



Curriculum Policy

Reviewed by:	Jess Wrigley, School Principal
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Curriculum Context

At Brook School, we pride ourselves on providing education that is engaging and innovative. We will always consider the SEMH and SEND needs of our learners and understand that they have not all had the best educational experience previously. We aim to inspire our learners to believe in their full potential and build confidence and resilience. Our teachers provide motivation, support, and guidance to our learners in every way possible to cater for their educational, social, and emotional needs whilst raising their aspirations and personal self-esteem overall.

The school's restorative culture underpins all aspects of planning including curriculum intent, implementation and assessment supporting individuals to reach their full potential. Practice ensures that learners are fully supported with diverse opportunities to succeed where they have experienced difficulty or failure in the past. Timetabled sessions that facilitate reflection and create opportunities to develop resilience to aid progression and achievement will be implemented. This enables a virtuous circle of reflection, action, achievement, resilience, and increased confidence promoting engagement and the love of learning.

The school prioritises class groupings by year groups with consideration of social accessibility and the ability to interact with the class, create and maintain flourishing friendships, with the aim that each learner placed in a class can access the environment both socially and educationally, complemented by a consistent classroom delivery model. Cohorts are grouped KS3 and KS4. At KS3, learners access a 3-year KS3 curriculum and a KS4 2-year curriculum.

Through a varied and adapted curriculum, we aim to teach learners how to grow into positive, responsible young people who can not only have a positive impact on our local community but can also successfully transition into further education, employment, volunteering, and adulthood. We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth – the ability to participate positively in society is also at the heart of our planning. The development of social skills is promoted through our PSHE programme, where elements such as self-esteem and self-awareness, body language, the way we talk, conversation and assertiveness are explored. Experiences in the community give learners the opportunity to practise their skills in external situations with the support and care of our skilled staff team.

The curriculum promotes achievement and success regardless of starting point to build confidence and engagement, the core curriculum is adapted to ensure that all learners can achieve.

Assessment, Progress Tracking, Monitoring, and Review

Assessment

Progress is tracked using a BRAG rating system in each lesson:

- Blue – Exceeding target.
- Red – Below expected progress.
- Amber – Working towards target.
- Green – Achieving target.

Teachers assess learning at the end of each lesson using this system, ensuring timely interventions and support where needed.

This data is collected to be used to track progress across each curriculum area which contributes to a data drop at the end of each half term. Our assessment tracking and reporting system allows us to:

- Record formative and summative data against individual or groups of learners.
- Analyse attainment and progress to see where learners are working at.
- Use the Gaps in Learning Report to aid lesson planning.
- Capture the small step progress of SEND learners.

Curriculum Planning, Teaching, and Learning

The long-term plan for the school is reviewed annually in consultation with the teaching team, taking into consideration any global/environmental/technical/policy changes and feedback/reflection from delivery of each subject area. From the long-term plan, bespoke schemes of work are developed, and from these, specific lesson plans and resources produced. Teaching staff customise and personalise planning to meet the needs of their individual cohort of learners. The approach to planning for teaching and learning is to ensure that all learners receive a broad offer, appropriate to supporting progression and achievement of personal targets, and that the planning itself is, wherever possible, hands-on, and experiential. This approach also enables teaching staff to maintain a manageable workload and facilitates a positive work/life balance. The KS3 and KS4 curriculums are planned together to facilitate an offer that supports learners to build upon prior knowledge. Through a creative curriculum, learners will face the challenge of debate and study that will foster recognition and sympathetic awareness of the beliefs and values of others, improving all learners' awareness of the world in which we live. Where relevant and possible, learners take part in a wide variety of educational visits and field trips to broaden their experience of different locations and situations and glean learning from real life experience.

Within Mathematics and English, the KS3 curriculum prepares learners for the preparation of their own pathway at KS4 – either Entry Level, Functional Skills, or GCSE, depending on ability.

Curriculum Areas

Please refer to the long-term plans for subject specific areas and content.

English

Functional Skills English

English is a subject, and it is an essential foundation for success in all subjects. Developing the core skills of reading and writing, vocabulary development and spoken language is essential for a learner's chance to progress.

KS3 curriculum aims – to instil the core skills of reading and writing, vocabulary development, and spoken language. This aims to compliment previous knowledge and work towards skills needed to succeed at KS4. Reading a variety of increasingly challenging texts will allow learners to access either pathway of Entry Level, Functional Skills English, or GCSE English Language. The curriculum will support learners to:

- Develop reading skills.
- Write accurately and effectively using Standard English and level appropriate spelling and grammar – plan, draft, edit and proof-read.
- Build on their vocabulary and understanding of more complex words.
- Speak and listen confidently and effectively.

