The Meadows School

Teaching and Learning Policy

'Together we grow, achieve and thrive'

Updated:	November 2026
Date to be reviewed:	September 2027
Ratified by Governors:	November 2026

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1. Aims of the Teaching and Learning Policy

The Teaching and Learning Policy at the Meadows school serves as a cornerstone for ensuring all pupils access a high-quality, meaningful, and inclusive education. It is underpinned by our commitment to recognising and celebrating each learner's unique strengths, needs, and aspirations.

Our aims are to:

Personalise Learning

- Ensure every pupil receives an education tailored to their individual needs, strengths, and EHCP outcomes.
- Provide flexible learning pathways (Pre-formal, Informal, Semi-formal, Formal, and Sixth Form) that match each pupil's cognitive, social, emotional, and developmental profile.

Promote Holistic Development

- Support pupils' academic progress alongside their communication, independence, emotional wellbeing, and social relationships.
- Deliver a broad and balanced curriculum aligned with EHCP areas of need:

  - ✓ Cognition and Learning
  - ✓ Communication and Interaction
  - ✓ Social and Emotional Development
  - ✓ Physical and Sensory Development
  - ✓ Independence and Life Skills

Create Engaging, Accessible Learning Experiences

- Use adaptive teaching methods and accessible resources to ensure all pupils can engage in rich, meaningful learning.
- Embrace sensory, thematic, experiential, and real-world learning opportunities appropriate to each pathway.

Celebrate Progress and Achievement

- Use a robust and responsive assessment system to celebrate all forms of progress, including small steps, skill generalisation, and increased engagement.
- Capture evidence using platforms like *Evidence for Learning* and assess through frameworks such as the Engagement Model, MAPP, and Routes for Learning.

Empower Independence and Preparation for Adulthood

- Embed life skills, problem-solving, and decision-making across all curriculum areas and learning pathways.
- Ensure that pupils are supported to build independence and confidence to prepare for meaningful adulthood experiences.

Support Reflective and Collaborative Practice

- Ensure all staff are equipped to reflect on their practice and adapt teaching based on pupil responses and team collaboration.
- Promote consistency, high expectations, and shared responsibility for pupil learning and wellbeing across the school.

Work in Partnership with Families and Professionals

- Foster open, honest communication with families and carers to co-produce educational goals and celebrate pupil successes.
- Collaborate with therapists, external agencies, and educational professionals to enrich the teaching and learning process.

2. Our guiding principles

Guiding Principles and School Values

Our teaching and learning practices are grounded in the core values that define our school community: **Communication, Respect, Collaboration, Independence, Growth, and Wellbeing**.

These values guide every aspect of curriculum design, classroom interaction, and long-term outcomes for our pupils.

- **Communication** is at the heart of all learning. We value every form of expression—verbal, visual, physical, or symbolic—and provide learners with the tools and opportunities to develop their communicative abilities, promoting meaningful connection with others.
- **Respect** shapes the inclusive, safe, and nurturing environment we foster. We uphold each pupil's individuality, learning style, and cultural identity, ensuring that their voice is heard and valued within the classroom and wider school community.
- **Collaboration** drives our teamwork ethos. Effective teaching and learning happen when staff, pupils, families, and professionals work together. Co-planning, co-delivery, and co-reflection ensure learning is relevant, ambitious, and consistent.
- **Independence** is both a process and a goal. Through structured support and scaffolded challenge, we empower learners to take increasing ownership of their choices, learning routines, and real-world skills that prepare them for adulthood.
- **Growth** reflects our commitment to progression over time. We celebrate every step of progress—academic, emotional, or social—and use formative assessment tools to continuously tailor learning experiences that stretch and support each learner.
- **Wellbeing** is central to sustainable learning. Our curriculum embeds emotional regulation, sensory integration, and safe relationships, ensuring that pupils are ready to learn and feel secure in their environments.

Together, these principles shape a teaching and learning culture that is aspirational, compassionate, and wholly pupil-centred—ensuring every child is seen, supported, and successful.

3. Equal opportunities

The school will ensure that all pupils have access to all aspects of educational life at the school, regardless of SEND. The school will provide reasonable adjustments wherever necessary to ensure that pupils with particular support needs can access the same opportunities as pupils without those needs.

The school will ensure that all teaching is made accessible for all pupils, and appropriate additional learning resources will be provided to ensure this wherever this is necessary, e.g. support from TAs or sensory materials.

Teaching staff will ensure that pupils' needs are assessed and reviewed where necessary in response to their behaviour, progress and attainment, and that these needs are catered for wherever reasonably practicable.

The school uses a 'total communication' approach to teaching to ensure that all pupils can access the lessons – this includes the use of signing, symbols and objects of reference where needed.

Staff will maintain high expectations of all pupils and will be expected to provide an environment where all pupils feel included, supported and challenged, and can achieve their best outcomes.

The school will implement a whole-school approach to the promotion of the fundamental British values and will ensure that these values are taught throughout all relevant areas of the curriculum.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure teaching and learning is inclusive, effective, and personalised, all members of the school community play a vital role in delivering and supporting the curriculum. The responsibilities below outline expectations for key stakeholders in the teaching and learning process.

Teachers

- Plan and deliver ambitious, carefully sequenced and accessible learning aligned with the intended curriculum, pupils' starting points and relevant EHCP outcomes.
- Use agreed communication approaches, appropriate modelling, scaffolding and assessment to enable pupils to access and understand the intended learning.
- Capture meaningful evidence of progress using agreed assessment systems, including *Evidence for Learning* (EfL), in line with the Assessment Policy.
- Check understanding, identify learning gaps or misconceptions, adapt teaching responsively and evaluate the impact on subsequent learning.

- Guide and deploy support staff purposefully, and work with families and relevant professionals to support consistent approaches and meaningful progression.

