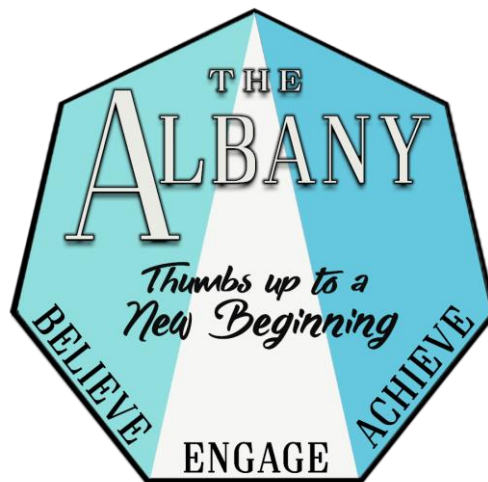


THE ALBANY
RECOVERY CURRICULUM
ACTION PLAN & HANDBOOK



BELIEVE

ENGAGE

ACHIEVE

SEPT 2020

“Trauma informed and trauma responsive systems acknowledge that every interaction is an intervention”

Dr. Karen Treisman

“Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly.”

Zen proverb



The Albany's Vision, Mission and Aims

COVID-19 and The Albany's Recovery Curriculum

Our school contains a mix of students from those who have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and/or Social Communication and Interaction Difficulties to students with complex SEMH needs and many students also have learning difficulties of varying degrees, often compounded by persistent, enduring and challenging emotional difficulties.

For our students to thrive, we aim to provide an enabling environment that has a clear focus on relationship building.

We have a broad curriculum that provides challenging and stimulating learning activities through a structured and supportive environment where positive relationships thrive. Our skilled staff understand each young person's needs, and tailor their learning to them. Through this, they develop a new relationship with learning, and gain the skills and knowledge to build a better future.

Our focus has shifted due to Covid-19 and whilst we still aim to support students in achieving their goals this will not be possible unless we firstly address their emotional wellbeing post the pandemic.

Our motto of "Believe, Engage, Achieve", encompasses our values and for students returning in September 2020 our "Thumbs Up to a New Beginning" could not be more relevant.

Vision

Re-establish relationships. Build resilience and recover emotionally. Re-engage with learning

Mission

The Albany's mission is that of re-engaging learners to enhance their life choices.

Developing strong and effective relationships is the foundation on which we build success. Within everything we do, knowing and understanding our young people and their families, and working together to maximise their achievement, both academic and personal, is at the heart of our practice

Aims

- Creating an ambassador mindset across The Albany community, such that, through our unique offer, we can influence how agencies, parents & carers, schools, local businesses, and the wider community perceive and engage with students with challenging behaviour.
- Working together to enhance the life opportunities for the whole Albany community.
- Nurturing a learning community who aspire to achieve the best they can.

Every one of our students and staff will have been affected, in a variety of different ways, by the events of the pandemic. In their thinkpiece "A Recovery Curriculum: Loss and Life for our children and schools post pandemic", Carpenter and Carpenter (2020) identified 5 losses that are likely to be experienced: "of routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom" and that these "can trigger the emergence emotionally of anxiety, trauma and bereavement in any child".

We are mindful that some of our students have been directly affected by bereavement during the pandemic and that both staff and students have, understandably, been subject to unprecedented stress.

We have remained open during the pandemic and this has created a new way of working, from which we have taken lessons and it helps inform our next steps.

Underpinning the recovery curriculum

The Six Principles of Nurture

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

Carpenter and Carpenter identified 5 losses:

- The loss of friendship and social interaction.
- The loss of routine.
- The loss of structure.
- The loss of opportunity.
- The loss of freedom.

*“The common thread that runs through the current lived experiences of our children, is **loss**. From loss emanates three significant dynamics that will impact majorly on the mental health of our children. Anxiety, trauma and bereavement are powerful forces. For them all to appear at once in an untimely and unplanned fashion is significant for the developing child. Our children are vulnerable at this time, and their mental-health fragile. And on top of that, they are witnessing a sea of adult anxiety, which they unwittingly are absorbing.” (Carpenter and Carpenter, 2020).*

The 5 levers of recovery:

Lever 1: Relationships – Some students have been in school and so relationships, though different have been maintained. However, a significant number have not been in school plus we have new students returning. There are three levels of relationship we need to focus on

a). Staff relationships- teams have been separate and some staff have not been in school at all. Initially our 4 days of CPD will help to rebuild those connections- and time needs to be set aside during those days for staff to be able to have recovery conversations with others. We need also to continue regular “check-ins” with staff to ensure their recovery is also progressing!

b). Staff/student relationships. New groups, new staff, new students. Initially we need to look at rebuilding the connections, establishing new relationships and providing a safe, known, structured environment.

c). Student/student relationships. Some students will be missing their year 11 friends. Others will be adjusting to new groups and some will be creating new friendships. Through team building and group exercises we need to help them build connections with each other built on positive behaviours.

