



## Castle Hill School - Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Aligned with Ofsted 2025 Inspection Framework

Last reviewed: Dec 2025

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### School Context

**Motto:** Innovating Communicating Empowering

**Mission Statement:** We are pioneers of innovative and personalised teaching and learning, enriching lives and fostering independence.

**Aim:** We aim to enable all students to be effective communicators, to engage in meaningful learning and be empowered to positively influence their world.

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### Self-Assessed Judgements (Ofsted 2025 Framework)

Evaluation Area	Self-Assessment Grade
Safeguarding	Met
Inclusion	Exceptional
Curriculum and Teaching	Exceptional
Achievement	Exceptional
Attendance and Behaviour	Exceptional
Personal Development and Wellbeing	Exceptional
Leadership and Governance	Exceptional
Early Years	Exceptional
Sixth Form	Exceptional



## **School Characteristics**

Castle Hill School was last inspected on 26th and 27th November 2024 and was recognised by Ofsted as Outstanding (under the previous framework) in all areas.

Communication is at the core of our learning offer. Our intent is to ensure our students are prepared for their future as effective, confident, and empowered communicators.

All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The greatest proportion of pupils have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties and many have associated sensory impairments. Some needs are life limiting and degenerative in nature. A growing number of students also have autism spectrum conditions and complex needs. Children can enter school at any age and therefore any Key Stage. Higher levels of new students are generally more common in Early Years Foundation Stage.

At the start the year 2025-26 Castle Hill School has 31.2% of learners who are eligible for Pupil Premium and associated Recovery Premium funding. 50% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and for many of these, English is an additional language. The analysis of data carried out over time identifies that there is no significant difference of progress when split by gender or by ethnicity as all receive a level of intervention dependent on their individual learning needs.

Our curriculum is ambitious, coherently planned and effectively delivered. Pupils make strong progress from their starting points and are well prepared for their next steps in education, training or adult services. Our inclusive approach ensures that all pupils achieve well and thrive.

Staff are highly skilled, well-supported and committed to continuous improvement. Leaders at all levels have a clear vision for the school and work effectively with governors, parents, and external partners to ensure the best outcomes for pupils.

We are proud of our achievements but remain a 'restless school' committed to continuous improvement. Our areas for development are clearly identified within our School Improvement Document (CHIP) and form the basis of our ongoing school development work.



The school holds numerous awards including the Inclusion Quality Standard Award (renewed 2025), the UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award (renewed 2025), the Gold Mental Health Award renewed Sept 2025, the National Association for Education Technology (NAACE) Award, Democracy Friendly Award, Careers Quality Standards Award, Asthma Friendly status, Makaton Friendly Award and the Healthy Schools Award.

The school is a member of the Together Learning Trust (February 2023-24) and is a close, active and valued partner of Kirklees Council and Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching School Hub.

## **1. SAFEGUARDING**

### **Summary**

Castle Hill School establishes an open and positive safeguarding culture that puts pupils' interests first. Leaders take an effective, whole-school approach to safeguarding.

### **Safeguarding Culture and Leadership**

The school has in place all the statutory policies and procedures regarding safeguarding and the Principal is the Designated Senior Lead. The Principal and the Director of Teaching Learning and Safeguarding (current deputy DSL) are supported by 4 other DSLs: family liaison TLR, EYFS DSL, deputy and assistant principal DSL. The 6 DSLs take a lead role in making sure that all pupils are safe, they also ensure continuity from up-to-date attendance to training. (Safeguarding training records including, CPOMS, Form 1 and 4, risk assessments, serious incident records, events folder, multi-agency working records including CIN outcomes, supervision records)

Training in Safeguarding and in the Prevent Duty are delivered annually to all staff. The training ensures staff are confident when dealing with potential safeguarding issues. Kirklees Safeguarding Board support this process and provide training on every third year. (Safeguarding training records)

All staff are aware of the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' and are aware of amendments. Staff are fully briefed on all aspects of safeguarding in the school and sign documentation to confirm this. All staff receive annual training and with this are updated at the beginning of each academic year. (Safeguarding training records)



## **Protecting Pupils from Harm**

School is vigilant, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'. The school uses the CPOMS Safeguarding recording system which assists communication regarding safeguarding and pastoral care. The school closely monitors student presentation and hypervigilant approach runs throughout the school culture. Behaviour plans (Form4s), risk assessments and bespoke observation forms support wellbeing. Incidents are recorded on the school's behaviour frequency forms (Form 1s) and monitored. More serious incidents are recorded in the serious incident book (see book in reception office). Incidents and incident frequency are monitored by the SLT and interventions are applied. Where necessary reviews are called to ensure multi staff and agency problem solving is applied. (Safeguarding training records, CPOMS, risk assessments, serious incident records, events folder, multi-agency working records including CIN outcomes, supervision records, Behaviour Working Party meeting minutes, wellbeing case studies, wellbeing targets and assessment and bespoke observation forms)

Weekly supervision meetings with the Principal and the DTLS monitor weekly events to evaluate actions taken and identify further possible input. Data from these meetings forms part of the reporting process to the LGC. Attendance is also closely monitored during the supervision meetings and appropriate interventions are planned, applied and reviewed. (Supervision records)

The safeguarding team ensure all new staff and volunteers are given a full and comprehensive induction which includes information on positive behaviour, safety and safeguarding. (Induction plans, protocols and records)

Incidents are recorded on the school's behaviour frequency form (Form 1). Form 1s are monitored for incident category and frequency by the school's Director of Teaching Learning and Safeguarding. If rising frequencies are identified reviews are arranged with the Positive Regulation Working Party (RWP) to ensure strategies are put into place to address the behaviour pattern/trigger. (Form 1s, minutes of reviews, behaviour plans, BWP minutes, behaviour reports)

Whole school weekly meetings cover a rolling programme of key focus areas including Behaviour, Safeguarding, SMSC, Wellbeing, Rights of the Child. Links between the areas are highlighted to promote a rounded understanding for staff about the whole school agenda. There is a cycle of updated



information to inform and maintain a high profile for these key areas. This ensures that the needs of all groups of learners are applied and integrated into daily practice. (Minutes of briefings)

### **Working with Partners and Sharing Information**

The school, in collaboration with parents, works highly effectively with trans-disciplinary social care, safeguarding and medical teams which enables positive social, medical and learning outcomes for pupils. (CPOMS, trans-disciplinary meeting records)

In partnership with families, we work closely with the Kirklees Virtual School to ensure that all CLA students' needs are addressed. We host e-pep meetings and provide clear targets to apply for access to Pupil Premium Plus funding to meet the additional needs of these students. (Trans-disciplinary meeting records)

Regular and frequent contact between home, school and social workers from the Disabled Children's Service ensures a cohesive support network that promotes good attendance. (CPOMS, attendance records, family liaison records of contact, home school diaries, trans-disciplinary meeting records)

We have coordinated dual placements in the recent past to ensure students receive the benefits from mainstream and special school placements at the same time. Successful transitions have ensured that placements have concluded appropriately when conditions are right. (Dual placement records)

### **Recognising Increased Risk**

We are aware that for our students, the expression of aggression and targeted behaviour is a result of the need to communicate an emotion. Responses, actions, and reactions could be triggered through proximity, noise, resources, and environmental factors. We work hard to identify these antecedents and solve issues of aggression by adapting the environment and addressing emotional needs. We are also aware that many of the behaviours expressed are as a result of congenital conditions as opposed to bullying with premeditated, harmful intent. A collegiate approach is taken to problem solve around such issues. Staff are hypervigilant regarding wellbeing which ensures students feel safe. Due to the successful application of this method, we have no exclusions.



We are aware that our students with SEND face increased risks. Staff know how to identify and remove barriers to achievement for their pupils through effective curriculum design, formative assessment and adapting their practice to meet pupils' needs. (Bespoke observation forms, planning and assessment for learning evidence, progress in provision documents)

Pupils are taught, at an appropriate level and how to keep themselves safe through a variety of topics embedded into the curriculum throughout school. The curriculum outlines criteria to ensure coverage of all relevant areas of personal safety. Example topics: My world – EY; People who help us – Primary; 999 Emergency - Secondary/Sixth Form. Students regularly complete out of school links and are involved in safety related learning such as Mencap's Safe Places Scheme. (Planning and assessment documentation, curriculum, school and community links successful post school placement monitoring)

The application of our Total Communication Strategy ensures that all students are informed of behaviour expectations through individualised communication systems. (Symbols, signage and communication aids)

A graduated approach to dysregulation supports strategies towards solutions. (Castle Hill School Graduated Approach Tool)

### **Child-on-Child Abuse**

All staff recognise that children can abuse other children. All staff are clear about our school's policy and procedures. Staff have been informed of the section within The Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. A section is also referred to in the Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy outlining expectations and vigilance in this area. (Safeguarding policy, Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy, CPOMS, risk assessments, form 1 and 4, serious incident forms)

### **Online Safety**

The school has a robust online-safety policy in place, supported by the school's safeguarding policies that make explicit reference to the Prevent Duty. Our internet provided by City Fibre via a Together Learning Trust central contract with a Smoothwall Firewall and Internet Filter device on the premises, which is joined to the Together Learning Trust parent Smoothwall device. All school devices that can leave site are also filtered via Smoothwall Cloud Filter, providing the same level of filtering that an on-premise device receives. Smoothwall have been members of the Internet Watch Foundation



(IWF) since 2007 – their aim is to minimise the availability of potentially criminal content. The system automatically blocks unlawful terrorist content and operates at a network level and on individual devices where required. (Licencing and application evidence, records of alerts and interventions)

Staff complete annual Cyber security, Online safety and GDPR training. School has provided on-line safety training for parents and carers, and drop-in sessions for staff on training days and twilights. An e-safety bulletin is provided to staff during the whole school meeting on a regular basis. (Training records)

Due to the unique needs of our students and their cognitive abilities all students accessing the internet at Castle Hill School do so on a supervised access basis and all our screens are in public view. Students do not access social media when in school. The school has also produced student friendly guidance for the use of the internet. (Planning and assessment outcomes, internet friendly guidance)

### **Safe Recruitment**

The SLT and other identified staff and governors have attended Safer Recruitment Training to give them the skills required when interviewing potential staff. All recruitment processes are led by Safer Recruitment trained staff. (Shortlisting outcomes, training records, induction and onboarding evidence)

All staff and governors have a DBS check as have all external students and volunteers. Checks are renewed on a 3 yearly cycle from 2023. (Single Central Record)

The single central record is reviewed annually through Kirklees' Safeguarding self-audit system. (Audit outcomes)

### **Managing Allegations**

Records are kept of any LADO referrals and outcomes. LADO instructions as a result of referrals are diligently applied. Incoming information from the LADO is appropriately disseminated amongst key staff. (CPOMS, LADO contact records, training records)

### **Governance and Accountability**

The governor responsible for safeguarding often visits the school and is invited to be involved in interview processes and has close links with the DSLs. The





governor also contributes to safeguarding audits. (Safeguarding governor monitoring visits)

The LGC are informed of all training opportunities including those associated with Safeguarding, the Safeguarding policy is ratified annually by the LGB. (Safeguarding Policy, Governor minutes)

The LGB are informed of safeguarding and behaviour data at each meeting to ensure they have a good understanding of the school's rigorous approach to student safety. (Principal's reports, LGC minutes)