Learning Support Practitioners (LSPs)

- Implement planned learning activities under the guidance of the class teacher.
- Provide appropriately scaffolded support that promotes communication, independence, engagement and emotional regulation without unnecessarily reducing challenge.
- Contribute accurate observations of what pupils know and can do, and record relevant evidence within EfL and other agreed systems under the class teacher's guidance.
- Support transitions, sensory needs, and the implementation of therapy-informed strategies.
- Participate in planning, assessment and professional dialogue, sharing observations promptly so that teaching can be adapted where needed.

Curriculum Leads

- Lead the review of curriculum intent, sequencing and progression across relevant pathways, ensuring appropriate ambition and accessibility.
- Maintain and develop curriculum frameworks, schemes of work and agreed resources, informed by evidence of pupils' learning and curriculum review.
- Support colleagues through modelling, coaching and sharing effective, pathway-appropriate curriculum and teaching approaches.
- Evaluate curriculum implementation and impact using planning, pupil work, assessment, observations and pupil voice, and respond to identified patterns.
- Identify professional development needs within their curriculum area and contribute to coherent school-wide improvement.

Key Stage Leads

- Lead teaching, learning and pupil progress within their key stage, ensuring appropriate provision across the curriculum pathways represented.
- Support teachers in implementing the agreed Teaching Practice principles and Assessment Policy, working collaboratively with Curriculum Leads.
- Promote high expectations, effective deployment of staff and the meaningful integration of EHCP outcomes within curriculum learning.
    - Lead Pupil Achievement Meetings (Learning Conversations) in collaboration with SLT, ensuring accurate assessment judgements, evaluating the impact of targeted interventions and monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of agreed actions.
    - Provide coaching, modelling and professional dialogue, communicate key-stage patterns to SLT and identify where further support is needed.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Oversee the coherent implementation and quality assurance of teaching and learning across key stages, curriculum areas and pathways.
- Ensure curriculum pathways remain appropriately ambitious, accessible, resourced and regularly reviewed for their impact on pupils.
- Triangulate assessment, lesson observations, pupil work, pupil voice and other evidence to identify strengths, learning gaps and priorities for improvement.
- Provide proportionate CPD, coaching and professional support in response to school improvement priorities and identified needs.
- Agree, monitor and evaluate actions arising from quality assurance, ensuring that feedback leads to sustained improvements in teaching and pupils' learning.

Parents and Carers

- Maintain regular, accessible communication with class teams, sharing insights that help strengthen learning and communication between home and school.
- Share valuable insights about their child's strengths, needs, and interests.
- Participate in reviews, goal-setting meetings, and co-production of PLGs and EHCP outcomes.
- Work with school staff to support the generalisation of communication, independence and other learning goals in ways appropriate to family routines and aspirations.

Students

All pupils, regardless of their needs or pathway, are valued as active participants in their own learning. We recognise that every learner has the right to be heard, to contribute, and to experience ownership over their educational journey. Pupils are encouraged to:

- Engage with learning opportunities to the best of their ability, using their preferred methods of communication and interaction.
- Express their preferences, choices, and interests in ways that are meaningful to them.
- Participate in setting and reviewing their personal learning goals, wherever appropriate, using pupil voice tools, visual prompts, or supported communication.
- Respect others, take turns, and contribute to a positive classroom environment.
- Develop self-awareness and independence, with scaffolded support from adults and peers.

By supporting pupils to understand their own learning needs, advocate for themselves, and celebrate their achievements, we foster confidence, autonomy, and a sense of belonging in the school community.

Governors

The Governing Body plays a vital strategic role in supporting and challenging the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Governors are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum pathways and ensuring that all pupils, regardless of need or ability, receive an education that is inclusive, aspirational, and aligned with statutory requirements. They do this by reviewing teaching and learning policies, scrutinising progress data (including outcomes linked to EHCPs), and evaluating the impact of leadership decisions. Governors also act as critical friends—supporting senior leaders in developing a robust, responsive curriculum and ensuring the school remains focused on pupil outcomes, wellbeing, and preparation for adulthood. Through visits, reports, and committee meetings, governors help ensure accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement in teaching and learning provision.

5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is broad, balanced, ambitious and personalised to pupils' strengths, needs and aspirations. It provides coherent opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills alongside communication, independence, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood.

Our curriculum places the child at the centre, beginning with the aims articulated in their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). We ensure a deep understanding of what each learner can already do and understand, enabling us to identify the targets that will have the most meaningful impact on their lives.

We define cultural capital as the essential knowledge and experiences pupils need to navigate the world around them and achieve future success. To that end, we provide regular opportunities to engage in enrichment activities and real-life experiences, including educational visits, guest speakers, and immersive learning experiences, both in and beyond the classroom.

Curriculum frameworks identify intended knowledge and skills, meaningful end points and appropriate steps in progression from pupils' starting points. Learning is sequenced to build on prior experiences and understanding, with planned opportunities to retrieve, revisit, consolidate and apply what has been taught. Progression is appropriately personalised for pupils working at the earliest developmental stages.

Where appropriate, subjects are taught through broad thematic topics, while still supporting pupils to recognise the distinct skills, knowledge and concepts unique to **each** subject discipline. This balanced approach helps pupils develop knowledge and understanding while making meaningful cross-curricular connections.

Our shared Teaching Practice Framework considers Curriculum Intent & Implementation, Curriculum Impact and Pupil Voice, supporting a consistent focus on what pupils are intended to learn, how learning is taught and how its impact is understood.