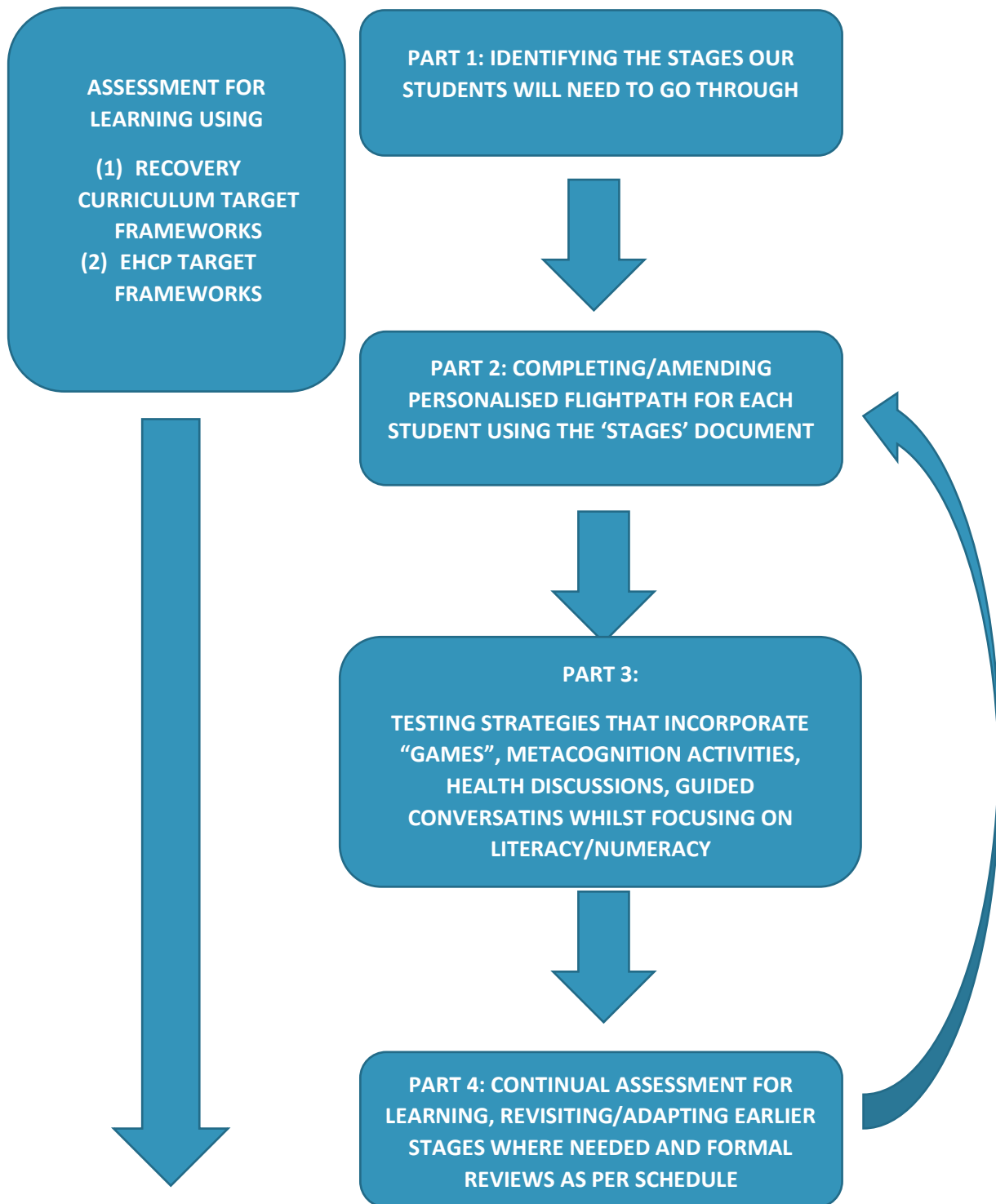
Lever 2: Community – Discussions with students and families and surveys will contribute significantly to initial planning for each student's reintegration. We need to address parental concerns around safety and our procedures must be transparent and well explained. Development of the parent portal on Arbor will support better parent/carer communication- as too promoting our Facebook page for quick connections. There will be some ongoing concerns around health for shielding families- we need to address these on an individual basis. Whilst we will have an overall approach it is important to keep in mind that individual needs will differ.