### **Health and Safety**

The Health and Safety Policy is in place and is monitored by the Local Governing Body. Health and Safety is a key item in the weekly whole staff briefing and governors are informed of collated incidents during LGC meetings. The Trust and the school's building management company are also informed of incidents related to more serious events and those related to the building when they occur. All staff are required to complete Health and Safety training and Fire Safety training. Fire, Lockdown and Silent Evacuation protocols are reviewed on an ongoing basis and training disseminated. Regular drills are practised, and actions taken where necessary. (Training records, LGC minutes, Principal's reports, briefing minutes events file, Form 3 outcomes, Riddor reports, emergency protocol practice records and policies)

Safe Lifting and Handling training, associated Risk Assessments and a skills and equipment audit are formulated in conjunction with an independent Lifting and Handling Specialist, is provided regularly to ensure the safe lifting and handling of students. (Contact information, risk assessments, lifting and handling plans)

Dedicated first aiders, including mental health first aiders and CPR trained responders help to ensure the safety of students and staff. (Training records, first aid records)

### **Evidence Base**

Safeguarding policies and procedures

CPOMS records

DSL training records

Supervision meeting minutes

Staff training records (KCSIE, Prevent, online safety)





Single central record  
Safer recruitment training records  
LADO correspondence  
Governor safeguarding monitoring reports  
Kirklees Safeguarding Board audit  
Health and Safety records  
Fire drill records  
Lifting and handling training records and risk assessments  
Online safety policy and training materials  
Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy  
Positive Behaviour/Regulation Working Party  
Graduated approach tool

## 2. INCLUSION

### Summary

Castle Hill School provides a curriculum and provision that is ambitious for all. The school's approach to inclusion draws explicitly on a child centred philosophy and is implemented consistently across the school to remove barriers to achievement.

School renewed the Inclusion Quality Standard Award in 2025, which recognises and quality assures our inclusive approach to education and learning.

### **Understanding and Identifying Needs and Removing Barriers Through Curriculum Design and Bespoke Assessment.**

All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The greatest proportion of pupils have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties and many have associated sensory impairments. Some needs are life limiting and degenerative in nature. A growing number of students also have autism spectrum conditions and complex needs. (Population data)

Each student EHCP plan provides a corner stone for our child centred plan, do, review model. We assess and adapt to each evolving learning need on an ongoing basis and the EHCP is a good summative point of reference for each learning journey. (EHCP plans and review outcomes)

As part of the admissions process for new pupils, a detailed initial communication assessment is completed by our Communication Teacher in



partnership with our Speech and Language Therapist providing an accurate starting point for communication needs to be met. Each assessment is updated on an ongoing basis. This process supports students need and provides a baseline to help teachers plan and assess. (communication audit)

Specialised input from our Communication Teacher is provided for students to ensure their additional complex learning needs are met. The Communication and Interaction Teacher provides support, advice and training related to communication needs including those associated with Augmentative and Alternative Communication systems (AAC). This work fully supports the communication needs of the pupils and provides an information and training service for the wider school community. (Intervention records)

The Communication and Interaction Teacher works closely with the school's own Speech and Language Therapist and the NHS Speech and Language Therapy. Collaboration ensures effective outcomes from shared advice and guidance. (Intervention records)

See and Learn Language and Reading strategies are applied to teach early vocabulary, sight words, simple phrases and sentences, and grammar rules. This process offers our students concrete and visual representations of language concepts to support the development of their spoken language skills. (Intervention records, planning and assessment evidence)

Our learning audit provided us with the information we needed to build our successful curriculum model. This information partnered with the Early Years Foundation Stage Areas of Learning ensures we deliver comprehensive subject area coverage for all. (Curriculum and curriculum model)

Teachers demonstrate an outstanding understanding of explicit and nuanced need in both teaching and assessment and know how to identify and remove barriers to achievement for their pupils through effective planning, formative assessment and adapting their practice to meet pupils' needs. (Assessment report, Progress towards Targets documents, Progress in Provision documents, Learning Journals, MAPP targets, planning, BOS forms, risk assessments, behaviour plans)

Our Curriculum's comprehensive Sensory element covers Multi-Sensory Impairment, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, and Feeding and Swallowing. This has ensured high levels of engagement for all students. (Curriculum, planning and assessment, VI and HI interventions, Feeding and swallowing assessments and outcomes)



The school benefits from input from a qualified Teacher of Children with MSI. This quality assures the outstanding practice that already exists in meeting the needs of pupils with multi-sensory impairments. (MSI interventions, advice and guidance)

Engagement profiles help teachers understand student motivators. This information provides the foundations of understanding the direction of unique learning pathways for many. (Engagement profile and outcomes, planning and assessment)

### **Supporting Disadvantaged Pupils**

During Autumn 2024-25 Castle Hill School has 31.2% of learners accessing Pupil Premium and associated Recovery Premium funding. 50% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and for many of these, English is an additional language. The analysis of data carried out over time identifies that there is no significant difference of progress when split by gender or by ethnicity as all receive a level of intervention dependent on their individual learning needs. (Current and historical Assessment reports)

Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium +pupils receive a variety of different interventions. These are personalised and dependent on the needs of the individual. Class teachers and the Pupil Premium team led by the Deputy Principal, work together to agree and set the specific Pupil Premium MAPP targets in consultation with parents. (Planning and assessment documentation, pupil premium strategy and Pupil Premium audit, case studies, learning journals).

### **Supporting Pupils Known to Children's Social Care**

All students within Castle Hill are CIN (Section 17) although cases are escalated and deescalated dependent on need. Early help also provides support.

In partnership with families, we work closely with the Kirklees Virtual School to ensure that all CLA students' needs are addressed. We host e-pep meetings and provide clear targets to apply for access to Pupil Premium Plus funding to meet the additional needs of these students. (E-pep and Pupil Premium records)

The school, in collaboration with parents, works highly effectively with trans-disciplinary social care, safeguarding and medical teams which enables positive outcomes for pupils. We also host joint Children in Need and Children



Looked After reviews which ensures an effective wrap-around service.  
(CPOMS, school diary, meeting notes, home/school diaries)

### **Supporting Pupils with English as an Additional Language**

50% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and for many of these, English is an additional language. Teachers focus on the vocabulary pupils need, including subject-specific vocabulary, to help them understand new concepts; they keep explanations clear and precise. Teachers develop and extend pupils' language carefully and deliberately, with plenty of repetition. Our Total Communication Strategy supports receptive and expressive interaction. (TCS strategy, curriculum, planning and assessment, assessment reports)

### **Evidence Base**

The analysis of data carried out over time identifies that there is no significant difference of progress when split by gender or by ethnicity as all receive a level of intervention dependent on their individual learning needs.

Curriculum and curriculum guides  
MAPP and PiP assessment data  
Assessment reports  
Communication Teacher audit and records  
Speech and Language Therapy records  
EHCP reviews and records  
Multi-Sensory Impairment Teacher records  
Multi-agency meeting minutes  
Engagement profiles  
Case studies of achievement  
Pupil Premium strategy and audit  
E-pep records for CLA pupils

## **3. CURRICULUM AND TEACHING**

### **Summary**

The curriculum is designed to enable all students to be effective communicators, giving them confidence and preparing them to take an active role in their community, influence their world, make positive contributions, be responsible and achieve social and emotional fulfilment.



## **Curriculum Intent: Ambitious and Broad**

All have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of curriculum and teaching across the school. Subject leads develop their curriculum guides collaboratively on an ongoing basis to ensure the guides evolve and develop to meet the needs of our ever-changing cohort. (Teachers meeting agendas, subject area development plans, planning and assessment, curriculum).

Our curriculum model partnered with the Early Years Foundation Stage Areas of Learning provides flexibility yet subject area coverage. (Planning and assessment, curriculum and curriculum guides, learning journals, subject area monitoring files).

## **Curriculum Design and Sequencing**

Our students experience a broad and varied curriculum accessed through Castle Hill Curriculum Guides. Each rigorous and comprehensive subject specific Curriculum Guide provides direction for next steps in learning and is coherently planned and sequenced so that pupils build knowledge and skills cumulatively. Opportunities for horizontal progression, however, are also provided. The guides provide information including the current theme, programmes of study, learning level guidance, references to further curriculum resources, suggested activities for Continuous Provision in EYFS, Primary, Extended Provision, key vocabulary, related literature and songs, Collective Worship, guidance on Unicef Articles and British Values, Gatsby Benchmarks, Safeguarding and on-line safety, Multi-Sensory approaches, pupil voice and wellbeing, guidance on Work Related Learning, and guidance on Healthy Eating ensuring the needs and interests of children are met. (Curriculum and planning)

A departmentally differentiated thematic approach in the curriculum ensures progression and enables shared learning experiences across the school. Example topic cycle: EYFS – My World, KS1&2 – People who help us, KS3&4 – 999 Emergency; Sixth Form - Getting Help. (Curriculum and planning)

Pre-formal, semi-formal, formal pathways are integrated into the curriculum model enabling delivery to run smoothly between pathways ensuring needs for those with spikey profiles are met. (Curriculum and planning)

## **Strong Foundations in Communication, Reading, Writing and Mathematics**

Our primary focus for learning is engagement. Without engagement learning is inhibited. From the very early developmental stages we promote learning



through the application of the Engagement Model (Exploration, Realisation, Anticipation, persistence and initiation) and through schema-based learning (Maths). Children are encouraged to make links between events and objects through abstract signifiers including photographs, symbols and signs. Active listening is also an important element of this process. We develop this through the application of techniques such as Rhythm and Rhyme, Intensive Interaction and sensory exploration. Our children then develop their formalised learning including reading skills from this developmental base. (Curriculum and subject area policies and philosophies of practice)

### **Teaching of Reading**

At Castle Hill school we follow and apply systematic phonics within a 'hybrid approach' to teaching reading and writing, to accommodate the individual needs of pupils. In line with the latest research our focus is on 'balanced instruction', combining a systemic approach to teaching phonics with whole word recognition, use of visuals and symbols and the development of comprehension skills. During the academic year 2022-2023 we have created a phonics progression document and a phonics pathway. The pathway reflects the needs of all learners. (Reading policy and phonics pathways)

Our Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening developmental pathways, augmented by the Hearing Sound and Listening pathway ensure that staff have a very clear idea of developmental stepping-stones. The pathways assist planning and target setting, ensuring programmes of study are relevant, appropriate and achievable for all students. (Literacy curriculum guides and reading/phonics pathways)

Our lesson study groups continue to develop reading pedagogy within school so we can fully understand and disseminate information to the staff group regarding what reading means in our context. Groups include: Rhythm and Rhyme group, Emergent reading group, AAC and Advanced reader routes for learning, Phonological/Sensory awareness, Multi-sensory reference development group. (Triad group study pathways and presentations, training information, learning walk outcomes, SIP reports)

Resources to aid reading are provided to enhance our students' ability to generalise their skills both in, and outside of, school. These often take the form of communication books, AAC, communication passports, symbol strips, and eye gaze. (Communication resource, planning and assessment, communication teacher interventions and assessments)



Our total communication strategy is applied for each student at the earliest opportunity. This promotes the understanding of many forms of communication including being able to decipher symbols and signs. This skill is enhanced throughout the students' school career and culminates in sixth formers and leavers applying their reading skills in real life contexts, including environmental signage, shop frontage, and logos. (Communication resource, planning and assessment, communication teacher interventions and assessments)

All learning environments include opportunities for developing communication/reading skills (signage, displays, learning environment development records, lesson observations, learning environment audit, 5 book displays).

