

Accepting Behaviour

Curriculum Policy

(Version 1.0 – Reviewed November 2025)

1. Purpose

This policy defines the aims, structure, and implementation of the **Acceptance-Based Curriculum** at Accepting Behaviour.

It ensures:

- Clear and consistent expectations for all staff and commissioners.
- Compliance with the Department for Education's (DfE) standards for **non-school alternative provision**.
- Alignment with statutory safeguarding, welfare, and quality assurance frameworks.
- Transparency in how learning is planned, delivered, and reviewed.

Our curriculum is built on the belief that **learning cannot occur until a child feels safe, accepted, and emotionally regulated**.

The purpose of our curriculum is not to impose learning, but to create the conditions in which learning can naturally grow

2. Our Philosophy

Accepting Behaviour is founded on the understanding that autistic and neurodivergent young people often thrive outside the constraints of traditional education.

Many of the children we support have experienced rejection, trauma, or exclusion from mainstream or special school environments. The **Acceptance-Based Curriculum** has therefore been designed to:

- Rebuild trust in learning.
- Empower autonomy and self-direction.
- Recognise that progress is not always linear or measurable by standard metrics.
- Honour each young person's pace, preferences, and emotional state.

The curriculum aligns with the **four foundations of the ACCEPT Approach**:

1. **Remove** – barriers and triggers that cause anxiety.
2. **Remind** – the young person it is not their fault.
3. **Reassure** – that it will be okay, and we will work together.
4. **Reaffirm** – our total belief in and commitment to them.

These foundations guide every interaction, lesson, and review process within Accepting Behaviour.

3. Curriculum Aims

Our Acceptance-Based Curriculum aims to:

- Provide a flexible, interest-led pathway for each learner.
- Promote emotional safety and wellbeing as the foundation of engagement.
- Encourage curiosity, self-expression, and intrinsic motivation.
- Develop life skills, communication, and confidence.
- Support students to reconnect with learning in a way that feels meaningful and achievable.
- Respect each child's autonomy and right to choose how and when they participate.

We define success not by conformity or output, but by **connection, confidence, and well-being**.

4. Curriculum Structure

Our curriculum is structured around four interlinked domains known as the **SEED Framework**, which forms the foundation of every individual learning plan:

Domain	Description
Social	Supporting students to connect with others at their own pace, in ways that feel safe and affirming. Focus on shared experiences rather than forced interaction.
Emotional	Helping students to understand, regulate, and express their emotions. Emotional literacy and co-regulation are embedded throughout sessions.
Educational	Re-engaging students in learning through personalised, interest-led topics, including functional literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving.
Developmental	Building independence, self-awareness, and resilience through real-world skills, exploration, and community engagement.

Each student's SEED Plan evolves with them. It is not fixed or target-driven but responsive and reflective.

5. Curriculum Design and Delivery

Individualisation

- Every learner has a bespoke **Acceptance-Based Learning Plan** designed collaboratively with the student, family, and professionals.
- Plans are fluid and may shift weekly based on emotional readiness, sensory needs, and personal interests.
- Learning is driven by curiosity and supported by compassionate adult guidance rather than directive teaching.

Environment

- Sessions take place in **home, community, or outdoor** settings that feel comfortable for the learner.
- We use environments as therapeutic tools to reduce anxiety and support engagement.

Content Areas

While flexible, our curriculum typically covers:

- **Functional Literacy and Numeracy** – embedded naturally within real-life activities such as budgeting, reading maps, or cooking.
- **Creative and Expressive Arts** – music, photography, writing, or digital media to support emotional expression.
- **Nature-Based Learning** – walking, conservation, and outdoor exploration to encourage sensory regulation and physical wellbeing.
- **Life Skills** – independence, cooking, travel training, personal organisation, and healthy routines.
- **Community and Social Learning** – voluntary projects, social communication opportunities, and shared experiences.
- **Accredited Opportunities** – ASDAN, AQA Unit Awards, and other accessible accreditation when appropriate to the student's readiness.

Delivery Methods

- Staff work **1:1 or 2:1**, depending on the student's needs and funding arrangements.
- Teaching is **relational and conversational**, following the learner's lead.
- No forced participation or behavioural compliance strategies are used.
- Activities are paced to the learner's energy, focus, and capacity each day.
- Emotional validation and co-regulation are prioritised above task completion.

