



Melrose Education
SCHOOL



Curriculum Policy

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Curriculum Context

At Coombswood 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, build confidence and resilience, and where appropriate provide a pathway to reintegrate back into mainstream education. Our staff provide motivation, support, and guidance to our learners in every way possible to cater for their educational, social, and emotional needs whilst overall raising their aspirations and personal self-esteem.

The school's restorative culture underpins all aspects of planning including curriculum intent, implementation and assessment, supporting individuals to reach their full potential. Practices ensure that learners are fully supported with diverse opportunities to succeed where they have experienced difficulty or failure in the past; examples of these are our STEP support programme and personalised intervention sessions: timetabled sessions that facilitate reflection and create opportunities to develop resilience to aid progression and achievement. This enables a virtuous circle of reflection, action, achievement, resilience, and increased confidence promoting engagement and the love of learning.

Our curriculum is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school: **DREAM** – **D**etermination, **R**espect, **E**mpowerment, **A**ppreciation and **M**otivation.


The school organises class groupings by social and curriculum accessibilities, the ability to interact with the class, and create and maintain flourishing friendships. This is with the aim that each learner placed in a class can access the environment both socially and educationally complemented by an adaptive classroom delivery model. Cohorts are grouped KS3 and KS4. At KS3 learners access a 3-year rolling curriculum and KS4 access a 2-year rolling curriculum.

Through a varied and adaptive curriculum, and the use of adaptive teaching methods, we aim to teach learners how to grow into positive, responsible young people that can not only have a positive impact on our local community but can 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 within our curriculum and throughout the school day, where elements such as self-esteem and self-awareness, body language, the way we talk, conversation and assertiveness are explored, modelled, and practised. 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.

Our curriculum promotes achievement and success regardless of starting point to build confidence and engagement. The curriculum is designed to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to fully achieve their potential and they follow a variety of learning pathways that prepare them for suitable qualifications in KS4, including Entry Level,

Functional skills, GCSE and BTEC. Our adaptive learning model supports progress and promotes independence through levels of classroom support: **S**(Supported) **T**(Tentative) **E** (Emerging) **P**(Proficient) stages with their development monitored closely and recorded in each lesson.

Lesson Objectives and Success Criteria are shared in every lesson using the proforma below and stuck in exercise books at the start of the lesson. This also provides opportunities for learners to feedback on their progress against individual success criteria and the lesson as a whole. Classroom staff also record the adaptive teaching STEP support level that the learner required against each success criteria, which informs future planning and support.

LO:	Staff	Learner
Success Criteria:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 		
Learner voice: <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>		

***When marking include STEP in Staff column

Assessment, Progress Tracking, Monitoring, and Review

Upon joining Coombswood School learners undertake formal initial assessments in Reading, English and Mathematics. The results from these assessments are used to enable staff to plan the correct pathways, interventions and levels of support based on learners' individual needs and starting points. These are reviewed every half term and within weekly planning.

Considering learners' previous educational experiences, it is also important that the class team holistically assess learners as a continuation of the initial assessment process. The combination of the formal initial assessment and the holistic view are used to inform adaptive teaching and support of the learners' classroom work.

During timetabled lessons, learners are assessed using a variety of formative and summative methods. All learners are supported to access the lesson objective and success criteria via our STEP support levels. Appropriate and developmental feedback is given within the lesson both verbally and via live marking, and all work is marked using our marking policy, with opportunities to correct or improve work. For the core subjects of English and Mathematics, timetabled in-class interventions provide personalised and targeted support to develop in specific areas.

At the end of each half term, formal assessments are undertaken in reading, spelling, writing and Mathematics. Progress is updated and analysed by SLT to ensure that every learner is making progress consistent with their learning path. Any identified inconsistency is highlighted, and supportive strategies agreed.

At KS4, learners will engage in a variety of programmes, suited to their individual needs and abilities. Courses offered will include Entry Level, Functional Skills, GCSE and BTECs. Our full and enriching curriculum offer also supports life skills, careers and personal well-being, preparing our learners for moving on to post-16 and adulthood.

Curriculum Planning, Teaching, and Learning

The long-term plan for the school is reviewed annually in consultation with the tutor 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 adaptive 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 and close gaps. Within English, Mathematics and Science, the KS3 curriculum prepares learners for their own pathway at KS4 – Entry Level, Functional Skills or GCSE dependent upon ability.