### **Teacher Knowledge and Expertise**

We follow a Primary delivery model which means that all teachers are required to deliver all subjects. Teachers are given time to refine and share with colleagues their own curriculum area development ensuring knowledge is shared, up to date, promoted and refined. (Planning, timetables curriculum development and lead evidence)

Lessons are highly effective due to the teachers' excellent subject knowledge and pedagogical skills. A variety of on-going strategies are applied to enhance and promote dialogue, reflection and challenge leading to development around pedagogy. (Teachers' meetings, lesson studies, peer to peer mentoring and management and peer led training)

Dynamic, innovative, and restless Continuous Professional Development (CPD) process takes a high priority, and this is clearly linked to the aims of the school. This is explicit within school culture and is continuously celebrated and shared. Due to the culture of expectation and empowerment of CPD and the high level of training made available to staff, there is a wide range of expertise, professional support and discussion which in turn leads to continuing development in the teaching strategies and techniques used. (CPD and PD records)

Leaders assure themselves that the curriculum is taught well; they identify areas for improvement and take effective action to tackle these, including through professional learning that ensures teachers develop the expertise needed to deliver the curriculum effectively. (Teachers meeting agenda and





minutes, Lesson study/triad groups, curriculum development projects, CPD targets, lesson observation outcomes, peer observation process)

### **Effective Teaching Practice**

Specialist teaching resources and materials and the learning environment enhance the aims of the curriculum. Management of external distraction and the provision of focused learning allow pupils to transfer key knowledge to long-term memory. (Learning environment development evidence, controlled and smart resource use evidenced in planning and subject lead development plans)

Teaching expectations are clear and all are aware of the value of commentary, chunking, rise and fall/rest and recovery, rhythm and rhyme, consolidated learning, routine, objects/items/sounds and actions of reference, the use of key vocabulary, the principals of stress, say less, show and go slow and the importance of processing time. (Lesson observations, baselines of practice)

Lessons are carefully planned with appropriate and challenging learning objectives. Planning includes references to all students, all of whom work on personalised programmes to ensure the best possible levels of engagement and progress. Teachers dynamically respond to pupil need as they teach, adapting their delivery and practice appropriately thus ensuring progression. (lesson plans and observations)

Leaders deploy staff effectively so that all pupils have access to high-quality teaching. High staffing ratios support behaviour management and enable personalised learning. (Whole school staff allocation information, Lesson plans and classroom management)

Curriculum leaders create Mastery statements on an annual basis which drive their subject area focus for the academic year. The statements are shared with colleagues in the teachers' meeting to ensure everyone has a shared understanding. Mastery statements are differentiated into PMLD, SLD and SLD+ streams to ensure a differentiated and targeted approach. (Mastery statements, subject lead development plans and innovation statements)

Curriculum leaders are responsible for disseminating information and national developments related to their curriculum areas to the teaching team.

Curriculum groups and leaders are given time to review, develop and enhance the guides on a termly basis. This provides excellent guidance for all



staff ensuring consistent delivery across the curriculum. (Subject leader development evidence)

Curriculum leaders also present to peers and Governors on a rota basis, this ensures action plans and curriculum development is shared with and monitored by peers, SLT and Governors resulting in high-quality outcomes. (Subject leader development files)

The holistic multi-agency approach to planning and delivering personalised learning is integral to life in the school. Specialist professionals employed directly by the school, inform and facilitate learning for a wide range of specific needs. (Records from; outdoor learning, music therapy and dance strategies)

The Communication and Interaction Teacher provides support, advice and training related to communication needs including those associated with Augmentative and Alternative Communication systems (AAC). This work fully supports the communication needs of the pupils and provides an information and training service for teachers and the wider school community. (Communication teacher records)

The Communication and Interaction Teacher works closely with the new school Speech and Language Therapist and the NHS Speech and Language Therapy provision. Collaboration ensures effective outcomes from shared advice and guidance. (Communication teacher records)

Collaborative practice within the MAT ensures good practice is shared. (Spring 2025/6 Art/Wellbeing CPD offer to MAT Primary schools)

### **Assessment to Support Learning**

The school has a clear assessment, recording and reporting procedures which ensure that progress can be effectively monitored. This in turn helps to ensure that appropriate learning strategies are applied. (Assessment policy, assessment procedures)

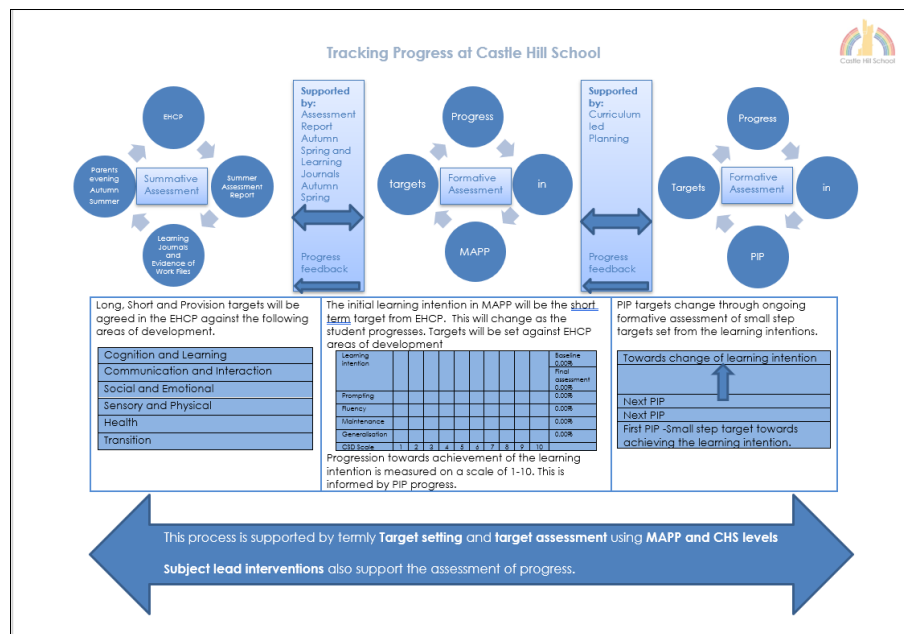
The school uses MAPP (Mapping and Assessing Pupil Progress) as an assessment tool and has developed its use to include PiP (Progress in Progression) criteria. The EHCP drives the targets set, which are then transferred into MAPP. These targets are assessed through the four MAPP categories; prompting, fluency, maintenance, and generalisation. Towards this process the targets are broken down further into small step PiP targets which are easily assessed and provide outcomes which feed into our



assessment for learning cycle. Any unfulfilled PiP target is reevaluated regarding how appropriate it is to the student's learning profile and a new adapted target is set. (MAPP and PiP assessment documentation, assessment reports)

The following diagram shows the school's intuitive assessment system.

<https://www.castlehillschool.org.uk/learning/assessment-planning-and-progress>



As part of the on-going process of assessment, rigorous target setting and Progress Towards Target (PTT) meetings take place termly with teachers. Castle Hill Level and MAPP outcomes are referenced, and areas for further development are highlighted and discussed. This enables a clear overview of any issues regarding the progress. (Progress Towards Targets documentation)

Subject leader monitoring processes ensure student progress and skill retention is assessed on an ongoing basis. This then informs targeted student interventions or alternative strategies for learning. (Subject leader monitoring files)

Formal assessment processes are supported by Evidence of Work Files which provide a child centred record of learning outcomes. This record along with case studies effectively illustrate year on year development and learning. (Evidence of work files)



Learning Journals provide a termly student-centred record of achievement for each curriculum area. These documents are collated towards end of year reporting to parents and carers. (Learning journals)

### **Evidence Base**

Curriculum guides for all subjects  
Curriculum overview document  
Planning (long, medium and short term)  
MAPP and PiP assessment data  
Progress Towards Targets meeting records  
Lesson observation records  
Peer observation reports  
CPD records and training logs  
Lesson study outcomes  
Subject leader monitoring and intervention documents  
Phonics progression document and pathway  
Reading, writing, speaking and listening pathways  
Hearing sound and listening pathway  
See and Learn programme evidence  
Assessment reports  
Case studies  
Learning journals  
Evidence of work files  
Curriculum leader action plans and presentations  
Teacher meeting minutes  
Moderation records  
Engagement profiles

## **4. ACHIEVEMENT**

### **Summary**

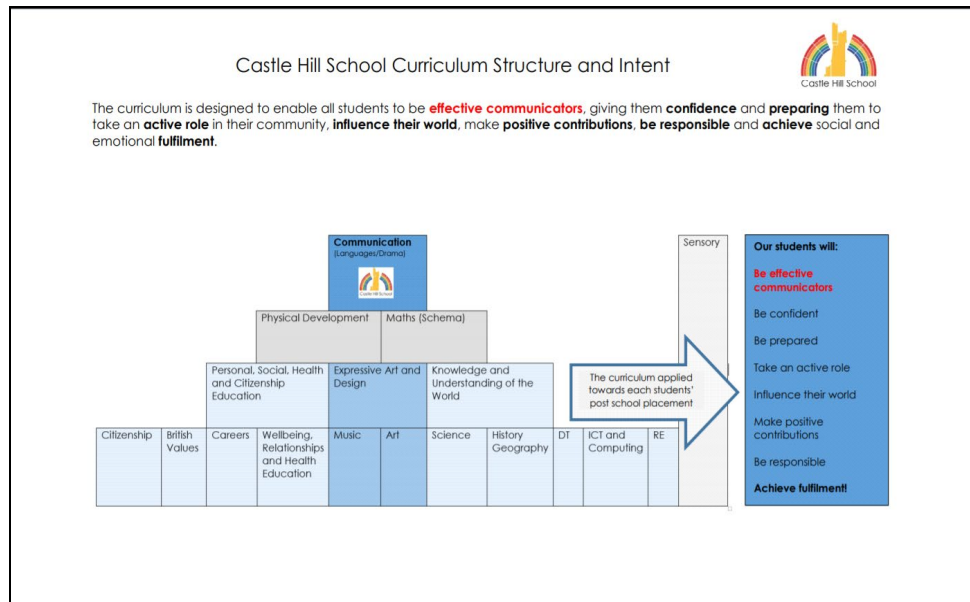
Learners gain the skills knowledge and experience they need to empower themselves in their future lives and positively influence their world.

### **Pupils Achieve Well Across the Curriculum**

The curriculum provides a broad and balanced approach to learning ensuring students develop knowledge and skills. The curriculum also provides opportunities for bespoke approaches to learning. The developmental pathways highlighted within each curriculum guide and the associated programmes of study provide varied learning opportunities to fit individual need. As a result, each child's learning experience is unique. (Curriculum, assessment documentation and post school tracking)



The Castle Hill School curriculum structure clearly highlights how each curriculum area is included and is combined effectively towards clearly defined outcomes and ultimately, destinations.