5.1 Curriculum Intent

"Our intent is to provide high-quality, personalised, and meaningful learning experiences that ***nurture essential life skills*** *and* ***promote independence, wellbeing, and success—both within and beyond the school environment.***

Our curriculum aims to promote

- **Holistic and Individualised Learning**: We acknowledge that each child is unique, and our curriculum reflects this by being holistic, individualised and child centred. Whether it's through sensory activities, life skills training, or creative exploration, we adapt our approach to each student's cognitive and developmental abilities. We believe that learning should be fun and engaging to help motivate students and allow them to feel happy and reach their potential in a safe, creative and supportive environment.
- **Preparation for Adulthood and Independence:** Preparing students for adulthood is fundamental. We focus on fostering independence, providing practical life skills that will support students in managing their day-to day lives as they transition into adulthood. This includes developing social skills, self-care practices, emotional resilience, confidence and the ability to communicate effectively and safely in their communities.
- **Community Engagement and Application of skills:** We aim to provide our students with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life inspiring a love of learning that will remain with them throughout their lives beyond the Meadows School. Our curriculum aims to foster community engagement by providing students with opportunities to apply the skills they learn in real-world settings, encouraging active participation and building connections within their community.
- **Achievement and Success**: Our curriculum is centred on promoting achievement, where each student's unique abilities and progress are celebrated. We aim for students to feel confident in their ability to achieve meaningful success, whether it be academic, personal or social. Through focused and individualised learning, we empower student to understand and pursue their aspirations.

5.2 Curriculum Implementation

To meet our curriculum intent, we implement the following:

- Planned and responsive teaching adaptations that reflect pupils' communication approaches, sensory and access needs, individual starting points and intended learning.
- Pathway-appropriate curriculum models that secure coherent sequencing, progressive challenge and developmentally meaningful learning.
- Explicit modelling, opportunities for guided and independent practice, retrieval, revisiting and consolidation, adapted to pupils' individual learning profiles.
- Personalised Learning Goals (PLGs) that are drawn from EHCPs and tracked through appropriate frameworks such as MAPP, and the Engagement Model.
- Accessible checks for understanding which identify specific learning gaps or misconceptions and inform timely changes to teaching.
- Embedding of life skills across all subject areas, with dedicated time for developing independence, emotional regulation, and functional application.
- Regular exposure to real-world experiences including community visits, enterprise projects, and work-related learning, supporting Preparation for Adulthood (PfA).

- Opportunities for pupils to apply knowledge and skills across varied contexts, enabling generalisation into everyday life, supported by cross-curricular planning.
- Celebration of progress and achievement in all forms—academic, personal, emotional, and social—through assemblies, reward systems, and family communication.
- Accessible pupil voice, gathered through verbal, symbolic, non-verbal and observational approaches appropriate to each pupil's communication profile.
- Ongoing professional development for staff, ensuring high-quality teaching and reflective practice that fosters a culture of aspiration and improvement.

Curriculum implementation is continually reviewed in response to emerging evidence of pupils' learning, staff reflection and changing needs.

5.3 Curriculum Impact

We will know our curriculum is having the intended impact when:

- Pupils make measurable progress towards their EHCP outcomes and personalised learning goals through high-quality, tailored provision.
  Pupils demonstrate, in ways appropriate to their communication and developmental profiles, that they have secured and retained intended knowledge and skills and can increasingly apply them in relevant contexts.
- Learners demonstrate increasing independence, applying practical skills in everyday situations and working towards aspirational futures.
- Students develop confidence in communication and self-expression, using a range of accessible, individualised methods.
- Skills are successfully generalised across settings, with pupils able to transfer learning between lessons, home, community environments, and work-related contexts.
- Learners are engaged, motivated, and emotionally regulated, showing improvements in confidence, self-expression, and active participation in their learning across all pathways.
- Social interaction and meaningful community engagement are evident across all pathways and learning experiences.
- Assessment frameworks (e.g. MAPP, SCERTS, Engagement Model, Routes for Learning) and qualitative evidence (e.g. portfolios, observations, learner voice) consistently demonstrate progress and inform meaningful next steps.
- Diversity, identity, and inclusion are promoted and respected, with pupils showing awareness of others' values, cultures, and perspectives.
- Individual successes are celebrated, and pupils are recognised for achievements in all forms—academic, personal, and social—fostering a culture of aspiration, pride, and lifelong learning.
- Pupils achieve positive post-16 destinations, with progress towards Preparation for Adulthood outcomes including employment, independent living, and health.
- Regular curriculum review ensures it remains responsive, engaging, and aligned with both statutory requirements and the diverse needs of our pupils.

6. Pathway-Based Structure

We deliver our curriculum through a flexible, progressive pathway model, ensuring all pupils receive a learning experience that is developmentally appropriate and aspirational. These pathways allow learners to follow a curriculum and pedagogical route that aligns with their interests, strengths, and future goals, whether they are academic, creative, or vocational.

Pathways are designed as flexible organizational tools that allow us to place students into the most appropriate pathway based on what we believe will benefit them both now and in the future. Recognizing the individuality and evolving nature of each student, these decisions are not permanent; students can move between pathways if such a transition will better support their personal growth and development. The selection of a pathway is based on both academic and social abilities, enabling us to tailor an individualized curriculum to meet the needs of each pupil at every Key Stage. Our students are regularly assessed, and their pathway can be adjusted throughout their time at the Meadows School to ensure they receive the best possible support and opportunities.

Our pathways focus collectively on supporting the diverse needs of our students, promoting their development and engagement at every stage of their educational journey. There is an emphasis on a student-centred approach that values individual interests and strengths, encouraging meaningful learning experiences that extend beyond traditional academic boundaries. We aim to prepare students for success in an increasingly complex world while considering individual student needs and promoting personal growth.

We embrace an approach that acknowledges all behaviours serve a purpose, whether it be for communication, emotional regulation, or engagement in adaptive skills. Learning experiences should be meaningful, functional, and developmentally appropriate, while also providing opportunities to encourage participation in everyday social experiences and routines.

Our learners typically follow one of the following curriculum pathways based on their primary needs.

- **Engagement for Life *(Pre-formal; PMLD)***

This pathway supports pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) through a highly personalised, sensory-based curriculum. Learning is centred around engagement, communication, emotional regulation and physical development, using routines and immersive experiences to promote interaction, exploration and early responsiveness.

- **Foundations for Life *(Informal; Complex ASC/Complex SLD)***

Designed for pupils with complex autism and/or complex learning disabilities and difficulties, this pathway provides a structured, low-arousal environment with a focus on functional communication, independence, emotional wellbeing, and positive routines. The curriculum is tailored to support interaction, flexibility of thought and sensory regulation.