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. Many of our learners have limited access to opportunities to improve their cultural capital outside school, so this is interwoven throughout the curriculum and within the school ethos.

Curriculum Areas

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

English

English 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. At KS3, a staged phonics programme and reading a variety of increasingly challenging texts will enable learners at KS4 to access either pathway of Functional Skills English, or GCSE English Language.

The curriculum will support learners to:

- Develop reading skills including using phonics interventions.
- 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.

Functional Skills English

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

A key aim for Functional Skills English is that it enables learners to gain confidence and fluency in their use of English language. It provides the basis for effective communication and understanding across the three subject skill areas: reading, speaking, and listening, and writing. Skills developed during the course include learning to write concisely, with clarity and meaning. Learners will apply this knowledge to a number of practical writing tasks, such as article and letter writing.

GCSE English Language

Edexcel GCSE English Language 2.0 is designed to engage and motivate learners through a choice of contemporary texts, relatable modern themes, and real-world writing tasks. It has been developed with non-neurotypical learners in mind.

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.

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 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

It 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/Digital Functional Skills

At KS3, 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. There is a specific focus on using ICT, social media and digital devices safely.

At KS4 planning is cross-referenced and complemented by the 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, and editing, communicating, transacting and being safe and responsible online.

Science

At KS3 Coombswood School's Science offer is broad and varied and reflects the interests and capabilities of the learner cohort. Learners can access a wide variety of Science curriculum topics ranging from cellular development to space and the solar system. All the topics are relevant to the learner's understanding of scientific theory, evidence, analysis, and comprehension. In addition, there are multiple practical investigations to encourage scientific thought and engagement.

At KS4 Entry Level and GCSE courses enable all learners to continue their learning journey in Science and achieve a qualification. The application of their knowledge to real-world and contemporary issues is a focus of their learning in order to make Science relevant and engaging.

PSHE/RSE

The aim of our PSHE offer is 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 step, lives, and aspirations to become responsible and productive members of society. The planning is mapped to the DfE's statutory RSE guidance and we are members of the PSHE Association.

Our PSHE curriculum includes a robust and relevant RSE offer, and learners can work towards accreditation at KS4 in Personal Growth and Well-being.

Throughout the year we celebrate our cultural diversity through exploring religious festivals and celebrations.

RE

The RE curriculum at Coombswood recognises and celebrates our diverse local area. Learners will study a wide variety of RE-based topics, including the key concepts of major religions found in the UK, how the design and use of religious buildings reflects the needs and beliefs of their users, the main religious founders of faiths, religious art and its use in celebrations and prayer, and the importance of tolerance and respect. There are many opportunities to engage with artifacts and visit local religious buildings to expand learners' cultural understanding.

Human and Social

Encompassing both History and Geography, these curriculums help learners to understand their world in the context of people and places, resources, and environments across the globe, and gain a solid knowledge around key historical events, locally and internationally that have effected changes in society over time.

Social Skills

A significant part of a learner's life is spent interacting with other young people. However, not all young people develop social skills naturally.

Social skills uses a hierarchical approach to teach these skills as shown in the graphic and is integrated into all activities in school.

Structured classroom activities develop a learner's social skills and are put into practice during school social time and social or academic trips such as ordering a meal, participating in a social sporting activity, interacting with new people etc.

We aim to develop young people's self-awareness and self-esteem so that they build core skills for initiating and maintaining friendships, resilience, and emotional wellbeing.

PE

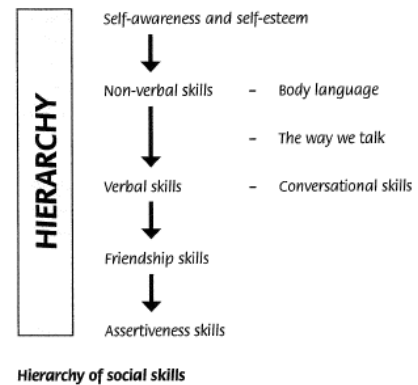
Physical education includes developing confidence and competence in a wide range of individual, paired and team activities, to promote physical health and wellbeing, positive mental health, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. All activities are planned and supported to ensure all learners can participate in activities. Where appropriate, learners make use of local leisure and sporting facilities, and all learners have the opportunity for swimming lessons.

Creative Art and Design Technology

The aesthetic and creative arts curriculum 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. Elements of Design Technology are also integrated to include the creative use of modern technology such as 3D printing and the use of CAD programs. 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 sector of art. In KS4, learners may choose to engage in further study leading to accreditation.