The school's use of MAPP as an assessment tool that supports the curriculum focuses on four areas, two of which are maintenance and generalisation. This ensures a focus on the retention of skills in preparation for the further development of independence. (Curriculum, assessment documentation and post school tracking)

### Assessing and Target Setting Towards Strong Progress

Termly assessment reports evidence the effectiveness of our target setting process and illustrate how students complete their programmes of study and progress. (Assessment reports)

In the absence of national data which provides a benchmark against which our students' progress can be objectively predicted, the school is developing its own bespoke progression guidance data to measure progress against, ensuring students are on track. This has been used to inform PTT dialogue and will be refined and integrated further on a year-by-year basis as data is added. (Assessment reports)

MAPP and PiP, and Castle Hill School Level data is collected and analysed by the whole school assessment team. This ensures challenging and robust targets are being set to ensure progression. (Assessment reports)



Dedicated data related to literacy and numeracy is collated via Castle Hill School Level assessment. This data is specifically used not only to help target set, but also to identify wider school trends. (Assessment reports)

### **Qualifications and Accreditation**

Our accreditation and qualification offer is bespoke and highly personalised and is integrated into the curriculum. Opportunities are differentiated according to need. Due to the highly personalised approach to the delivery of qualifications and accreditation students achieve successful outcomes. (Annual qualification and accreditation outcomes)

A differentiated accreditation and qualification pathway is delivered to meet the needs of each student according to their ability, interests and strengths. (Accreditation and qualification outcomes, Sixth form and KS4 pathways for learning)

Students begin to complete accreditation through the AQA Unit Award Scheme during transition in Key Stage 2. This continues through Key Stage 3 into Key Stage 4. Students also complete ASDAN Personal Progress Qualification units in Key Stage 4. Units are specifically designed to prepare students for the future and cover themes including Preparation for Work, Community Participation and Independent Living. (Qualification and accreditation pathway)

Sixth form students access a choice of three qualification options; ASDAN Personal Progress (Pre-Entry and Entry Level 1), ASDAN Personal and Social Development (Entry Level 1), OCR Functional Skills (Entry level 1, 2 & 3 if required). The qualifications provide a differentiated learning route to meet all needs. (Qualification and accreditation pathway)

### **Preparation for Next Steps**

Students completing ASDAN Personal and Social Development (Entry level 1), OCR Functional Skills (Entry Level 1, 2 & 3) are fully prepared for college/educational destinations where their education pathway can be continued to the next appropriate stage, for example Entry 2 or 3 qualifications. Other students are also prepared to progress into service providers through ASDAN Personal Progress and ASDAN Personal and Social Development. This certification is based on work related learning and life skill including units based on Independent Preparation for Work, Managing your



own money and others. (Qualification and accreditation outcomes, multi-agency transition scaffold, post school tracking)

The curriculum provides opportunities to understand and experience the world of work through mini-enterprise projects, work experience within and out of school and community visits. The Gatsby Benchmarks provide us with a framework which has been adapted appropriately for the needs of our students in order to quality assure our careers provision. (Curriculum, learning journals, planning and assessment, links audit and evidence, Re-Works link evidence)

Our new Reworks building is used to enhance the opportunities available to Castle Hill School learners by providing a work-based learning site for students, giving them skills to prepare them for adult life. The separation of the ReWorks Centre from the main school site helps the students think of it as a work-based environment rather than a typical school classroom. (Curriculum, learning journals, planning and assessment, links audit and evidence, ReWorks link evidence)

Destination tracking shows that the vast majority of leavers retain their initial destination placement. This indicates that they are fully prepared for their next stage of education/service provider. (Destination tracking and placement planning evidence)

The three-year Sixth Form curriculum is designed with a core dedicated to the development of independence and the accumulation of cultural capital. This enables and empowers our students to feel confident to communicate their needs and be active participants in their future placements, their community and society as a whole. (Curriculum, learning journals, planning and assessment, links audit and evidence, destination tracking, Re-Works link evidence)

### **Evidence Base**

Assessment reports (termly and annual)

MAPP and PiP progress data

Castle Hill Level assessment data

Progression guidance models (CHIP)

Case studies showing individual progress

Accreditation outcomes (AQA Unit Award Scheme)

Qualification outcomes (ASDAN Personal Progress, ASDAN Personal and Social Development, OCR Functional Skills)

Destination tracking data





Post-19 placement monitoring  
Progress Towards Targets meeting records  
Subject leader progress monitoring documents  
Evidence of work files  
Learning journals  
Moderation records  
Pupil Progress reports  
Engagement profiles  
Work Related Learning assessment  
Gatsby Benchmarks report  
ReWorks records  
Community links evidence

## **5. ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOUR**

### **Summary**

Leaders and other staff create a calm, orderly, respectful, supportive and positive environment in which pupils can thrive. The school's work has a positive impact on the attendance, behaviour and attitudes

### **High Expectations for Attendance and Behaviour**

At Castle Hill School we recognise that all behaviour is communication. Each students' experience in school is scaffolded through the application of familiar routines which allows them to feel secure, anticipate activities and understand expectations to enable learning. (Planning, positive behaviour plans, positive behaviour policy, behaviour/regulation working party minutes, lesson observation outcomes, baselines of practice)

A highly effective Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy is applied throughout school. The policy is formulated by the Regulation Working Party (RWP) which includes staff from all departments and roles. The Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy focuses on de-escalation strategies and provides a positive, flexible approach to dealing with regulation issues. (Planning, positive behaviour plans, positive behaviour policy, behaviour/regulation working party minutes)

Leaders pay close attention to every element of the school's work to make sure that the school is a place that pupils want to attend. The learning environment is key and is continually adapted to meet need and promote wellbeing. (Development record and timeline)



The school rule is displayed throughout the school in symbol form and is regularly referred to by staff and students alike ensuring a consistent approach. (School rule displays)

### **Monitoring and Improving Attendance**

Attendance is reviewed daily, weekly and monthly and actions are taken accordingly to contact and support families in order to improve attendance. (Attendance system and records)

Families are called by school if absence has not been previously arranged. This ensure attendance can be supported. Accurate data is gathered regarding absence and a double check on registration codes is applied to ensure accurate record keeping reflects reality, ensuring attendance support can be targeted. (Attendance reporting process records)

Severe and persistent absenteeism is monitored and support is provided, often as outreach. Data shows that severe and persistent absentees predominantly fall within SLD/PLMD high medical need group. (Attendance and outreach records)

Regular and frequent contact between home, school and social workers from the Disabled Children's Service ensures a cohesive support network that promotes good attendance. (CPOMS)

Weekly DSL supervision meetings check attendance records to ensure accuracy and review support and need. ( Supervision records)

A collaborative and solutions-focussed approach between the school and school transport ensures that transportation issues are resolved effectively. (Contact records)

### **Positive Behaviour Culture**

Enjoyment of learning is consistently recognised as being an outstanding feature of the school. Ofsted stated 'Pupils at this school thrive in an environment tailored to their individual needs. This is a happy, encouraging and caring school where the vision to 'innovate, communicate and empower' is not just a statement but a lived reality. From the moment they arrive, pupils are surrounded by staff who deeply understand their strengths and the challenges they face. There is a culture of trust and care that allows pupils to feel secure and be ready to learn'. (OFSTED report)



Learners' attitudes to school are excellent and they enjoy coming to school. Students are rewarded for attitudes to learning and their successes are celebrated in a range of ways appropriate to their needs. They are proud of their certificates and rewards and will communicate and celebrate their achievements with staff. (Sign and sing outcomes, class plenary evidence, lesson observation outcomes)

Positive behaviour principles are reflected in our philosophy. As such everyone supports the process and offers help and support to apply explicit and subtle expectations. This has a positive influence on student presentation and staff practice. (Positive behaviour policy)

When dysregulation occurs during lessons, effective management and the application of the positive regulation strategy ensures that not only learning continues for others, but the individual in crisis is encouraged to develop coping strategies for the future. A culture of collaborative problem solving promotes this approach. (Positive behaviour plans, planning, regulation/behaviour working party minutes)

Effective adherence to the Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy is ensured through informal learning walks. This ensures that procedures are clear, consistently and diligently applied. Behaviour/regulation plans are formulated with families and reviewed regularly. (Positive behaviour plans, learning walks and contact with parents)

We celebrate success daily in class and weekly in whole school and phase celebrations. Achievements are then recorded on individual, class and whole school achievement boards. Students are keen to achieve and are motivated to behave well to receive them. (Rewards, stars and routines)

Staff have been informed of the section within The Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance related to child-on-child abuse. A section has been added to the Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy outlining expectations and vigilance in this area. (Positive behaviour policy, behaviour training, CPOMS, interventions)

No exclusions have been made due to the application of our highly effective positive behaviour/regulation strategy. Regulation support meetings are arranged where necessary regarding any emerging or ongoing behaviour concerns. External agencies support the school as appropriate in support meetings including educational and clinical psychologists and CAMHS. (Meeting minutes, CPOMS)



## **Respectful Culture and Anti-Bullying**

We are aware that for our students, the expression of aggression and targeted behaviour is a result of the need to communicate an emotion. Responses, actions, and reactions could be triggered through proximity, noise, resources, and environmental factors. We work hard to identify these antecedents and solve issues of aggression by adapting the environment and addressing emotional needs. We are also aware that many of the behaviours expressed are as a result of congenital conditions as opposed to bullying with premeditated, harmful intent. A collegiate approach is taken to problem solve around such issues. Staff are hypervigilant regarding wellbeing which ensures students feel safe. (Positive behaviour policy, positive behaviour plans, planning, regulation/ behaviour working party minutes)

The PSHE curriculum guide and related policies includes a planned approach to fostering positive relationships between peers and staff. By covering themes including Emotions and Relationships, Turn-taking, Sharing and Rules, Tolerance and Racism, this ensures that a positive environment is promoted. (Curriculum)

Pupils' attitudes to their education are positive. They are committed to their learning and take pride in their achievements. Wellbeing analysis indicates that students are happy and their indicators of wellbeing (MIND criteria) continue to develop and improve. (MAPP and PiP outcomes)

All students engage in learning on arrival at school. Total communication approaches ensure that students have access to personalised timetables ensuring understanding of routines, expectations, and daily transitions. The students are empowered to communicate effectively and this in turn has a positive effect on regulation. (Timetables and planning)

Staff responded to the annual questionnaire overwhelmingly agreeing that Pupils are safe at Castle Hill School, Castle Hill School provides an environment where pupils thrive, Staff consistently manage pupil behaviour using positive techniques. (Staff annual questionnaire)

There have been no incidences of any prejudice-based bullying.