Lever 3: Transparent Curriculum – Our new groupings will help focus on a curriculum that is tailored to type of need. Underpinning all the curriculum is communication and interaction. However, although processes such as team building, and group activity will be across the board we are mindful that year 11 students will have additional academic concerns and needs. Parents/carers and students may well be additionally anxious about their progression pathways. Building on the learning from our summer school we shall need to identify focused support to enable year 11 to have appropriate outcomes and not be overly disadvantaged by the loss of core learning.

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. There will be a focus on and support of the development of key learning skills that are likely to have been impacted in recent months, e.g. listening, maintaining their attention, sensory regulation and social communication and interaction. The Recovery Curriculum will be key to developing students' confidence, self-esteem, and resilience. Training of staff in this area will take place before September.

Lever 5: Space – to be, to rediscover self, and to find their voice on learning in this issue. Whilst we establish a framework to support students transition back into learning it is also crucial that we allow them to voice their concerns; have space to think and reflect and time out when needed.

PROCESS FLOWCHART



(PART 1: STAGES)

GUIDING OUR STUDENTS THROUGH RECONNECTION, RECOVERY AND BUILDING THEIR RESILIENCE

Identify engagement factors

Safety needs & reconnection

Routine and respect

Relationship building

Transition planning

Safety needs & reconnection

Routine, respect & relationships

Continuing pre-pandemic progress

Individual progression pathways

Self-actualisation

SOMEWHERE OVER THE

RAINBOW

SKIES ARE BLUE

AND THE DREAMS THAT YOU







DARE TO DREAM

REALLY DO COME TRUE






- LYMAN FRANK BAUM



PART 1: STAGES OF ALBANY'S RECOVERY CURRICULUM

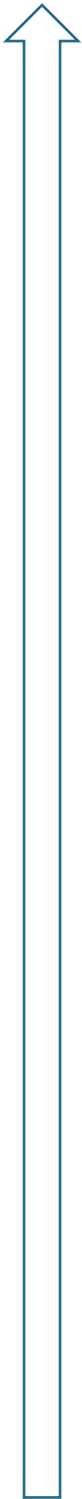
-  **Identify engagement factors** – what motivates each student to come to school? Friends, esteem needs, self-actualisation needs? Identifying and utilising staff strengths.
-  **Physiological and attachment needs** – positive and regular communication with families, healthy cooking, supporting families with advice on sleep hygiene and screen time, THRIVE 1:1, supporting safeguarding needs, physical and mental health and any physiological symptoms of stress and trauma, supporting attachment needs, student and parent support surveys, leadership supporting staff's individual needs.
-  **Safety needs and reconnection** – Building staff and student confidence, supporting students with interpreting information from the media and how it impacts them, communicating measures in place, social stories, self-responsibility, social distancing, identifying safe and withdrawal spaces, supporting and responding to sensory needs, rebuilding relationships with staff, using technology to support reconnection for students who want to engage, home-community visits where needed, Thrive, strategies to communicate and manage their anxieties, supporting students' and staff's physical and mental health needs. USE OF PARENT PORTAL TO BE DEVELOPED FOR POSITIVE COMMUNICATION
-  **Routine, respect, rights, responsibilities** – once groundwork above has been done, establish the routine that our students need.
STRUCTURE PLUS NURTURE. Developing clear daily routines- News & Views as check in and starting conversations. – Supporting students to re-establish purpose and vision of their journeys and coping with sense of loss of learning time, respecting students' need for space after being isolated and students respecting social distancing and their responsibility to keep others safe, respecting others' journeys, needs, anxieties and coping strategies. Re-visit our rights and responsibilities.
-  **Relationship building** – supporting attachment needs, building on and rebuilding healthy online relationships, coming to terms with the fact that they may be rebuilding relationships at school before those with their own extended family, loss and bereavement, with the community – feeling safe in the community, understanding new boundaries. Guided conversations- group team building exercises so positive relationships established within groups.
-  **Transition planning** – planning for a positive future, creating positive news stories, building relationships with new peers, new staff, orientation with new groups. Year 9 upwards to complete MAP – Moving into Adulthood Plans. Y10/11 to explore Work experience/college placements/careers guidance. NB- specific transition work for new Silver students moving from Primary School. Transition back to mainstream for some students. Transition from remote learning/home tuition to time in school. ALL transitions to involve referring/other schools, parents, staff and student.