KS4 curriculum aims – to expand on and further their knowledge of the key skills covered in KS3 to support learners to:

- Develop reading skills.
- Write accurately, fluently, and effectively at length using Standard English and level appropriate spelling grammar – plan, draft, edit and proof-read.
- Write using an informed personal response.
- Build on their vocabulary from KS3 and use it effectively.
- Speak and listen confidently and effectively using personal opinions and the opinions of others.

GCSE English Language

GCSE English language is designed on the basis that learners should read challenging texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Each text will represent a substantial piece of writing, making significant demands on learners in terms of content, structure, and the quality of language. The texts, across a range of genres and types, will support learners in developing their own writing by providing effective

models. The texts will include literature and extended literary non-fiction, and other writing such as essays, reviews, and journalism.

It enables learners to:

- read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding.
- read critically, and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing.
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately.
- use grammar correctly, punctuate and spell accurately.
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- listen to and understand spoken language, and use spoken Standard English effectively.

Reading

Brook School is committed to promoting a culture of literacy proficiency and enthusiasm for reading. We support every learner on their individual reading journey through the use of personalised adaptations, scaffolding, a DfE approved Phonics scheme where appropriate, and digital games and literacy programmes.

Teachers and the SENDCO use baseline assessments to identify learners who need support with reading and phonics. Fully trained staff deliver a phonics intervention scheme which supports early reading skills using age-appropriate texts.

Reading is promoted via the use of motivating text across the curriculum, community outings, educational magazine subscriptions, and learner choice of text. Our school library is full of books - many chosen based on learners preferences. Learners can spend time on the sofa reading and relaxing. The timetable includes dedicated time for reading for pleasure.

Mathematics

Functional Skills Maths

A key aim for Functional Skills mathematics is that it enables learners to gain confidence and fluency in, and a positive attitude towards, mathematics. Learners will convey their confidence in using mathematics when they can demonstrate a sound grasp of mathematical knowledge and skills and apply it to solve mathematical problems. It develops behaviours such as persistence, resilience and logical thinking as learners apply mathematical tools and approaches.

The Entry Level and Functional Skills qualifications provide a foundation for progression into employment or further technical education and develop skills for everyday life.

The content will introduce learners to new areas of life and work so that they are exposed to concepts and problems which, while not of immediate concern, may be of value in later life. It enables learners to develop an appreciation of the role played by mathematics in the world of work and in life.

GCSE Maths

This encourages learners to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, mathematics and to recognise the importance of mathematics in their own lives and to society. It also provides a strong mathematical foundation for learners who go on to study mathematics at a higher-level post-16.

This planning enables learners to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts.
- acquire, select, and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems.
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions.
- comprehend, interpret, and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

The problem solving at the heart of mathematics learning, helps learners tackle everyday mathematical problems whilst studying and after obtaining the qualification. It encourages the teaching of links between different areas of the curriculum by targeting questions that cover the content from different subject areas within mathematics.

ICT

ICT develops the learners' knowledge, skills and understanding with a key focus on the development of effective communication skills and encourages them to demonstrate their skills in using ICT systems, finding, and selecting information, developing, presenting, and communicating information in a range of contexts and for various purposes. Planning is cross-referenced and complemented by the National Curriculum and Digital Functional Skills subject content where ICT planning provides learners with a solid understanding of the five content themes of using devices and handling information, creating, editing, communicating, transacting, and being safe and responsible online.

Science

Brook School's science offer is broad and varied and reflects the interests and capabilities of the learner cohort. Learners can access a wide range of science curriculum topics, spanning from cellular development to the solar system and space. All the topics are relevant to the learner's understanding of scientific theory, evidence, and analysis comprehension. Additionally, there are multiple practical investigations designed to encourage scientific thought and engagement.

PSHE/RSE

Our PSHE offer aims to educate and support individuals to lead safe and healthy lives, make informed choices regarding social and personal issues and develop the necessary skills to manage their next steps, lives, and aspirations to become responsible and productive members of society. Our PSHE curriculum includes a robust RSE offer, and learners can work towards accreditation at both Key Stage 3 (KS3) and Key Stage 4 (KS4). We subscribe to the PSHE Association which informs our curriculum. Planning is also mapped to the DfE's statutory RSE guidance.

Humanities

Encompassing RE, History and Geography, the Humanities curriculum helps learners to understand their world in the context of people and places, resources, and environments across the globe, and gain a solid knowledge of key historical events, locally and internationally, that have effected changes in society over time. Lessons focus on respecting all cultures and beliefs and applying critical thinking skills to the real world.