## **Staff Training and Support**

Teachers, educational support staff and lunch time support staff receive training on the content, principles and protocols of the positive behaviour/regulation plan and as a result apply the school's positive behaviour/regulation ethos. The Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy is reviewed and disseminated annually. (Positive behaviour policy and training records)

Whole school weekly meetings cover a rolling programme of key focus areas including Behaviour, Safeguarding, SMSC, Wellbeing, Rights of the Child. Links between the areas are highlighted to promote a rounded understanding for staff about the whole school agenda. (Meeting minutes)

## **Monitoring and Review Systems**

Incidents are recorded on the school's behaviour frequency form (Form 1). Form 1s are monitored for incident category and frequency by the school's Director of Teaching Learning and Safeguarding. If rising frequencies are identified reviews are arranged with the Positive Regulation Working Party (RWP) to ensure strategies are put into place to address the behaviour pattern/trigger. Weekly supervision meetings also review weekly behaviour outcomes to assess intervention and support. (Positive behaviour plans, positive behaviour policy, behaviour/regulation working party minutes, form 1 collation, behaviour monitoring data, supervision meeting records)

Form1 information is collated to provide a termly/annual whole school behaviour frequency model. We hope this information will indicate termly/annual commonalities regarding behaviour frequency. This will assist in providing additional support at specific times of the term/year. This data is also provided for the Governors to analyse during ½ termly LCG meetings. (Behaviour data outcomes)

Behaviour/Regulation Plan reviews can be called by any member of staff and the school's Positive Behaviour Working Party can be convened to assist. (Behaviour/regulation working party minutes, review outcomes and minutes)

More serious incidents are recorded in the serious incident book. The CPOMS Safeguarding recording system is also use comprehensively to track need. Incidents are monitored by the SLT. If rising frequencies are identified Behaviour/Regulation Plan reviews are called to ensure strategies are put into



place to address need. (Positive behaviour plans, behaviour/regulation working party minutes)

The Events/Near Miss File also supports this process. We apply lessons learnt to learning strategies and behaviour/regulation plans. All processes are carried out in consultation with parents. (Events/Near Miss file, home school books, CPOMS)

Governors review behaviour data and actions to ensure the strategic imperative is addressed re the positive behaviour approach( Governor monitoring visits)

### **Supporting Pupils and Families**

School deals exceptionally well to support the needs of those with challenging behaviour, taking advice from external agencies.

Parents and carers are encouraged to play an active role in the formulation of behaviour strategies and are consulted throughout. Parents/carers are kept informed about behaviour via telephone messages, home schoolbooks and review meetings. (Positive behaviour plans, home/school contact including home/school book and CPOMS evidence)

Training for parents and carers has been delivered by staff and external agencies such as CAMHS, and resources shared to provide a consistent approach to behaviour. (Training records)

Parents and a variety of professionals are invited to behaviour/regulation or emergency reviews to offer advice and guidance. Professionals invited can include, but are not limited to, Educational Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists, Consultants, Community Nurses and CAMHS. (Meeting minutes and outcomes)

As well as new learning approaches, staffing arrangements and timetables are formulated as a response to consistent crisis behaviour. A graduated approach to dysregulation supports strategies towards solutions. (Positive behaviour plans, planning, regulation/ behaviour working party minutes, graduated approach document)

Parent/carer questionnaire outcomes have positive responses regarding the application of our positive behaviour strategy and its impact. (Parent/carer questionnaire)



### **Evidence Base**

Positive Behaviour/Regulation Policy  
Graduated approach document  
Regulation Working Party minutes  
Behaviour/regulation plans  
Form 1 records (behaviour frequency forms)  
Serious incident book  
CPOMS records  
Events/Near Miss File  
Attendance data and reports  
Supervision meeting minutes  
Outreach records  
Anti-Bullying Policy  
PSHE curriculum guide  
Learner of the week records  
Achievement boards and records  
Wellbeing MAPP targets  
Training records (behaviour, safeguarding, SMSC)  
Parent communication records  
Multi-agency meeting records  
Risk assessments  
Visual timetables  
School rule displays  
Governor monitoring visit reports  
Ofsted report 202  
Parent/carers questionnaire  
Staff questionnaire  
Transport communication records

## **6. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING**

### **Summary**

The Wellbeing agenda ensures wellbeing is a high priority, creating optimum conditions for learning. Our wellbeing agenda is based on the seven indicators of wellbeing, as identified by the UK's leading Mental Health Charity, Mind, underpin wellbeing practices in school. Wellbeing practices enable pupils to: feel confident in themselves and have positive self-esteem, feel and express a range of emotions, build and maintain good relationships with others, feel engaged with the world around them, live and work productively, cope with the stresses of daily life, adapt in times of change and uncertainty.





Pupils feel well supported, develop consistently detailed knowledge and skills, make a strong positive contribution to the school's inclusive culture and are well prepared for their next steps and for life beyond school.

### **Curriculum for Personal Development**

The curriculum contributes to pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The curriculum provides programmes of study that offer a broad scope of learning opportunities which are matched to child centred need. Wellbeing programs of study in all curriculum guides support this process along with specific wellbeing MAPP and PiP targets. (Curriculum guides, planning, assessment outcomes including MAPP and PiP, Learning Journals)

The Physical Development, including Sport Premium provision, and PSHE curriculum guides provide teachers with activity descriptors to ensure wellbeing coverage for all our pupils. This has provided many opportunities for our students to participate in physical sport-based activities in school, during after school activities, and out in the community such as indoor multi-sports. This helps promote student health and wellbeing, and attitudes to healthy adult life-style choices. (Planning and assessment, learning journals)

Agility, Balance and Coordination (ABC) sessions are available each morning for pupils across school. This enables students to feel orientated, happy and relaxed for the start of the day, as well as allowing students to problem solve and use fine and gross motor skills. (Planning and assessment, learning journals)

### **Developing Character and Resilience**

The creation of a positive, solutions focussed, and can-do culture ensures that our students believe that they are capable and empowered to try new opportunities without fear and self-doubt as a barrier. (Planning and assessment, learning journals)

Students often face physical, emotional, and societal challenges due to their unique conditions. A collegiate approach involving school, families, and other agencies provide opportunities promote and instil resilience (Links evidence, enrichment opportunities, planning, assessment reports, learning journals, school newsletter)



Students are closely monitored to assess their wellbeing (Bespoke Observation Schedules).

In the beginning and throughout a child's school career, the application of the Engagement Model, teaches children the skills they need to progress and succeed. Skills include persistence which helps foster resilience. The school transition processes support this to enable our students to generalise these skills and become confident, able and contributing members of society. (Links evidence, enrichment opportunities, planning, assessment reports, learning journals, school newsletter)

School renewed its Inclusion Quality Standard Award status in 2025. The award recognised and quality assured our inclusive approach to education and learning. We believe inclusion strategies promote resilience, confidence and independence. (Inclusion Quality Standard Award)

### **Mental and Physical Health**

The school has achieved the Gold Mental Health Award, renewed in 2025, accredited by Leeds Beckett University. This award quality assures the substantial wellbeing agenda that runs throughout the school which promotes pupils', staff, and families' wellbeing and happiness. School also has a number of Child Mental Health First Aiders who support wellbeing. (Gold Mental Health Award)

Wellbeing photographic evidence is displayed during whole school Sign and Sing assembly on a weekly basis, and the seven indicators of wellbeing are used to categorise achievement. This process promotes confidence and empowerment. (Presentation evidence)

Our Family Liaison offer provides support to families to improve their resilience and signpost services that they can access to promote wellbeing and attendance. (Family liaison outcomes and referrals, CPOMS)

We hold the Healthy Schools Award. Fruit is distributed daily and is supplied at snack time and lunch times. School also celebrates fruit week which is led by the School Council. (School council minutes and actions, Healthy schools award)

### **Understanding Risks and Staying Safe**

Pupils are taught, at an appropriate level, how to keep themselves safe through a variety of topics embedded into the curriculum throughout school.



Curriculum outlines criteria to ensure coverage of all relevant areas of personal safety. Example topics: My world – EY; People who help us – Primary; 999 Emergency - Secondary/Sixth Form. (Curriculum, planning and assessment)

Pupils are encouraged to apply skills and learning related to personal safety in their home, school and community through the application of modelling and social stories. (Curriculum, planning and assessment, social stories)

The RSE curriculum within school ensures an understanding of privacy, empathy and sexuality and how to build and maintain relationships, this is delivered in a student-centred way with bespoke approaches to learning supported by social stories. (Curriculum, Planning and assessment, social stories)

Due to regulation being a high priority in our curriculum, students are encouraged to develop self-regulation skills and have access to relevant resources. We promote coping mechanisms for empowerment through the application of bespoke positive behaviour plans and learning strategies ( Positive behaviour plans, curriculum, planning and assessment)

### **British Values, Diversity and Citizenship**

The school curriculum highlights the importance of cooperation, being a part of a community and respecting others. The curriculum guides provide specific programmes of study which influence medium term planning, MAPP and PiP targets, and so student learning. These programmes of study include content from British Values, SMSC, Unicef, and Wellbeing guidance. (Curriculum and planning)

To confirm our continued commitment to our pupils, their conduct and their values we renewed the Gold Rights Respecting School Award (June 2025). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child set out a series of 'Articles' that list the child's rights which we respect and are aligned with our fundamental British values. (Unicef Gold Award)

Outstanding community link opportunities throughout school promote a sense of belonging within the wider community including with multi-generational groups. Through this process we actively encourage a sense of social responsibility.(Links evidence)

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development runs through everything we do at Castle Hill and we successfully renewed our Gold Award in March 2025.



This nationally recognised Quality Mark recognises, and quality assures the work that we do in this area for students and the wider school community. (SMSC Gold Quality standard Mark)

The curriculum, collective acts of worship and festival days ensure that multi-cultural diversity is celebrated. (celebration records and newsletters)

An understanding of exchange is promoted through the curriculum to address issues related to economic well-being. This helps our students to understand real-world concepts. This process is differentiated according to need, from the exchange of objects and symbols to communicate wants, to the exchange of money for items. (Curriculum, planning and assessment, case studies)

### **Enrichment and Wider Opportunities**

We create opportunities for students to generalise, apply and refine core skills in real-world situations, through ongoing community visits and work experience. These opportunities take place both in and out of school (Curriculum, planning and assessment, links records, learning journals, newsletters)

Enrichment activities allow students to access a broader curriculum, activities include Yoga, gardening, cycling and dance. (Curriculum, planning and assessment)

Groups working in our ReWorks building welcome peers from mainstream schools with SEMH needs. This enriches our students' experiences and those experiences of visiting students. (Curriculum, Planning and assessment, links records, learning journals, newsletters)

### **Pupil Voice**

The School Council promotes pupil voice through its inclusive agenda. (School council minutes)

Pupil voice is embedded throughout the curriculum including through the key learning area of communication and the promotion of independence, choice-making and expressing wants, needs and emotions. (Curriculum, planning and assessment)

The school has researched how we can capture, promote, and respond to pupil voice. Indicators of wellbeing and the production of wellbeing portraits



are essential in ensuring all students' wants and needs are heard and responded to. (Wellbeing portraits, BOS forms)

Enrichment activities ensure that student choices, preferences and indicators of engagement are responded to, thereby promoting the outcome that students' opinions are listened to, valued, and acted upon. (Enrichment opportunities, newsletters, curriculum, planning and assessment)

Student voice is a valued and essential part of the planning process, informing teaching and learning through our assessment for learning model. (Please follow the link

<https://www.castlehillschool.org.uk/learning/assessment-planning-and-progress>)

Our Democracy Friendly Award (Kirklees) celebrates young people's voice. In achieving the award students have learnt about being part of the local community, building confidence, the application of Life Skills and building relationships with the community. (Democracy Friendly Award)

### **Careers and Preparation for Adulthood**

Our bespoke Work-Related Learning pathway, Sixth Form Curriculum and link opportunities throughout school promotes students' confidence, independence, and sense of empowerment, preparing students to maximise opportunities and thrive in their adult lives. (Work Related Learning pathway, Sixth Form Curriculum and link evidence)