Building on previous work

-  **Safety needs and reconnection.** Allow students time to move back into school and learning but in a structured way Reconnecting with academic learning- from the start with a focus on English and maths initially to create a learning expectation underpinned by emotional nurture and support.
-  **Routine, respect and relationships** – embedding routines and expectations, respecting one another's needs and ways of working, establishing new class groupings.
-  **Continuing pre-pandemic progress journeys** – baselining, managing the impact on students'/staff's mental health of previous stages.
-  **Individual progression pathways** – working towards their personalised progression pathway based on their interests and aspirations.
-  **Self-actualisation** – on journey of achieving aspirations, developing independence and self-belief to support them achieving their goals.

PART 2: PROGRESS ALONG THE ALBANY REINTEGRATION FLIGHTPATH: NAME

Date
moved up:



Self-actualisation:

Individual progression pathway:

Continuing pre COVID-19 progress journeys:

Routine, respect and relationships:

Safety needs and reconnection:

Transition planning:

Relationship building:

Routine and respect:

Safety needs and reconnection:

Physiological and attachment needs:

Identify engagement factors:

Who are the key people who support me?

What helps me?

Recovery Curriculum

(PART 3: THE CURRICULUM)

Aims

Our Recovery Curriculum at THE ALBANY aims to enable our students to continue to develop their emotional resilience; developing their self-regulation and learning how to learn in a school environment once again.

Central to this will be supporting them through the following stages using a personalised approach:

- 1) Physiological and attachment needs
- 2) Safety needs and reconnection
- 3) Identifying engagement factors
- 4) Routine and respect
- 5) Relationship building

Students will need to focus on each stage with differing periods of intensity and for varying amounts of time. If and where necessary, referrals to external professionals will be made.

Following, and quite possibly alongside the above stages, will come the following stages – reflecting an iterative cycle; mirroring the initial stages they will need to go through following the trauma experienced from the pandemic:

- 6) Transition planning
- 7) Safety needs and reconnection
- 8) Routine, respect and relationships

Although engaging in core learning will be important for routine for many of our students, only when they have made sufficient progress through the above stages will the predominant focus be able to shift towards their cognition and learning targets and progress in order that they can continue their personalised progress pathways towards their pre-pandemic goals and aspirations.

However, we know that structure is crucial to our student's wellbeing so our "academic" focus will be on English and maths lessons as a daily constant. This serves two purposes

1. It creates a crucial focus during the day of learning to learn again
2. It assuages some fears regarding previous loss of learning and reassures students that their key skills are being supported.

The Recovery Curriculum Principles

Our Curriculum Policy is underpinned by the ACE principles and training regarding trauma informed awareness of all our staff. Most of our students have previously experienced trauma in some form and the pandemic is, in effect, another layer of trauma.

However, we must also be mindful that the lockdown was not necessarily a wholly negative experience for ALL our students. For some the trauma is returning to school!

You can engage that child as a learner once more, for engagement is the liberation of intrinsic motivation, (Carpenter et al, 2015).

RE-ENGAGING OUR LEARNERS

We will use the 5 aspects of engagement as a framework to assess student engagement

1. Exploration: motivation, curiosity and investigation
2. Realisation: reaction to the stimulus, eg: 'surprise', 'excitement', 'delight', 'amazement' or 'fear'.
3. Anticipation: predicting the start, finish or pattern in the activity to measure their comprehension of cause and effect.
4. Persistence: sustained attention and determination
5. Initiation: spontaneous and independent action

it will be crucial to manage students' expectations and that students are well prepared for the return to school; knowing what to expect, specifically knowing:

- Their morning routine.
- Where they will be working.
- Who they will be working with – adults and students.
- How working with adults and other students will look different.
- What their day will look like.
- What to do if they are anxious or in crisis – knowing where their safe space is.
- What to do in an emergency.
- What restrictions are in place in the school building.
- What safety measures are in place and how this will change the school day for them.
- Procedures for break and lunch times.
- The 'whys' to all the elements above.