Cookery

At KS3, learners learn the basics of cooking via a half termly focus including seasonal, cultural, environmental and health themes. Being able to cook for oneself is a major step towards independence as a young adult and as well as practising essential culinary skills,



learners will also study the basics of food safety and hygiene. The curriculum is planned to promote links with other curriculum areas including Science, PE and PSHE.

At KS4, Cookery forms part of the Life Skills provision and learners have the opportunity to achieve accreditation via a suitable qualification.

Interventions

There are a number of interventions that staff are trained in, including Emotional Coaching, Lego Therapy and learners can seek support from Mental Health First Aiders who can be made available. Learners do have access to a number of staff, including 'safe faces' and quiet working areas.

Marking and Feedback Policy

Marking should provide meaningful, accessible and constructive feedback to every learner, focusing on success and improvement needs against lesson objectives and success criteria, 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, success criteria, adaptive teaching support (STEP), quality questioning and meaningful feedback both oral and written.

Marking is most effective when it is:

- Simple
- Appropriate to age and ability
- Helps learners know what they have done well against learning objectives and success criteria.
- Clearly shows how to improve.
- Supports self-assessment.
- Is 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.

To help achieve this aim, the marking policy will be applied consistently across all the school sites and all subjects.

The objective of the policy is to raise learner achievement and confidence and accelerate rates of progress.

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 success criteria, 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 learning and understanding.
- teachers use assessment to check on how well their teaching is achieving the learning objectives and adapt their teaching and support 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.

Writing, Speaking & Listening & Reading

Writing – we encourage:

- Correct grammar
- Correct punctuation

- Planning of written work
- Correct sentence structures
- 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
- Reading aloud
- Reading independently
- Being read to by staff
- Strategies to deal with difficult words
- Making sense of whole texts
- Summarising texts in their own words
- Developing opinions of texts
- Extending vocabulary

Marking Guidance

How will we evidence the marking?

Work is marked using the **Marking Codes** sheet provided. Each learner will have access to the marking codes through classroom displays/handouts.

We will mark positive achievements and areas for development in **green** ink. Yellow and green highlighters will also be used.

How will we show improvement of learners' work?

Learners will be given the opportunity to correct any mistakes or improve work, that have been highlighted by the teacher/tutor, using a "Purple Pen of Progress"

- Evidence over time throughout learners' exercise books or folders
- Completion of targeted work/task setting during lessons or interventions

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 is given to ensure all learners achieve their full potential. Assessment will be in different forms:

- Verbal and written daily feedback through exercise books or folders
- Live marking - teachers' movement around the classroom to routinely, systematically check learners' understanding of work in relation to the lesson objective and success criteria, and the opportunities for 'in the moment' feedback that this provides. The teacher should circulate around the room as learners are working to:
 - provide verbal feedback or make notes to correct misconceptions and/or guide learners on next steps.
 - check that the right level of STEP support is in place for each learner

- check that all tasks are completed.
- check that the quality of work is of the required standard.

Additional strategies we will utilise where appropriate:

- Self-assessment to encourage active learner involvement in assessing own strengths and steps needed to achieve lesson objectives, success criteria and progress.
- 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.
- Tailored intervention to bridge the gap.

Marking and Feedback Codes

Mark Scheme

Marking Symbol	Explanation
Green highlighter	Positive feedback of good work
Yellow highlighter	Incorrect information
Yellow highlighter	Incorrect spelling
X	Incorrect answer
^	Omission – give more detail
√	Correct answer
√√	Correction or improvement from verbal feedback
//	New paragraph

Feedback Scheme

The use of WWW, EBI acronyms etc. commonly used in schools require learners to engage in multi-step processing streams to interpret and understand. This can be confusing for learners who have processing difficulties, are literal thinkers or for whom literacy is still a barrier to learning. EBI can also be interpreted as “never good enough” by some learners who have previously had negative educational experiences. Colour coding (yellow or green highlighting) will therefore be used as a visual prompt which requires minimal processing to understand.

We will further give personalised written feedback to learners specific to the piece of work assessed through:

- **Green highlighter** – What went well... detailing positive feedback on the work completed.
- **Yellow highlighter** – Even better if ... detailing developmental feedback so learners are clear on how they can improve.
- **Extend and challenge** – work or tasks that enable learners to develop or experience work at a more advanced level, building resilience and confidence.
- **Subject specific marking codes** – In KS4 as per exam boards' marking criteria.