A service level agreement with the Careers Service ensures quality advice, guidance and information is supplied to students, parents and carers. The careers library resource ensures that information is available for opportunities about the world of work. (Planning and assessment, minutes of meetings)

School has successfully achieved the Quality Standards Mark in Careers Information, Advice and Guidance in 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2023. This ensures our provision is in line with national expectations. (Careers quality standard mark)

We comply with national careers guidance in relation to the Gatsby Benchmarks, which have been adapted to meet the unique transition needs of the students at Castle Hill School to ensure that they are prepared for their future placements. (Curriculum, planning and assessment)



We comply with national careers guidance in relation to the Baker Clause ensuring appropriate work-related learning destinations and experience is associated to learning need and propensity. (Curriculum, planning and assessment)

The annual What Next Fair, Preparing for Adulthood events, coffee mornings, visits to service providers ensure parents and carers and students, have a clear picture of transition possibilities for the future. (collated evidence, letters, photographs, newsletters)

Close links and ongoing dialogue with professionals and service providers ensures the best destination for need is organised for leavers. (Leavers case studies, post school tracking, transition journey records, minutes of meetings)

### **Evidence Base**

Wellbeing policies and PSHE curriculum guides  
Physical Development curriculum guide and Sport Premium records  
MAPP wellbeing targets, wellbeing portraits, BOS forms  
Mental Health Gold Award  
Healthy Schools Award  
Inclusion Quality Standard Award  
UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award  
SMSC Gold Award  
Democracy Friendly Award  
School Council action plan and reports  
Engagement profiles  
RSE policy  
Careers Quality Standard  
Curriculum: Gatsby Benchmarks  
Work Related Learning pathway  
ReWorks records  
Community links audit  
Enrichment timetable and after school club records  
E-pep records  
Collective worship timetable  
Festival celebration records  
Case studies  
Learning journals  
Destination tracking  
Preparing for Adulthood event records  
Careers service records



## 7. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

### Summary

Leaders have a clear and determined vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practice. Leaders focus on improving staff's pedagogical knowledge to enhance teaching. Leaders engage effectively with learners and their community and are supportive, solutions focused and ambitious.

### Clear Vision and Shared Values

Our Mission Statement mirrors our strong shared values. Our motto of 'Innovating, Communicating, Empowering' signifies our belief in that we are a restless school, constantly collaborating, problem solving and providing new ideas with the intention that our students become valued and engaged members of the wider community. (Vision, staff and parental questionnaires, parents evening questionnaire, post school tracking, assessment outcomes, graduation records, transition plans, event attendance)

The School Improvement Plan (CHIP) clearly provides the school with a route towards improvement and is updated termly. Targets are formulated as a response to the continually changing need of the community. Student need is paramount, however, parent, staff and the wider community need is also included. The CHIP is available for all to access via the school website. (CHIP)

The importance of all stakeholders' views is integral to the development and implementation of the plan. The termly School Improvement Partner and peer review reports also help to inform the CHIP's direction of travel. (CHIP and peer review reports)

Under leadership guidance the school continues to adapt to the changing landscape within the national educational agenda, provide continuity and stability and keep standards high. (Castle Hill School Development Centre plans and outcomes throughout the years, school plans for development, financial management and planning)

The SLT ensure they have a visible presence around school to provide leadership, reassurance and support. This is clearly represented in the outcomes of the staff questionnaire and Ofsted reports; Staff at the school feel supported and valued. Both new and long-standing members describe





an open culture that prioritises their well-being and workload. Many highlight the positive relationships they have with both colleagues and pupils. One member of staff captured the thoughts of many when they said, 'Everything we do here is about well-being – we are a nurturing environment that cares for everybody.' (Ofsted report 2024)

### **Developing Staff Expertise**

Continuous Professional Development is promoted throughout the school and all staff have effective professional/personal development meetings. Teachers meet with members of the Senior Leadership Team to clarify their CPD targets annually, which are then reviewed at the midpoint. Core targets are agreed collaboratively and focus on school priorities, pedagogy, action research, and have reference to the Teachers' Standards. (CPD records, training records)

The school's action research/triad approach to pedagogical development is an essential element in analysing and understanding changing need and finding solutions. The action research groups are led by teachers but also include learning Facilitators. Their annual outcomes are disseminated to the wider staff group to ensure theory is transferred to practice. Each triad's focus evolves with the changing need of the school population and is influenced by the latest external research outcomes. (Triad evidence of work, training records, achievement outcomes)

Leadership is keen to source and fund opportunities for learning. Active courses in 2025-27 include: NPQH, Specialist Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship Level 5, MA Inclusion (SLD/PMLD) MA / PGCert University of Birmingham. (Evidence of learning)

Support staff follow a personal development pathway annually, reviewed biannually by the SLT. Support staff meet with their PD facilitator coach and set targets for their own development, often based upon class need, their own areas of interest, the whole school research agenda, lesson study outcomes, and opportunities provided by the school's training menu. (PD records, training records)

Lunchtime Support Assistants follow a personal development pathway and set one target annually. The Lunchtime Support Assistants also access a menu of personal development opportunities on a weekly basis provided by the SLT and a wide selection of professionals. (CPD records, training records)



The school provides a comprehensive training menu annually based upon student need, internal research, external research, and general pedagogy. This training is often presented through twilights and early bird sessions to accommodate issues related to work/life balance. (CPD records, training records)

Training is provided through the application of training days and disaggregated training days, although many staff exceed school's expectations and attend more training than our baseline specifies. Sessions are delivered by external agencies and in-house expertise. (Training day records)

Coaching groups have been established to tailor support specific to role and experience levels, for example the Teachers as Leaders hub, Learning Facilitator and HLTA coaching group. (Minutes of meetings)

Ongoing supportive dialogue is promoted to embed confidence and share experience. New staff are allocated mentors to ensure a clear pathway to the understanding of systems and processes is achieved. (Staff retention records, staff questionnaire outcomes)

All teachers, learning facilitators, HLTAs and Senior ETAs are observed in a classroom situation termly, providing accurate feedback for the development of pedagogy. The peer observation process also promotes further development and dialogue regarding pedagogy. 1:1 meetings between the peer and observer following an observation provide an opportunity for deep pedagogical reflection. (Observation outcomes, peer observation outcomes)

All teachers' planning is reviewed on an ongoing basis by the SLT. This process ensures lesson activities are very well matched to learning needs, promoting excellent levels of engagement and progress. Generalised feedback, advice and guidance is provided from this process in the teachers' meeting and more specific comment is provided through the 'Looking at my file' reporting system. ('Looking at my file' records, teachers meeting minutes)

Weekly SLT meetings based on long and short-term strategic and operational priorities ensure that discussions regarding pedagogy and the wider school need are ongoing. This leads to appropriate changes and development in practice. (SLT meeting minutes, CHIP, teachers' meeting agendas)



The SLT uses a holistic method to assess the competences of each teacher. This takes into account lesson observations, engagement with performance management, and scrutiny of planning and evaluations. (Holistic performance records)

The school's SALT provides weekly updates in the teachers' meeting. The updates are influenced by outcomes from ongoing SALT learning walks. This process highlights total communication good practice which in turn influences dialogue regarding pedagogy. The presentations produced by the SALT are then used by teachers in their weekly staff meetings to ensure support staff are continually informed of good practice. (SALT presentations, Teachers' meeting minutes, class teacher minutes)

All teachers' planning, preparation and assessment is openly available for all staff to see. This model has enabled teachers to share ideas and strategies and make more accurate judgements when assessing learning.

### **Managing Staff Workload and Wellbeing**

Our OFSTED report stated, 'This is a happy, encouraging and caring school' (OFSTED report 2024)

All staff who responded to our 2025 staff questionnaire agreed with the following statement: I enjoy working at Castle Hill School. (Staff questionnaire 2025).

The school Wellbeing Champion leads the innovative wellbeing support programme and co-ordinates systems for supporting staff. This results in pupils having consistency in their learning approaches which leads to progress in attainment. (Wellbeing champion records, wellbeing policies)

Staff wellbeing is a high priority and school's staff wellbeing policy clearly outlines the importance of good staff health in providing an effective learning environment. Castle Hill School's wellbeing offer continues to develop in partnership with Employee Healthcare. Ongoing referrals, and the possibility of staff self-referral, provide opportunities for mental and physical health support. Staff give positive feedback around this offer and SLT support (Employee Health Care Offer, staff questionnaire)

Rigorous implementation of staff attendance management ensures attendance issues are addressed. The school provides appropriate support, care and direction for staff. This helps provide consistent attendance resulting in a more stable learning environment. Staff attendance continues to



improve pre and post pandemic. (Staff attendance records, staff questionnaire)

The school provides ongoing wellbeing and therapeutic sessions to assist in the development of resilience. Resilience mentors have been trained to give additional support. (Staff training day records, resilience mentor training, staff questionnaire outcomes)

Our wellbeing champion coordinated our successful application for our School Mental Health Award (Leeds Beckett University accreditation) in Summer 2020 and renewal was completed in Autumn 2025. The award celebrates and recognises our ongoing staff support systems. (School Mental Health Award)

Our staff satisfaction quotient collated from staff questionnaire outcomes monitor wellbeing year on year. The quotient for 2025 evidences the most positive average outcomes to date. (Staff questionnaire and satisfaction quotient)

The SLT ensure that there is a termly Achievement in Continuing Excellence (ACE) Award for staff nominated by their colleagues, recognising those who have excelled. This promotes staff wellbeing through recognition of inspirational role models. (Termly outcomes)

Leaders' actions have a significant positive impact across all areas of the school. Staff feel valued and supported, as evidenced by staff questionnaires and retention rates. (Staff retention rates, staff questionnaire outcomes)

### **Ensuring Pupils Complete Their Programmes**

The school's termly assessment report evidences the effectiveness of our target setting process and illustrates how students complete their programmes of study and progress. (Assessment reports)

We offer inclusive provision for those students who require educational support off site, this may be due to medical needs and/or unforeseen circumstances. (Outreach records)

School is vigilant towards developing need and facilitates student transition to more appropriate placements when need and ability provide indicators towards other specialist provisions. (Pre and post transition evidence and student tracking)



## **Engaging with the Community**

EHCP review attendance records show 100% attendance by families and carers. This collaborative approach to learning is supported by multi-agency attendance. (Review officer notes, minutes and EHCP outcomes)

Teaching and support staff have excellent links with all families and carers which ensures contact between home and school is outstanding. Parents are kept informed via telephone messages, home school books, parent/carers evenings and review meetings. Parents/carers take an active role in the formulation of all educational plans.