PE and Games

At Brook School, we offer lessons in PE within the Hall and Games on our outside Multi Use Games Area. Physical education includes activities such as Dance and Yoga with Games including basketball and football, developing confidence and competence in a wide range of individual, paired and team activities, to promote physical health and wellbeing, positive mental health, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. All activities are adapted to ensure all learners can participate in activities; additional adult input is available should individual learners require this.

Art and Design

The art and design curricula will give learners experiential involvement with different art media, including drawing, painting, printing, collage, sculpture, and photography. Learners will study a variety of artists with a different focus, embedding historical, geographical, cultural, personal, and social development. This provides knowledge and skills to support progression into further education and adulthood, to develop a lifelong love of the creative arts and potential careers within the sectors of art, technology, joinery and more. The design side of the curriculum involves using many skills, including problem-solving, maths, and following and reading instructions. The art and design curriculum is hands-on and will give the learners the experiences they need to take up, perhaps, further education and apprenticeships in practical trade careers.

Therapeutic Interventions

If it is felt that a learner would benefit from therapeutic intervention, this may need to be sourced through the local authority, or via the school, depending on need. We are able to offer access to calm spaces and sensory spaces, and quiet working provision, with the aim of underpinning educational activities and access to different aspects of the curriculum. Our approach is trauma informed and therapeutic with our culture and ethos reflecting this.

Life Skills and Careers

Brook School will work towards embedding all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, which, in turn, will meet the needs of every learner. Approach to careers will differentiate in accordance with the different needs and abilities of the learners, ensuring that every learner within Brook School has employability skills and career information at the appropriate level. We want every learner to be confidently able to make realistic and ambitious choices about future courses and jobs. Learners identified as being at risk of becoming NEET are provided with early support and are prioritised at the transition stage. Referrals to appropriate Local Authority Careers Hubs are made when appropriate for early interventions and ongoing support.

A planned annual career schedule of events and activities ensures that every learner will have the relevant knowledge and skills to make an informed choice about their future. Brook School will involve parents and carers through Newsletters, school website, careers events, Parent Consultation Day, and EHCP Annual Review meetings.

A significant part of a learner's life is spent interacting with other young people. However, not all young people develop social skills naturally. Structured classroom activities develop a learner's social skills and are put into practice within school social time and during social academic trips, such as ordering a meal, buying ingredients for Food Technology lessons, and participating in a social sporting activity. We aim to develop young people's self-awareness and self-esteem so that they can build core skills for maintaining friendships, resilience, and emotional well-being.

The Life skills and Careers programme provides opportunities to build independence, citizenship and positive relationships while equipping them with employability skills. The programme supports personal development, helping learners to overcome barriers, set meaningful future goals. This holistic approach ensures that learners leave with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to navigate their personal and professional lives successfully.

Qualification Offer

Here at Brook School, we have a Core Offer of qualifications available for our KS4 learners alongside additional options chosen by themselves – a choice from the list below. These are offered at various levels dependent on ability:

Core:

- English
- Mathematics
- Life and Living Skills

Options:

- Science
- Art and Design
- Esports
- Digital Skills
- Computer Science
- Physical Education
- Home Cooking Skills
- History

Marking and Feedback Policy

Marking should provide constructive feedback to every learner, focusing on success and improvement needs against learning outcomes: enabling learners to become reflective and helping them close the gap between current and desired performance.

The marking policy should be seen as part of the cycle of effective assessment, which includes using learning objectives, quality questioning, and quality feedback, both oral and written. The marking policy will be applied consistently across all subjects.

Marking is most effective when it is:

- Simple
- Appropriate to age and ability
- Helps learners know what they have done well against the learning objectives.
- Clearly shows how to improve.
- Supports self-assessment.
- Timely for learners to act on feedback.

The aim of the school policy is to ensure that learners are encouraged to value feedback and to know that it is addressed to them individually and specifically tailored to help them learn, improve, and achieve.

The objective of the policy is to raise learner achievement and accelerate rates of progress against individualised targets.

The judgement on the effectiveness of the marking policy rests on the impact that marking and feedback have on learners' progress. The following points are considered as indicators of effective marking and feedback:

- learners showed that they understood the purpose of the marking or feedback was individually tailored to their needs to help them develop academically.
- teachers' handwriting is easy to read, and all spelling, grammar and punctuation is correct.
- marking recognises successes against the learning objective and helps learners understand what they have done well.
- teachers provide constructive feedback to learners so that they can identify and understand how they can improve their learning.
- action points for improvement are given, that specifically relate to instances in the marked work and give opportunities for learners to close the gap to have a positive impact on their personalised IEP targets.
- teachers use assessment to check on how well their teaching is achieving the learning objectives and adjust their teaching accordingly.
- learners will be able to articulate what they need to do to progress.