Students with needs similar to those typically associated with complex ASC may also need to be supported through the school's informal and complex autism curriculum

pathway, ensuring provision is tailored to their individual communication, sensory, and learning profiles."

- **Learning for Life *(Semi-formal; SLD)***

This pathway supports pupils with severe learning difficulties through a broad, skills-based **subject specific** curriculum that includes elements of literacy, numeracy, topic-based learning, and personal development. Teaching is highly practical and meaningful, enabling pupils to build independence and access a range of subject areas at an appropriate level.

- **Options for Life *(Formal; MLD)***

Our formal curriculum pathway offers an adapted version of the National Curriculum, tailored to pupils with moderate learning difficulties. It includes subject-specific learning, and life skills development, enabling pupils to prepare for further education, vocational training or supported employment.

- **Transition to Adult Life *(Sixth Form)***

In our Transition to adult life (Sixth Form) provision, the focus is on preparing students for adulthood. Pupils follow a personalised programme of study that includes functional skills, life skills, community access, careers education and work-related learning. Each student's pathway is shaped by their aspirations and destinations, supporting a smooth and successful transition beyond school.

7. Curriculum Areas

The six agreed curriculum areas underpin learning across the school's pathways:

- **Communication and Interaction**
- **Cognition and Learning**
- **Social and Emotional Development**
- **Physical and Sensory Development**
- **Independence and Life Skills**
- **Culture and Arts**



- **Communication and Interaction - Curriculum Overview**

The Communication and Interaction curriculum area is central to our provision, reflecting the belief that communication is the foundation of all learning, relationships, and personal development. Our approach recognises that pupils may experience significant barriers in expressive and receptive language, social interaction, and understanding non-verbal cues—and that these barriers must be addressed systematically and sensitively through a personalised curriculum.

This area of the curriculum is designed to support pupils at every level of communication, from pre-intentional and sensory communication to early symbolic language, through to functional spoken language, augmentative communication, or alternative systems (e.g., AAC, PECS, Makaton). The focus is on developing the means, motivation, and opportunities to communicate, ensuring all pupils can express needs, make choices, share experiences, and build social connections.

Key elements of this curriculum area include:

- Developing intentional communication (e.g., eye gaze, gesture, vocalisation)
- Supporting receptive and expressive language
- Enhancing social interaction and shared attention
- Using and understanding symbols, signs, and AAC
- Developing functional communication in real-life contexts
- Supporting self-advocacy and emotional expression
- Supporting the systematic teaching of phonics and reading

Teaching is delivered through highly structured, multi-sensory, and interactive approaches, embedded across the curriculum and personalised through EHCP outcomes and Personal Learning Goals (PLGs). Communication opportunities are maximised throughout the day, in both planned activities and natural interactions, with staff modelling and reinforcing language through routines, play, and enrichment.

Progress is measured using developmental and functional tools such as MAPP, and in-school communication profiling frameworks, ensuring we capture both communicative intent and skill development.

The Communication and Interaction curriculum ensures that all pupils are supported to become active participants in their world, equipped with the tools they need to connect, relate, and express themselves, no matter their mode of communication.

- **Cognition and Learning - Curriculum Overview**

The Cognition and Learning curriculum area forms a core component of our provision, ensuring that all learners have access to a curriculum that is individualised, developmentally appropriate, and meaningful. This area supports the development of essential thinking skills, problem-solving strategies, memory, and early academic foundations, tailored to the diverse needs and learning profiles of our pupils.

Our approach is underpinned by the recognition that pupils, particularly those with complex learning difficulties or working at pre-subject-specific levels, require a highly differentiated and scaffolded pathway that enables them to build confidence and independence in their thinking and learning processes. We focus on how pupils learn,

not just what they learn, embedding principles of metacognition, repetition, multi-sensory learning, and practical application.

Curriculum planning within Cognition and Learning is informed by developmental frameworks, Personal Learning Goals (PLGs), and EHCP outcomes. It encompasses areas such as:

Science and Computing are included within Cognition and Learning. Computing applies across all key stages and pathways, with teaching and assessment adapted to pupils' developmental starting points; Engagement for Life classes record relevant learning through the agreed EfL tagging arrangements.

- Early problem-solving and reasoning
- Memory and recall strategies
- Visual and auditory discrimination
- Sequencing and pattern recognition
- Organisational skills and task awareness

Teaching is designed to be highly structured, visually supported, and delivered through engaging, functional, and context-rich activities that promote generalisation and transference of skills. Pupils access learning through a combination of individual, small group, and co-active experiences, with communication, emotional regulation, and sensory needs carefully considered throughout.

Progress within this area is assessed using formative and summative frameworks, such as the Engagement Model, MAPP, or bespoke profiling frameworks and PLG tracking systems, ensuring a holistic view of development that captures both small steps and wider functional achievements.

The Cognition and Learning curriculum ensures that all pupils, regardless of starting point, are supported to develop their capacity to think, learn, and solve problems, laying a foundation for lifelong learning, independence, and participation in wider society.

- **Social and Emotional Development– Curriculum Overview**

The Social and Emotional Development curriculum is a foundational aspect of our SEND teaching and learning approach. It supports pupils in understanding themselves and others, building meaningful relationships, developing emotional literacy and acquiring skills for wellbeing, independence and inclusion.

Teaching in this curriculum area is individualised, carefully scaffolded and embedded across the school day. Emotionally attuned relationships, predictable routines and communication- and sensory-informed approaches support pupils' self-regulation and sense of belonging.

The key aims of this curriculum area include:

- Developing self-awareness and a positive sense of identity
- Supporting emotional recognition, regulation, and expression
- Building resilience and coping strategies

- Establishing and maintaining relationships
- Understanding social expectations and boundaries
- Encouraging independence, responsibility, and decision-making
- Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing

Social and Emotional Development is embedded through routines, structured interactions and real-life opportunities such as turn-taking, making choices and managing change. Where appropriate, targeted strategies and specialist input support individual needs.