The school welcomes and encourages parents/carers to be fully involved in the life of the school. We continue to develop opportunities for parents and carers to participate in; stay and play (EYFS); careers coffee afternoons (Sixth form), art and craft sessions for grandparents and parents (Whole school), assemblies and coffee mornings; the school's Facebook page is also active. Parents are also consulted regarding training needs and training opportunities are provided related to feedback. (Photographic evidence, planning, parent/carers questionnaire)

Biannual parents' evenings provide further opportunities for discussion. These events are well attended and provide an opportunity for parents and carers to talk with teachers and support staff. Those unable to attend are provided with alternative times, dates and opportunities. Autumn 2025 feedback statements include: 'Everything is fantastic! I am very happy with my parents evening session, thank you so much!', 'My child has never been in a class setting and the team have all been phenomenal'. (Parent/carers evening questionnaires)

Attendance at EHCP review meetings is outstanding. This allows the EHCP to remain appropriate and ensures that the child's needs are being addressed. It also secures partnership between home and the school. (EHCP review outcomes)

The school, in collaboration with parents, works highly effectively within a trans-disciplinary approach with agencies including social care, safeguarding and NHS medical teams. This enables positive holistic outcomes for pupils. (CPOMS records)



In partnership with families, we work closely with the Kirklees Virtual School to ensure that all CLA students' needs are addressed. We host e-pep meetings and provide clear targets to apply for access to Pupil Premium Plus funding to meet the additional needs of these students. (E-Pep records)

The school has strong relationships with Post 19 providers, developed through a wide range of events and meetings. The school has been involved in the planning and implementation of the highly successful "Local Offer Live" event that is run by the Local Authority each year. Within school, we organise several events to provide a shared forum for Parents and Carers and a wide range of providers. (Pre and post 19 transition evidence)

Working closely with the school's C&K Careers Advisor, we support students and their families in making decisions for future placements including through supported parental visits to providers. Once decisions on future placements have been made, we set up and run extensive transition processes, with close working between the school and the providers. (Pre and post 19 transition evidence)

Effective links with faith groups and care settings ensure our students receive comprehensive and complete experience of a multi-cultural/multi age society. Links with homes for the elderly and multifaith assemblies support the process. (Assembly/event planning and outcomes, links evidence)

School provides excellent partnerships which develop teaching approaches and lead to the enhancement of learning opportunities for pupils. Our ITT programme continues to provide the next generation of special school practitioners. Our work with the Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching Hub and Huddersfield Horizon SCITT ensures SEND has a voice within the larger educational community. Our principal is also a member of the Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching Hub (SCITT and Hub evidence)

School to school support is developing within the MAT and ongoing links and visits enrich the student experience. ( Links evidence including collaborative mark making sessions during Autumn 2025, Castlefest 2024, Ryburn Christmas celebration 2025)

The school principal attends MAT headteacher meetings, Kirklees special school heads meetings and works collaboratively in peer review processes. He also attends Kirklees funding review meetings which work to shape funding mechanisms within the authority over the foreseeable future. (Meeting minutes and outcomes)





The school works in partnership with the local authority SENCO coordinator. Representatives from school attend and contribute to SENCO net meetings ensuring local and national issues are collaboratively addressed. (SENCO net meeting records)

We have developed a Sixth Form recycling centre (ReWorks), opened Spring 2023. The centre provides further outreach opportunities within the community including visits and projects from local school children, specifically those with SEMH needs. This project helps to promote further SMSC development within the community. (Planning and assessment)

Local school children visit our Sign and Sing assembly on a weekly basis; this promotes inclusion and community cohesion. (signing in records)

### **Strategic Leadership and School Improvement**

The SLT, led by the Principal continually assess school's needs. Dialogue based on the learning environment, pedagogy, staffing structures, wellbeing, inclusion and attendance are continually high on the agenda. A hypervigilant approach with a clear operational knowledge of the school gives an outstanding insight into areas for development. This understanding, along with external local and national SEND agendas feed the schools strategic planning process. (CHIP outcomes year on year highlighting continual development and adaptation, SIP partner focus and associated reports, SLT meeting minutes, Teacher meeting minutes and agendas.

The Principal is a Governor of the Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching and Learning Hub ensuring that Castle Hill School is included in the dialogue around the national and regional learning program. (Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching School Hub minutes)

The CEO of the Together Learning Trust is in communication with the Principal to review pedagogy and progress. The Principal also works closely with the TLT Primary School Heads and meets with them on a ½ termly basis. Collaboration on professional development opportunities are ongoing (TLT Primary Heads meeting minutes, CPD opportunities including Headteacher wellbeing sessions in January 2026)

The Principal works closely with Kirklees Special School Heads to ensure effective and on-going peer review processes assists school development. (Peer review records, minutes of meetings, curriculum development hub meetings, funding review meeting minutes)





Independent SIP visits are completed termly by an experienced practitioner to provide challenge. Jackie Nellis is an experienced Educational Consultant and has been an Executive Headteacher and Assistant Director of Children's services with a local authority, Jackie has a demonstrated and successful history of school leadership and working with schools, academy trusts and local authorities. SIP reports provide invaluable outcomes for school development. (SIP reports, CHIP)

The Director of Teaching and Learning and Safeguarding works with the SLT on a variety of innovative projects to ensure that Castle Hill School is at the forefront of the educational agenda. (SCITT and Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching School Hub)

The school is involved with School Direct in partnership, in the past with Cumbria University and now with Huddersfield Horizon SCITT. This enhances the work which we do with Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students, thus enabling the school to have more involvement in teacher training, helping to further raise the profile of Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in initial training. SCITT and Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching School Hub)

Coaching and mentoring processes are applied by the Senior Leadership Team to strengthen shared understanding of values, policies, practice, and expectation resulting in effective working partnerships and the empowerment of groups. (Teachers as leaders minutes and LF mentor meeting minutes)

School policies are formulated and reviewed in consultation with a range of staff to ensure ownership and understanding of values. (Behaviour working party minutes and training records)

The Deputy Principal and Assistant Principals manage the Lunch Time Support Assistants to ensure high quality Teaching and Learning continues during the lunch time session. (LSA meeting minutes and training records)

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation awarded school £164,000 in 2023 to participate in their Teacher Development Fund. Castle Hill School led five other schools through the two-year project, due to end Summer 2025. The project focussed on working with teachers who work in the Primary phase of school and on mark making, music and light. (Paul Hamlyn Project outcomes)



## **Effective Governance**

Those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. They ensure that the provider has a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education. (Governor meeting minutes and monitoring outcomes)

Til Wright, chair of Governors, is an experienced educational practitioner and was a service leader of Safeguarding in Leeds. Til brings a great deal of knowledge to the role consequently ensuring standards remain high. Governors are allocated specific areas of responsibility and comprehensive monitoring visits proceed on an ongoing basis. (Governor meeting minutes and monitoring outcomes)

The vision, aims and outcomes of the school are reviewed regularly by the LGC and the LGC strategic plan is closely 'dovetailed' to the school improvement plan ensuring clarity regarding improvement focus. (CHIP and strategic plan)

The LGC provided a summary of perceived current strengths and areas for improvement. The LGB continue to complete a self-review process. (Governor meeting minutes)

The LGC representatives join the interview panel for the appointment of staff, therefore, strengthening knowledge of school development. (Interview panel records and outcomes)

The LGB is highly effective and is rigorous in carrying out their duties. They challenge the SLT in order to gather information regarding pupils' progress and the curriculum. (Governor meeting minutes and monitoring outcomes)

The LGB monitors the use of targeted funding such as Pupil and Sports Premium. They are informed as to how additional support through these funds enhances learning outcomes for identified students. (Governor meeting minutes and monitoring outcomes)

The Principal's CPD is a highly effective process with LGC Chair, Governor, CEO and SIP involvement. This enables the LGC to closely monitor the work of the Principal. The targets set are of an exceptionally high standard and pertinent to school development and ultimately pupil learning. (Principal's CPD)



The Chair of the LGC and Principal have regular meetings and are in ongoing contact. This enables them to scrutinise the strategic workings of the school thus fulfilling their accountability. (Minutes of meetings)

Governors are exceptionally well informed of curriculum developments. All curriculum teams present current action plans to the LGC on a rota basis. Through their monitoring visits, Governors effectively hold the school to account in their delivery of the curriculum. (Curriculum lead presentation evidence)

The LGC are informed regarding staff CPD and ongoing training opportunities, this enables an ongoing quality assurance process. (Principal's reports)

The LGC are informed regarding student educational achievement, they are informed of headlines and areas for development, this further ensures understanding. (Principal's reports)

### **Statutory Duties**

All school policies are evaluated on a time-line basis by the LGC and are amended if practice or guidance has changed. (Policy timeline and LGC minutes)

The governor responsible for safeguarding often visits the school and is invited to be involved in interview processes and has close links with the DSLs. The governor also contributes to safeguarding audits. The LGC are informed of all training opportunities including those associated with Safeguarding, the Safeguarding policy is ratified annually by the LGB. (LGC minutes, monitoring outcomes, interview notes)

The Health and Safety Policy is in place and is monitored by the Local Governing Body. Health and Safety is a key item in the weekly whole staff briefing and governors are informed of collated incidents during LGC meetings. The Trust and the school's building management company are also informed of incidents related to more serious events and those related to the building when they occur. From academic year 2025-26 all staff will be required to complete Health and Safety training and Fire Safety training. (Weekly staff and governor meeting minutes, Health and Safety records and RIDDOR reports)



The LGB are informed of safeguarding and behaviour data at each meeting to ensure they have a good understanding of the school's rigorous approach to student safety. (Principal's reports, LCG agenda and minutes)

### **Evidence Base**

School Improvement Plan (CHIP)  
Mission Statement, Motto and Aims  
Staff CPD records and targets  
Personal Development files for all staff  
Training records and training day agendas  
Lesson observation records  
Peer observation reports  
Planning monitoring documents ('looking at my file', planning dialogue documents)  
Teachers' meeting minutes  
SLT meeting minutes  
Coaching group records (Teachers as Leaders, HLTA/LF hub)  
Staff wellbeing policy and records  
Employee Healthcare records  
Staff attendance data  
Staff questionnaire results  
ACE Award records  
Parent/carer questionnaire results  
Parents' evening feedback  
EHCP review attendance records  
Multi-agency meeting records  
Communication Teacher records  
Speech and Language Therapy collaboration records  
Post-19 provider partnership records  
ITT and School Direct records  
Calderdale and Kirklees Teaching Hub records  
Huddersfield Horizon SCITT partnership evidence  
Paul Hamlyn Foundation project records  
ReWorks community partnership records  
Governor meeting minutes (full LGC and committees)  
Governor monitoring visit reports  
Governor strategic plan  
Principal's reports to Governors  
Principal's CPD records  
Policy review cycle and updated policies  
Safeguarding Governor reports  
Health and Safety records  
SIP visit reports  
Kirklees Special School Heads meeting minutes



Together Learning Trust meeting records

Quality mark and award certificates

Outreach records

Dual placement records

## **8. EARLY YEARS**

### **Summary**

Our aim is for the Early Years' pupils to have a happy and settled start to their education here at Castle Hill School. Our Early Years pupils and their families and carers are supported with their transition into school life. The school offers a high-quality early education for children that gives them the knowledge and skills they need for a successful start to their education. The school meets the statutory requirements of the EYFS.

### **Meeting EYFS Requirements**

The EYFS Department currently follow the Department for Education's (DfE's) 2021 Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Birth to 5 Matters (2021) supports implementation of the Statutory Framework. This is used alongside Development Matters (2021), to guide the EYFS curriculum. Programmes of study are collated into the EYFS curriculum guides providing opportunities for depth and breadth in skill development and progression. (EYFS curriculum, planning and assessment).