6. Pedagogical Framework

Our pedagogy is rooted in **humanistic and neuroaffirmative principles** and draws from:

- **Carl Rogers' person-centred learning** (1951)
- **Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and self-actualisation** (1943)
- **Rollo May's emphasis on authenticity and courage** (1953)
- **Modern neurodiversity paradigms** that view difference as natural and valuable

Key principles include:

- Learning occurs through **relationship, autonomy, and exploration**.
- The adult's role is to **facilitate, not control** learning.
- Emotional connection precedes cognitive engagement.
- Growth happens when the learner feels understood and respected.

7. Assessment and Progress

Traditional grading systems are replaced with **reflective, narrative-based assessment** focusing on development rather than comparison.

Assessments include:

- **Observation Logs:** Tutors document qualitative observations about engagement, mood, and emerging interests.
- **Student Voice Reflections:** Learners are invited to share how they feel about activities and whether they want to continue or adapt them.
- **Parent and Professional Feedback:** Regular communication ensures alignment across home and provision.
- **Six-Weekly Reviews:** Formal progress reviews shared with commissioners, families, and the student.

Progress is measured by indicators such as:

- Increased engagement or willingness to participate.
- Improved emotional regulation and sense of safety.
- Growth in independence or confidence.
- Development of communication or self-expression.

Where academic goals are appropriate, progress in literacy or numeracy is tracked using flexible, non-comparative tools.

8. Safeguarding and Attendance

- Attendance and absence are recorded for every session.
- Absences are reported to the commissioner **within 30 minutes** of the start of the session.
- Unexplained absences are followed up on urgently to ensure safety.
- Safeguarding concerns arising during sessions are immediately reported to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.
- All sessions are risk-assessed and reviewed regularly in line with health and safety and child protection policies.

9. Staff Development and Quality Assurance

All staff receive:

- Full induction and ongoing training in the **ACCEPT Approach**.
- Safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, and neuroaffirmative education training.
- Supervision and reflective practice sessions.
- Access to professional development and research opportunities.

Quality assurance is maintained through:

- Termly observation of practice.

- Review of planning, logs, and assessment records.
- Regular supervision and feedback.
- Ongoing evaluation of curriculum impact.

10. Monitoring and Reporting

The Director oversees the monitoring of curriculum delivery through:

- Regular supervision meetings with tutors and teachers.
- Review of SEED Plans and session logs.
- Student feedback and engagement tracking.
- Six-weekly progress reports for commissioners.

When a learner is not progressing as expected, staff collaborate with the student, family, and professionals to adjust strategies and re-engage the student's motivation.

11. Safeguarding Integration

Safeguarding principles are embedded throughout the curriculum:

- Every session begins and ends with emotional check-ins.
- Tutors observe and record any changes in mood, presentation, or wellbeing.
- Emotional regulation activities are built into every learning plan.
- Staff are trained to recognise signs of distress or burnout and respond appropriately.

12. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Our curriculum reflects and celebrates:

- Neurodiversity and difference as natural variations of human experience.
- The rights of all children to be heard, respected, and accepted.
- A rejection of deficit-based or compliance-driven models.
- Cultural and personal diversity through inclusive topics and representation.

All materials and activities are adapted to ensure accessibility, with sensory needs, communication preferences, and cognitive profiles fully respected.

13. Review and Continuous Improvement

- The curriculum is reviewed annually in consultation with staff, students, and commissioners.
- Updates incorporate new research, best practice in autism education, and feedback from learners.
- The Director ensures compliance with DfE standards and continuous improvement of educational quality.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Director (Aaron Yorke)	Oversees curriculum design, evaluation, and quality assurance.
Designated Safeguarding Lead Daisy Ball	Ensures safeguarding principles are embedded across all learning activities.
Tutors and Teachers	Plan and deliver learning aligned with the Acceptance-Based Curriculum and the SEED framework.
Commissioners and Partners	Engage with progress reviews and provide feedback for development.

15. Policy Review

Policy Owner: Director, Accepting Behaviour

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jayne Yorke

Date Reviewed: July 2026

Next Review: July 2027