Curriculum planning is aligned with EHCP outcomes, Personal Learning Goals (PLGs), and recognised frameworks such as SCERTS, Engagement Model, or PSHE Association guidance, ensuring a developmental and functional progression.

Assessment in this area values small steps and subtle shifts in behaviour, including increased tolerance, emerging independence, positive social interactions, and the ability to manage transitions or express preferences appropriately.

Through Social and Emotional Development, pupils are supported to build confidence, emotional resilience and the social understanding needed to participate safely and meaningfully within school and the wider community.

- **Independence and Life Skills – Curriculum Overview**

The Independence and Life Skills curriculum area plays a vital role in preparing learners with SEND for everyday life by promoting autonomy, dignity, and functional skills that support lifelong wellbeing. For many of our pupils, the journey to independence involves highly individualised pathways that take account of cognitive, physical, sensory, and communication needs. This area of the curriculum ensures that all learners have access to practical, achievable learning opportunities that are embedded in real-life contexts.

The focus is on developing the skills, routines, and confidence needed to manage personal care, make informed choices, and contribute meaningfully to daily life. These skills are foundational not only to future independence but also to the pupil's self-esteem, safety, and ability to participate within the school and wider community.

Key components of this curriculum area include:

- Toileting, hygiene, and personal grooming
- Dressing and managing belongings
- Eating and drinking skills
- Safety awareness and risk management
- Managing transitions and routines
- Understanding health and wellbeing needs
- Making personal choices and expressing preferences
- Functional life skills (e.g., shopping, cooking, travel training)

Learning in this area is embedded throughout the school day—from morning routines and mealtimes to structured life skills sessions—and is always delivered with dignity, respect, and sensitivity. Staff work co-actively and collaboratively, offering graduated levels of support based on pupil need, including physical prompting, visual supports, and verbal modelling.

Planning is directly informed by EHCP outcomes, Personal Learning Goals (PLGs), and where appropriate, the Preparation for Adulthood framework. For some learners, developing consistency and confidence in a single routine may take extended time and repetition. For others, progression may involve generalising skills across contexts and increasing independence with less support.

Assessment in this area celebrates functional progress, such as initiating a self-care task, using a symbol to request help, or managing part of a routine independently. It also recognises the importance of emotional readiness, self-advocacy, and the pupil's ability to make informed, supported choices.

Through the Independence and Life Skills curriculum, we aim to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and confidence to participate in daily life with increasing independence, dignity and choice.

- **Physical and Sensory Development – Curriculum Overview**

The Physical and Sensory Development curriculum area is a key component of our provision, supporting pupils to develop the physical, sensory, and motor skills necessary for functional independence, learning engagement, and wellbeing. For many pupils -particularly those with complex, sensory, or physical needs—this area of development is central to accessing the wider curriculum and to ensuring a meaningful and personalised educational experience.

Our approach is rooted in the understanding that pupils may experience a range of barriers, including gross and fine motor challenges, sensory processing differences, and physical disabilities that impact how they move, explore, and interact with their environment. As such, this curriculum area is carefully planned in collaboration with therapeutic and clinical teams (e.g., physiotherapists, occupational therapists, sensory specialists), and embedded throughout the school day.

Key aims of this curriculum area include:

- Developing gross motor skills (e.g., posture, balance, coordination, mobility)
- Enhancing fine motor skills (e.g., grasp, manipulation, pre-writing skills)
- Supporting sensory integration and self-regulation
- Building body awareness, spatial awareness, and physical confidence
- Promoting functional movement for independence (e.g., navigating the environment, dressing, using equipment)
- Encouraging engagement in active play, physical education, and relaxation
- Developing personalised sensory diets and strategies to reduce barriers to learning

Learning is highly differentiated and may take place through a variety of contexts, such as sensory circuits, hydrotherapy, movement breaks, forest school, yoga,

adapted PE and co-active exploration. It is delivered through repetitive, responsive, and pupil-led approaches, with close attention to regulation, safety, and pupil preferences.

This curriculum area is directly informed by EHCP outcomes, therapy programmes, and Personal Learning Goals (PLGs). It also aligns with Engagement Model principles by emphasising exploration, realisation, persistence, and initiation within physical and sensory tasks.

Progress is measured not only in terms of skill acquisition, but also in increased tolerance, participation, body control, emotional regulation, and the ability to engage meaningfully in a range of activities.

Through the Physical and Sensory Development curriculum, we aim to support each learner in developing the confidence, control, and comfort they need to navigate the world with increasing independence, safety, and enjoyment.

- **Culture and Arts – Curriculum Overview**

The Culture and Arts curriculum area is designed to help pupils make sense of their environment, develop curiosity about the world around them, and build foundational knowledge across arts, humanities, and culture. This area is delivered through highly personalised, sensory-rich, and experiential learning, enabling pupils to explore, notice, and engage with people, places, objects, and events that are relevant to their lives.

The Culture and Arts curriculum develops pupils' awareness of their immediate surroundings and the wider world, including how people live and how places, traditions and cultures vary. It offers expressive and creative experiences through art, music, drama, history, geography and RE, making knowledge accessible through developmentally appropriate approaches.

Key aims of this curriculum area include:

- Building curiosity, engagement, and investigative behaviours
- Exploring the lives, experiences and traditions of people in different times and places
- Exploring creativity through sensory art, music, and performance
- Gaining awareness of time, place, and cultural identity
- Recognising and respecting diversity in people and traditions
- Exploring cultural experiences and environments through appropriate real-world and creative activities
- Exploring historical and geographical concepts in practical, real-world contexts

For pre-subject-specific learners, this may involve tactile and sensory experiences, such as handling natural materials, exploring changes (e.g., light/dark, wet/dry), participating in sensory stories, or engaging with seasonal routines and cultural celebrations. For those working at a more formal level, there are opportunities to engage in structured enquiry, expressive arts, and topic-based exploration with adapted materials and communication supports.

Planning in this area is closely aligned with Personal Learning Goals (PLGs) and EHCP outcomes, with cross-curricular links to communication, physical development, and emotional regulation. Opportunities are also embedded within enrichment experiences such as community visits, themed days, performances, and outdoor learning.