### **Curriculum Design and Implementation**

The learning journey begins for our students' pre-placement, where effective transition arrangements help students and families orientate, feel a sense of belonging and be ready to learn. The initial learning experience is based upon EHCP targets partnered with Birth to 5 Matters Guidance and parental information which gives clear pre-formal developmental steps and where appropriate, Development Matters Guidance is also referred to as another supportive document within this process. The content of the curriculum is then taught in a child centred way which is supported by the 5 areas of engagement; exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation. (EYFS curriculum, planning and assessment, home visits, nursery visits, 'stay and play' sessions)

The bespoke, thematic, and differentiated curriculum ensures that the teachers have an outstanding resource of reference which provides guidance on learning pathways, resources, and approaches to ensure



teachers have the scaffolding they require to assist planning, delivery and workload. (Curriculum, planning and assessment)

### **Focus on Communication and Language**

Staff focus on developing children's communication and language. Our primary focus for learning is engagement. Without engagement learning is inhibited. From the very early developmental stages we promote learning through the application of the Engagement Model and through schema-based learning. Children are encouraged to make links between events and objects through abstract signifiers including photographs, symbols and signs. (Total communication strategy, curriculum, planning and assessment)

### **Teaching and Assessment**

Each child's learning journey is unique, and our initial communication assessment audit provides a foundation from which to begin. Discovering the world through scaffolded play, discovery and engagement ensures learning pathways are defined, followed and then adapted to changing need. (EYFS curriculum, planning and assessment including additional assessment for learning tools such as Tapestry, communication audit)

### **Assessment Process for Early Years**

Pupils are assessed using MAPP and PiP targets, related to EHCP targets, in line with the rest of the school. Pupils are also assessed using the Birth to 5 Matters' statements providing us with a comparative measurement process. Horizontal progression is also captured in Early Years as the students work consolidate and enrich their experience. (Planning and assessment processes, case studies, evidence of work files, learning journals)

Recording of pupil achievement is measured against the Birth to 5 Matters' statements which informs progression within 6 stages towards secure to inform next steps. (Planning and assessment including additional assessment for learning tools such as Tapestry)

Bi-annual reviews take place for children under 5 years old ensuring formative and summative assessment opportunities are effectively informing the early learning process. (Planning and assessment outcomes, EHCP meeting minutes)

### **Supporting Needs**



Prime areas of learning are a focus as well emotional and physical dependence and independence Staff are responsive to holistic needs. They are comforting, patient, attentive and supportive appropriate to the child's individual needs and adapt the learning environment accordingly. They are mindful of a child's context, barriers to learning and wellbeing. Hypervigilance is key in Early years as in the rest of the school. (Assessment processes, multi-agency working, home/school contact)

Specialist resources, rooms and space are an essential part of the learning experience for our students. The SLT have, and continue to, develop the environment to address need. (Learning environment development evidence)

### **Transition and Partnership**

Many of the younger children are supported through parental stay and play visits. Students' transitioning into Castle Hill are given opportunities to visit new class groups, peers and teachers. These transitions can happen at any time and are arranged according to need and are often supported by home and current placement visits. (Transition plans)

The school works in partnership with the local health trust which provides a range of health staff to support the needs of children attending the school. The local health trust also leads student health reviews from the premises and provides school staff with training in a range of interventions and medical conditions. (Trans-agency partnership working evidence)

### **Evidence Base**

- EYFS curriculum guides
- Birth to 5 Matters assessments
- Development Matters assessments
- MAPP and PiP assessment data for EYFS
- Planning (long, medium and short term)
- Engagement profiles
- EHCP reviews (bi-annual for under 5s)
- Stay and Play records
- Transition records
- Learning journals
- Evidence of work files
- Case studies
- Assessment reports
- Communication Teacher audit for EYFS pupils
- Health partnership records





Training records from health professionals  
Learning environment audit  
Observation records

## **9. Sixth Form**

Many of the following Post 16 statements are integrated and entwined into the CHIP but are repeated here for confirmation of our dedicated Post 16 approach.

### **Strategic leadership of the post-16 provision**

Students can be part of the Sixth Form department for three years, until the end of the academic year in which they are 19. In Sixth Form there is an emphasis on developing students' abilities to use key skills in practical ways in, for example, work towards qualifications in English and Maths. It is also a time to develop important life skills. The students work on a broad range of skills with real-life applications, often through the ASDAN Personal Progress and Personal and Social Development accreditation programmes.

Much of our learning takes place out in the community, preparing students for life beyond school and developing their skills in practical situations. This might take the form of shopping in preparation for a cooking activity, or helping out at a local shop or school.

As students approach their final terms at Castle Hill, and all the excitement within the graduation celebrations, they are ready for their next steps in life. In the build up to this transition to adult life, the Sixth Form department works closely with parents, carers and Local Authority services to explore future possibilities, help to make decisions and prepare each student for their move. The Sixth Form has regular links with Service Providers and Colleges and works closely with Kirklees Transitions Team and Adult Social Services to enable students and their families to make informed choices for the future.

### **Achievement in the post-16 provision (Summative)**

Sixth form students access a choice of three qualification options; ASDAN Personal Progress (Pre-Entry and Entry Level 1), ASDAN Personal and Social Development (Entry Level 1), OCR Functional Skills (Entry level 1, 2 & 3 if required). The qualifications provide a differentiated learning route to meet all needs. Students completing ASDAN Personal and Social Development (Entry level 1), OCR Functional Skills (Entry Level 1, 2 & 3) are fully prepared for college/educational destinations where their education pathway can be continued to the next appropriate stage, for example Entry 2 or 3 qualifications. Other students are also prepared to progress into service providers through ASDAN Personal Progress and ASDAN Personal and Social



Development. This certification is based on work related learning and life skill including units based on Independent Preparation for Work, Managing your own money and others. (Planning, Qualification and Accreditation outcomes, Sixth Form curriculum)

### **Assessment Process for Sixth Form (Formative)**

Pupils are assessed using MAPP and PiP targets, related to EHCP targets, in line with the rest of the school. The assessment process for Sixth Form also incorporates assessment based on the Achievement Continuum, which is integrated into the Castle Hill Level assessment tool. (EHCPs, MAPP, PiP progress document, Progress Towards Targets Documents, Pupil Progress reports)

### **Curriculum and teaching**

A departmentally differentiated thematic approach in the curriculum ensures progression and enables shared learning experiences across the school (topic cycle: EYFS – My World, KS1&2 – People who help us, KS3&4 – 999 Emergency; Sixth Form - Getting Help in the pre-formal, semi-formal, formal pathways). This approach to curriculum development and delivery has promoted excellent progress in all groups of students. (Curriculum)

Our Sixth Form curriculum provides 3 distinct learning pathways: Developmental (Pre-Formal); Nurture (Semi-Formal); Independence (Semi-Formal to Formal). Students in each Learning Pathway access a varied and personalised curriculum dependent on learning need and student choice. (Sixth form curriculum)

### **Preparation for next steps**

Our total communication strategy is applied for each student at the earliest opportunity. This promotes the understanding of many forms of communication including being able to decipher symbols and signs. This skill is enhanced throughout the students' school career and culminates in sixth formers and leavers applying their reading skills in real life contexts, including environmental signage, shop frontage, and logos. (Curriculum, case studies, EHCPs, assessment and accreditation, learning journals)

Community links run through the school from Early Years to Sixth Form, through which students are encouraged to apply their skills, knowledge, and understanding of the world around communication in real life contexts from an early age. Reading and pre-reading skills are key within this process. Resources to aid reading are provided to enhance our students' ability to



generalise their skills both in, and outside of, school. These often take the form of communication books, AAC, communication passports, symbol strips, and eye gaze. (MAPP, PiP outcomes, class reading journey documents)

### **Transition towards future placements**

The three-year Sixth Form curriculum is designed with a core dedicated to the development of independence and the accumulation of cultural capital. This enables and empowers our students to feel confident to communicate their needs and be active participants in their future placements, their community and society as a whole. The curriculum is flexible, adaptable and empowering. (Sixth Form curriculum, Sixth Form pathways, Accreditation records, destination tracking, assessment, learning journals, parental surveys)

The annual What Next Fair, Preparing for Adulthood events, Post 19 service provider coffee mornings, visits to service providers ensure parents and carers and students, have a clear picture of transition possibilities for the future. (Preparing for Adulthood event with the inclusion of DWP and legal advice, Careers service school surgery evidence, parents evening records, questionnaire outcomes, successful destination placements)

Close links and ongoing dialogue with professionals and service providers ensures the best destination for need is organised for leavers. (Meeting minutes, e-mails, destination outcomes and destination tracking)

A service level agreement with the Careers Service ensures quality advice, guidance and information is supplied to students, parents and carers. The careers library resource ensures that information is available for opportunities about the world of work. (Service level agreement, Calderdale and Kirklees Careers Resource Standard for special schools)

School has successfully achieved the Quality Standards Mark in Careers Information, Advice and Guidance in 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2023. This ensures our provision is in line with national expectations (Award outcomes).

We comply with national careers guidance in relation to the Gatsby Benchmarks, which have been adapted to meet the unique transition needs of the students at Castle Hill School to ensure that they are prepared for their future placements. (Careers Policy, Careers Quality Standard)

We comply with national careers guidance in relation to the Baker Clause ensuring appropriate work related learning destinations and experience is associated to learning need and propensity. (Careers Policy)



Review procedures based on person centred approach commence from year 9 and continues to year 14. The EHCP review process ensures external multi-agency involvement is delivered according to need. This supports successful post 19 outcomes. (Review minutes from year 9, leavers' destination monitoring)

### **Wider opportunities**

We have developed a Sixth Form recycling centre, opened Spring 2023. The centre provides further outreach opportunities within the community including visits and projects from local school children. This project helps to promote further SMSC development within the community. (See recycling project design, timeline and timetable)

### **Inclusive practices in the post-16 provision**

Castle Hill renewed the Inclusion Quality Standards Mark in June 2025. The moderator stated: 'My learning walk took me throughout the school; the planning, care and thought that has been put into its design is remarkable. Every single space has been created with a clear purpose in mind. There is an onsite clinic where I observed an optometrist fitting a new pair of spectacles to a pupil. Also used as a drop-in centre for pupils, parent, and carers medical appointments during the week, this is a school that really does try and think of everything and go the extra mile to support its community of learners and their families. Classrooms are highly adapted, catering for the needs of Early Years students and progressing all the way through to a cohort of sixth form students' (Inclusion quality standard report 2025)

### **Evidence base**

ASDAN Personal Progress and Personal and Social Development accreditation programmes  
Graduation celebrations  
Service Providers and Colleges  
Kirklees Transitions Team  
Adult Social Services  
OCR Functional Skills (Entry Level 1, 2 & 3)  
MAPP and PiP targets  
EHCP targets  
Achievement Continuum  
Castle Hill Level assessment tool  
Community links  
The three-year Sixth Form curriculum  
Destination tracking  
Learning journals



Parental surveys

What Next Fair, Preparing for Adulthood events

Calderdale and Kirklees Careers Resource Standard for special schools

Quality Standards Mark in Careers

Quality Standards Mark in Careers

Gatsby Benchmarks

Baker Clause

Sixth Form recycling centre

Inclusion Quality Standards Mark