Every member of staff is responsible and accountable for correcting and developing English language skills across all subjects. We have a policy of marking 100% of learner work completed and providing accurate, relevant, personal, and developmental feedback to support progression.

Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Reading

Writing – we encourage:

- Correct grammar
- Correct punctuation
- Planning of written work
- Correct sentence structures
- Solid spelling
- Using the correct tense (past, present, future)
- Correct subject-verb agreement e.g., verb 'to be' = I am, it is, you are, we are, they are, etc.

Speaking and listening – we encourage:

- Speaking formally (how, when, and where)
- Speaking informally (how, when, and where)
- Speaking in a group
- Listening to others' opinions without interrupting
- Contributing appropriately to a discussion
- Asking questions based on information presented
- Answering questions with a thought-out response
- Presenting independently (this could be in the form of 'show and tell')

Reading – we encourage:

- Use of phonics to support reading development (That Reading Thing)
- Reading aloud
- Reading independently
- Strategies to deal with difficult words
- Making sense of whole texts
- Summarising whole texts in their own words
- Developing opinions of texts
- Extending vocabulary

Marking Guidance**How will we evidence the marking of written English?**

Work is marked using the provided marking codes sheet (Appendix A). Each learner will have access to the marking codes through a visual chart in the back of each exercise book or folder. Learners who are weaker at reading will have the codes and explanations read to them for understanding.

We will mark positive achievements in green ink, and areas for development in purple ink

How will we show improvement of learners' written English?

Learners will be given the opportunity to correct any mistakes that have been highlighted by the teacher/tutor within three areas:

- Evidence over time throughout learner's workbooks
- Completion of targeted work/task setting during lessons
- Individualised learning activities

Assessment and Feedback**How will we evidence, regularly assess, and provide feedback on learners' work?**

Learners' work will be regularly assessed in many different formats to ensure appropriate progress, and feedback will be given to ensure all learners achieve their full potential. Assessment will be in three different forms:

- Verbal and written daily feedback through workbooks, task sheets, and vocational booklets.
- Live marking - teachers' movement around the classroom to routinely, systematically check learners' completion of work in relation to the learning outcomes and the opportunities for 'in the moment' feedback that this provides. The teacher should circulate around the room as learners are working to:
 - check that all tasks are completed.
 - check that the quality of work is of the required standard.
 - provide verbal feedback or make notes to correct misconceptions and/or guide learners on next steps.
- Termly through the Sandwell Math's, Salford Reading, and GSL assessment tools.

Additional strategies we will utilise where appropriate:

- Self-assessment to encourage active learner involvement in assessing own strengths and steps needed to achieve learning outcomes and progress. Specific displays are placed in each classroom.
- Peer assessment to develop understanding of what is required to be successful and how to make judgements that are fair and accurate.
- Online resources to engage learners in an alternative form of learning that provides instant and visual feedback, such as the Lexia programme.
- Tailored 1:1 intervention with SENDCo/Subject Specialist to bridge the gap.

Feedback Scheme

We will further give personalised written feedback to learners, specifically to the piece of work assessed, through the use of individual marking stickers. In Mathematics and English, this will be at the end of lessons with the same learning outcome. In other subject areas, this will be at the end of an overall topic:

Learning Objective:					
Success Criteria:				Secured Tick/comments	
1.					
2.					
3.					
Engagement Score	1	2	3	4	5
Learner Tick score/comments					
Staff Tick score/comments					
Even Better If:					

Engagement Descriptors

Engagement Score Descriptors
1 Present, but unable to engage
2 Able to show positive response to staff interaction
3 Able to participate in a learning experience, an intervention or a social experience
4 Able to show realisation of the importance of a learning experience, an intervention or a social experience
5 Able to initiate and positively engage with a learning experience, an intervention or a social experience

The Teacher will mark your work in green and purple pen.

Green pen will be the things that are right or positive about the work along with teacher comments.

Purple pen will be things that we might need to remember next time or practice for next time. They may indicate where corrections are needed.

Appendix A

Marking and feedback codes:

Marking Symbol	Explanation
P	Punctuation missing, or error
SP	Spelling mistake
//	New paragraph needed
VF	Verbal feedback given
①	Work completed independently
⑤	Support given