Progress is observed through pupils' increasing awareness, interaction, and expression of ideas, as well as their ability to engage in real-life contexts and understand their place in the world. Emphasis is placed on developing knowledge that is functional, personally relevant, and supportive of each learner's future engagement with society and culture.

Through Culture and Arts, learners develop curiosity, identity and meaningful connections with the world, laying foundations for lifelong learning, creativity and inclusion.

8. Planning

Effective planning is at the heart of delivering a curriculum that is purposeful, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of every pupil. Our planning model is designed to ensure progression, sequencing, and meaningful learning across all pathways and curriculum areas, while also maintaining flexibility to personalise learning in accordance with individual EHCP outcomes.

Planning draws on accurate starting points, the intended curriculum and ongoing assessment. Staff identify what pupils need to learn next, build in opportunities to retrieve and revisit prior learning, and adjust subsequent teaching when gaps or misconceptions are identified.

- **Long-Term Planning**

Curriculum Leads work collaboratively to develop long-term maps that identify intended coverage, significant knowledge and skills, progression and meaningful end points across relevant pathways. These maps are reviewed as **curriculum frameworks** evolve.

- **Schemes of Work**

Curriculum leads design and maintain adaptable schemes of work for their subjects, clearly mapped to different pathway requirements (Pre-formal to Sixth Form). These schemes reflect the individualised and holistic nature of our curriculum and embed opportunities for community engagement, skills application, preparation for adulthood, and learner achievement. They are aligned with recognised SEND frameworks (e.g. SCERTS, MAPP, Engagement Model) and provide flexible resources, scaffolded objectives, and progression steps.

- **Medium-Term Planning**

Teachers translate curriculum intentions into coherent, sequenced learning experiences informed by pupils' starting points, EHCP outcomes and assessment. Plans identify intended learning, appropriate adaptations and opportunities to revisit, practise and apply knowledge and skills.

- **Short-Term and Core Subject Planning**

Short-term planning responds to ongoing checks for understanding and pupils' responses, particularly in **foundational areas** such as communication, literacy and mathematics. It identifies relevant staff roles, agreed communication approaches, levels of support and adjustments needed to secure learning.

- **Progressive and Purposeful Planning**

Across all levels, planning is:

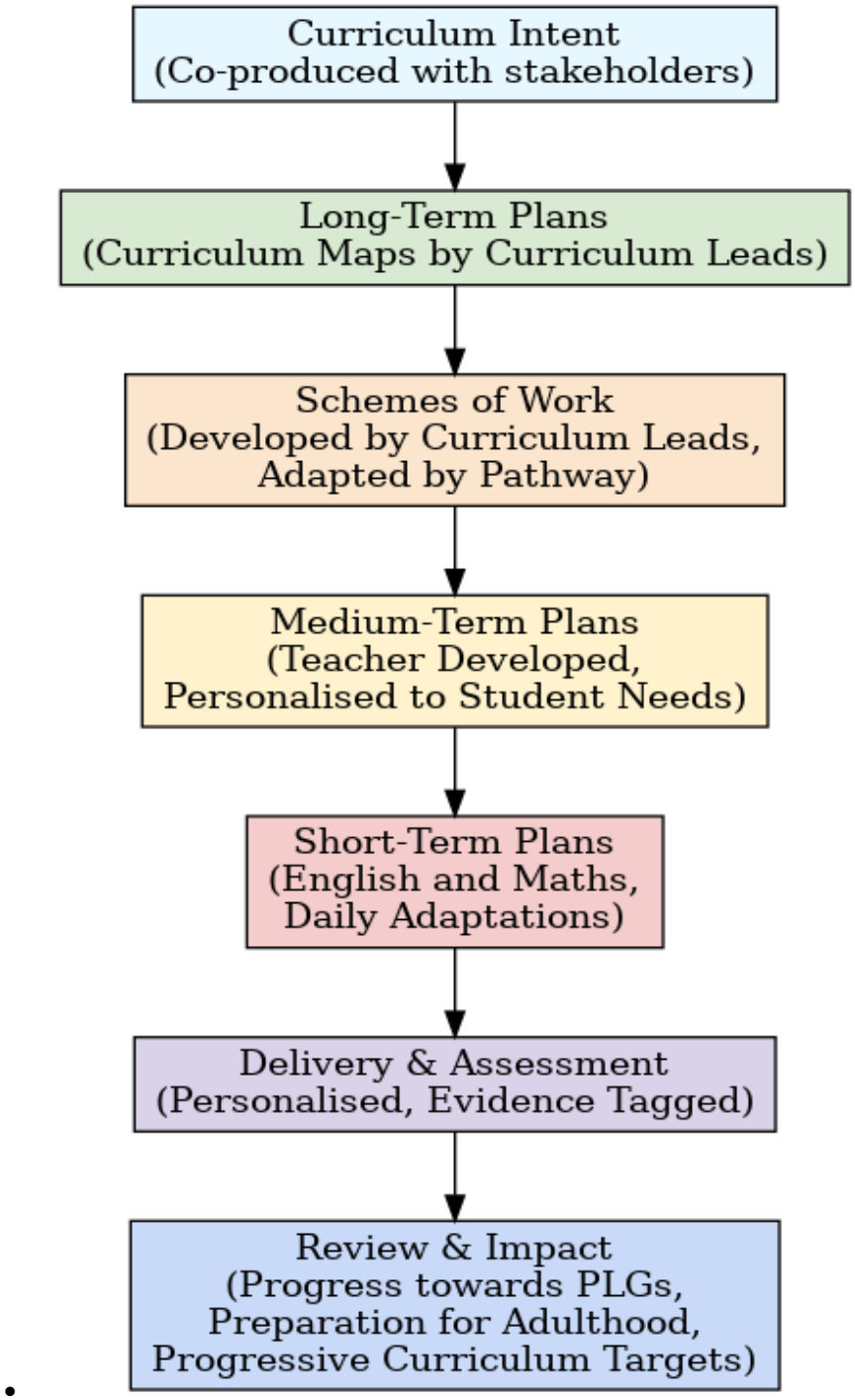
- Progressive – building on prior knowledge, skills, and experiences in a cumulative and reinforcing way.
- Sequenced – ensuring logical order and scaffolding that support conceptual understanding and skill mastery.
- Meaningful – connecting learning to real-life contexts, personal interests, and future aspirations.

