned advice from the Local Authority.

Date: September 2018

To be reviewed by: SLT and Management Committee – October 2020