INTRODUCTRY ACTIVITIES TO SETTLE STUDENTS

During the first few days it is important that we settle students into their new routines- in collaboration with the students within each group.

Visual timetables- labelling books- creating personal spaces within the classroom – sorting out pencil cases

In addition, EVERY classroom will have clear uncluttered displays with LEARNING displays being front and forward to support students in some basic, key areas

1. Visual timetables
2. A number line including negative numbers
3. The Times table 12 x 12 grid – large enough to read from afar!
4. Albany Rights and Responsibilities
5. Traffic lights
6. Believe Engage Achieve
7. KEY WORDS – initially most useful English words – then can be added to with subject specific key word displays.
8. Classroom Charter...students own words about how they want their classroom to “feel”

Thrive

Class teachers need to use the Thrive class action plans to develop group activities to build positive relationships within their groups and a collaborative environment.

Through Thrive sessions we aim to develop students' resilience and work towards supporting them engaging in structured learning again. The more they practise activities which support them being able to self-regulate, in time, the less time it will take them to settle after an incident of stress, and more successful they will be.

Communication

"Relationships are at the heart of creating environments which support good mental health and wellbeing for our children and young people" (Barnados, 2020).

Relationship building: This is one of the key levers for a Recovery Curriculum as identified by Barry and Matthew Carpenter (2020). For our students it will be important for them to feel listened to and to process their emotional experiences of lockdown; discussing what happened, how it affected them, what sense they made of it and how they managed it. Relationship building with staff and developing their trust and confidence will be key. It is about:

- Understanding how an individual feels
- Enabling students to discuss how they feel
- Promoting change in how they deal with how they feel.

Social, emotional and mental health interventions will be planned tailored to the individual student.

There will also need to be relationship building with students who are new to their class, rebuilding where there were incidents prior to lockdown or where there have been conflicts online during lockdown.

Expressive and social communication: This is an area that students are likely to have had limited experience of during lockdown; spending increased time at home, many in their bedrooms and engaging in narrow social communication opportunities such as online gaming. Regular practise developing confidence and skills in speaking and listening activities and social communication will be key – through group discussions, turn taking games, team building, social communication games and drawing and talking therapy where there is a trained practitioner available. A high level of adult modelling and scaffolding will be required.

Receptive communication: A high proportion of our students have ADHD and/or concentration difficulties. It will have been some time since they have had to sit down and do active listening. At home they are likely to have been able to dip in and dip out of conversations whilst completing another activity so developing the single channelled sitting and listening skills required in a more formal classroom situation will require practice. Giving processing time will be key. Social communication skills such as turn taking in conversation, active listening and respecting others' viewpoints are also likely to require considerable focus, modelling and scaffolding.

Community

The focus of this area of learning for students is 'be kind'; both to themselves as they build up their confidence being out and about in the community again and to others, as 'compassion' is a key element in recovering from trauma as it is actively good for our mental health, as demonstrated by neuroscience. As community is a key part of our values it may be about forging new links in the community where compassion is at the heart and undertaking projects related to this. We will also continue to use the community for outdoor learning, as appropriate within the constraints of the current government guidance and school risk assessments.

Core skills

Routine is important to our students so elements of core learning skills such as English and Maths will be introduced early on for those who are able to access this. Considering engagement and a manageable level of challenge will be key in the current climate – games, for example, would be a good starting point to re-engage students in English as they have engaged in less English than maths when working from home.

For some students, core skills will need to be worked on within the context of projects in their areas of interest or may be more basic such as reading/literacy and numeracy activities and less exam focused.

For others, specifically Key Stage 4 it will form a key part of their Recovery Curriculum to help compensate for any sense of loss of opportunity they may perceive more pertinently due to upcoming exams and transitions. RHSE will be our vehicle for speaking and listening practice.

Assessing progress will form a separate document as it will feed into our assessment practices overall.

However, initial assessments will focus on engagement of pupils as below

Key for scoring stages of engagement	0	1	2	3	4
	No focus / Disengaged <i>Inattentive and unresponsive</i>	Emerging / fleeting <i>Low and minimal levels of engagement; some evidence of awareness</i>	Partly engaged <i>Emerging engagement but unpredictable</i>	Mostly engaged <i>Engagement occurring the majority of the time</i>	Fully engaged <i>Completely engaged</i>