Responsive – using assessment to identify emerging gaps, provide suitable challenge and adapt teaching without losing sight of intended learning.

Planning is evaluated regularly to ensure it reflects our curriculum intent to:

- Provide **holistic and individualised learning** opportunities.
- Promote **preparation for adulthood** and development of **independence**.
- Encourage **community engagement** and application of functional skills.
- Celebrate **achievement and success** in all its forms.

See Overview of Planning Process:



9. Learning Environment

We are committed to creating safe, structured, and stimulating learning environments that reflect the individual needs, sensory profiles, and interests of our pupils. Our classrooms are inclusive spaces where communication is accessible, independence is promoted, and emotional regulation is supported. Each learning environment is carefully planned to offer predictability, visual clarity, and adaptability, incorporating elements such as personalised workstations, calming zones, sensory resources, and interactive displays. Across all pathways, the learning environment supports pupils in engaging meaningfully with the curriculum, developing autonomy, and feeling

secure and valued. Staff work collaboratively to ensure that both the physical and emotional environments reflect the core values of the school—**respect, communication, wellbeing, collaboration, growth, and independence**—to enable every pupil to thrive.

Each pathway—Pre-formal, Informal, Semi-formal, Formal, and Sixth Form—has an accompanying Pathway Overview Document that outlines not only curriculum and pedagogy but also the environmental structures necessary to support effective engagement and learning. These documents guide teams in adapting spaces for sensory regulation, promoting communication, supporting physical access, and encouraging independence. Environmental strategies such as visual timetables, structured routines, access to quiet areas, and use of AAC tools are clearly referenced to ensure a consistent and thoughtful approach across all classes. This alignment ensures that the learning environment evolves in parallel with curriculum design, reinforcing our intent to provide holistic, accessible, and individually responsive education.

Please see below in summary distinct environmental priorities that enable pupils to engage meaningfully, regulate effectively, and access their learning.

- **Engagement for Life** *(PMLD, Pre-formal)*: Environments prioritise low-stimulation sensory accessibility, cause-and-effect opportunities, and interactive zones for tactile, auditory, and visual engagement. Settings may include blackout tents, light boxes, resonance boards, and sensory pathways to support awareness and responsiveness.
- **Foundations for Life** *(Complex ASC/Complex SLD, Informal)*: Classrooms are designed with a focus on predictable structure, visual clarity, and autism-friendly practices. Environments feature individual workstations, calm areas, clear transitions, and personalised communication supports (e.g., PECS, AAC, TEACCH principles).
- **Learning for Life** *(SLD, Semi-formal)*: Spaces balance structure and flexibility, offering opportunities for thematic learning, group collaboration, and scaffolded independence. Classrooms may include creative zones, and task systems that promote cognitive development and social interaction.
- **Options for Life** *(MLD, Formal)*: Learning environments reflect a more subject-specific structure while continuing to embed inclusive adaptations. Classrooms support focused independent work, peer collaboration, and use of digital tools, with clearly defined subject zones and learning displays.
- **Transition to Adult Life** *(Sixth Form)*: Spaces are modelled on real-world and vocational contexts, with access to kitchens, and community-based settings. The environment fosters functional communication, self-advocacy, and preparation for adulthood, supporting learners to generalise their skills with confidence.

These pathway-specific environmental approaches are co-developed with staff teams and reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with the school's curriculum intent and the evolving needs of learners.

10. Adaptive Teaching and Responsiveness

Adaptive teaching ensures that all pupils can access an ambitious and relevant curriculum from their individual starting points. Teachers and support staff know pupils well, use agreed communication approaches and anticipate barriers relating to cognition, communication, physical access, sensory regulation or emotional wellbeing. Adaptations may include modelling, scaffolding, concrete or visual representations, pacing, accessible questioning, alternative response methods and purposeful staff deployment; they should support access without unnecessarily lowering expectations.

Ongoing formative assessment is used to identify what pupils already know and can do, reveal specific gaps or misconceptions and distinguish difficulties in demonstrating learning from gaps in knowledge or skills. Staff check understanding through each pupil's established communication methods, respond promptly through targeted teaching adaptations, retrieval, consolidation or additional challenge, and check again to determine whether the intended learning has been secured. Where concerns persist, assessment informs further teaching or intervention in accordance with the Assessment Policy.

11. Home Learning

Home learning in a SEND context plays a unique and flexible role in reinforcing skills, supporting generalisation, and strengthening partnerships between school and home. It is not about quantity, but about quality, relevance, and accessibility, with the central aim of reinforcing learning in meaningful ways that complement each pupil's needs, routine, and family context.

We recognise that many of our pupils face significant cognitive, sensory, or physical challenges, and that families may require personalised approaches to engagement. As such, home learning is:

- Optional, adaptable, and always rooted in communication and collaboration with families.
- Designed to extend learning beyond the classroom in functional, enjoyable, and low-pressure ways.
- Linked to personalised learning goals, including EHCP outcomes, preparation for adulthood, and communication targets.

Examples of appropriate home learning may include:

- Practising core skills through everyday routines (e.g., cooking, shopping, travel training)
- Listening to or reading familiar sensory stories together
- Watching videos created by class staff to rehearse signs, symbols, or sequences
- Taking part in simple art, movement, or music activities

Class teams work collaboratively with families to identify manageable opportunities to practise communication, independence and other agreed learning goals at home. Strategies, visual supports or communication resources used at school may be shared where helpful and appropriate to family circumstances and aspirations.

Home learning remains flexible and supportive rather than burdensome. Families' perspectives on what works well, emerging skills and future ambitions help inform

provision and opportunities to generalise learning between school, home and community settings.

12. Marking and Feedback

Feedback should be timely, accessible and focused on helping pupils recognise what they have achieved and what will support their next learning. It is personalised to individual communication profiles, intended learning and developmental starting points, and should be meaningful, manageable and motivating.

Principles of Effective Feedback:

- Feedback is always personalised and reflective of each pupil's communication style, cognitive profile, and learning targets.
- It focuses on the process of learning, not just the outcome—recognising effort, engagement, independence, and skill development.
- Staff provide feedback through appropriate verbal, practical, visual, gestural, modelled or recorded approaches, including in-the-moment responses that help pupils improve.
- Written comments and recorded next steps are used in accordance with the Assessment Policy, agreed school arrangements and any relevant accreditation requirements.
- Feedback supports self-esteem and motivation while encouraging independence and the ability to reflect and respond at an appropriate level.

Use of Evidence for Learning:

Evidence for Learning (EfL), pupils' work and professional observations capture meaningful learning and provide a basis for future teaching, where appropriate. Detailed evidence, marking, feedback and recording expectations are set out in the Assessment Policy.

- Link feedback to EHCP outcomes, PLGs, or curriculum areas
- Show progress over time through visual or video documentation

Staff-to-Staff Feedback and Professional Dialogue:

Professional dialogue between teachers and support staff helps identify effective feedback, pupil responses and further teaching needs. This includes:

- Post-lesson reviews and next-step planning
- Joint moderation of evidence to ensure consistent expectations
- Sharing strategies that worked well or need adjusting

Parent/Carer Input

Parents and carers contribute to understanding pupils' progress and the generalisation of learning through ongoing communication, reviews and discussions with class teams.

13. **Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning**

Monitoring and evaluation form a developmental, evidence-informed part of the Quality of Education cycle. Leaders and staff draw on a range of complementary evidence to understand the consistency of agreed approaches, celebrate effective practice, identify improvement priorities and evaluate the impact of subsequent actions on pupils' learning.

Key Strategies for Monitoring and Evaluation

These activities are coordinated through the school's agreed Quality of Education processes and interpreted in the context of pupils' individual pathways and starting points:

- **Learning Walks**

  Learning walks consider the implementation of agreed teaching approaches, curriculum access, communication, staff deployment and the learning environment. Themes and findings inform professional dialogue, coaching and wider improvement actions.

- **Lesson Observations**

  Lesson observations use the agreed school Teaching Practice Framework and supporting guidance to consider Curriculum Intent & Implementation, Curriculum Impact and Pupil Voice. Observation and feedback are developmental, recognising effective practice and identifying agreed, manageable improvements; no single lesson is treated as a complete measure of teaching quality.

- **Moderation and Evidence Review**

  Staff and leaders review pupils' books, folders, EfL evidence and *assessment judgements, as* appropriate to each pathway. Professional dialogue supports consistent expectations, accurate identification of learning gaps and agreement of effective feedback and next steps. These processes align with the Assessment Policy.

- **Planning Scrutinies**

  Curriculum and Key Stage Leads review planning proportionately to consider intended curriculum, sequencing, appropriate adaptations and the use of assessment to inform teaching. Findings support staff development and curriculum refinement.

- **Data Drops**

  Three school data drops across the year provide structured opportunities to review progress from individual starting points and identify pupils working below expectations (WBE), meeting expectations (ME) or exceeding expectations (ExE). Outcomes inform targeted teaching responses and are evaluated alongside wider professional evidence.

- **Pupil Achievement Meetings (Learning Conversations)**

  Pupil Achievement Meetings (Learning Conversations) bring class teachers, Key Stage Leads and senior leaders together to review progress, assessment judgements and how effectively teaching meets pupils' needs. Existing PLG and curriculum assessments, EfL, work and observations inform discussions about WBE/ExE pupils, barriers, challenge and teaching adaptations. WBE concerns are monitored through the Class Intervention Log, with actions and impact reviewed over time. Further arrangements are detailed in the Assessment Policy.

- **School Council Feedback**

  Pupil voice is gathered through appropriate verbal, symbolic, non-verbal and observational approaches, including supported communication, class discussions and school council activities. This informs the evaluation of curriculum access, engagement, learning and wellbeing.

- **Parent/Carer and Multi-Agency Input**

  The school seeks parents' and carers' perspectives through regular communication, reviews and consultation. Specialist professionals contribute where appropriate, supporting coherent provision and pupils' progress across settings.

14. Outcomes and Impact

The insights from these monitoring activities are:

- Shared appropriately through leadership reporting and governor oversight, with attention to what the evidence shows about pupils' learning.
- Used to celebrate effective practice, identify relevant professional development and agree proportionate support or improvements.
- Triangulated through SLT and middle-leader discussion to inform self-evaluation, curriculum review and the School Development Plan.
- Followed up through assigned actions and reviews of impact.

15. Review and Supporting Documentation

This policy is reviewed annually through the school's strategic cycle, led by the Senior Leadership Team and informed by the perspectives of staff, governors, pupils and families where appropriate. Findings from teaching quality assurance, curriculum review, pupil progress and stakeholder feedback inform amendments. Substantive changes to its agreed expectations or statutory responsibilities follow the school's established approval arrangements. Once approved, the policy is communicated to relevant staff and stakeholders.

The policy is supported by the school's Teaching Practice Framework, High-Quality Teaching at a Glance guidance, curriculum pathway overviews, curriculum intent, implementation and impact documents, long-term plans, schemes of work, PSHE & RSE Policy and related Assessment Policy guidance, including Learning Conversations and intervention templates.

These supporting documents are maintained separately in the school's agreed central location and may be reviewed and refined by the Senior Leadership Team in response to emerging needs, developments in practice and school improvement priorities. Such amendments do not require formal reapproval of this policy, provided they remain consistent with its agreed principles and expectations. Substantive changes affecting policy requirements or statutory obligations will follow the school's established review and approval procedures. Updated documentation will be version-controlled and relevant changes communicated to staff.