



Curriculum Policy

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At Coombswood School, we pride ourselves on providing education that is engaging and innovative. Our curriculum is designed to meet the SEMH and SEND needs of our learners and instil the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be successful and progress to the next stage of their development, whether that is continuing their education, training, or employment.

We are very aware that our learners have not all had the best educational experience previously and therefore focus on a holistic approach at inspiring our learners to believe in their full potential. We are fully aware that our learners have significant gaps in their skills and conceptual knowledge compared to their age expectations and peers. We build their 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 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. 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 Personal Support plans, 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.

Curriculum Rationale

Intent

Our curriculum is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the diverse needs of our learners, ensuring that they have the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our vision is to provide a trauma informed, inclusive and nurturing environment where all learners can achieve.

The curriculum is structured to:

- Foster self-esteem, wellbeing, self-confidence, increased cultural capital and a curiosity about the world.
- Deliver a high-quality, engaging education tailored to individual needs.
- Equip learners with the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary for future independence and success.
- Support emotional regulation and social development alongside academic achievement.
- Offer flexibility to meet learners where they are, ensuring accessibility for those working at lower-than-expected levels.
- Build links between learning at school and life beyond.
- Build critical thinking skills and encourage self-advocacy.
- Embed strong citizenship values, ethics, and awareness of personal, community and global safety.

Implementation

Our curriculum covers all areas of learning for independent schools, ensuring a comprehensive and well-rounded education. These areas include:

- Linguistic – developing communication skills through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- Mathematical – encouraging numerical fluency, problem-solving, and logical reasoning.
- Scientific – promoting inquiry, investigation, and understanding of the natural world.
- Technological – enhancing digital literacy and practical skills.
- Human and Social – exploring history, geography, and spiritual topics.
- Physical – Building a physiological understanding of fitness and encouraging teamwork, strategy, movement, performance, flexibility, and healthy lifestyles.
- Aesthetic and Creative – Providing opportunities for self-expression through art, crafts, design, poetry/lyric writing, and music recording.

Curriculum Structure

Our curriculum is constantly evolving to suit the needs and interests of our children. A detailed and well-designed long-term plan ensures that skills and knowledge are mapped out clearly and sequentially. This robust vision is then adapted by individual teachers into their midterm plans, customised to suit individual needs of the learners. Teachers edit the schemes to include more challenging content for higher achievers as well as more accessible content for learners who may be working at a lower level. Options for specific SEN adaptations are also incorporated in the planning.

Teachers include an analysis of the diverse needs of their learners in their classes and designs specific strategies or interventions for individual learners. The curriculum is spiraled, allowing learners to revisit and build upon previous learning. Learning questions are used to guide assessment, written as 'Can you.' statements to track progress. Cross curricular links are identified in the SOW and MTPs to encourage project work across several subjects, for example: Science and Food Tech to look at raising agents.

Core subjects are prioritised:

- Maths and English: At least three lessons of each subject per week.
- Science: at least two lessons per week.
- All other subjects: at least one lesson per week.

A three-year rolling KS3 curriculum labelled A, B, and C instead of 7, 8, and 9 to accommodate learners at varying levels. Lessons will include both secondary and primary level objectives and content bridge learning gaps for all abilities and learners in the class.

KS4 is a two-year rolling curriculum labelled KS4 YA and KS4 YB to accommodate learners joining at different times and working at different levels. The KS4 courses follow GCSE/Functional Skills SOW for Maths and English and Entry level or BTEC SOWs for other subjects. Depending on the suitability, subjects may also include both GCSE and Functional Skills level content to cater for all abilities in the class. At KS4, learners will be entered for the highest possible level of qualifications suitable for their abilities based on assessment led decisions and consideration for their own interests and ambitions.

Each subject has:

- Schemes of Work (SOW) including the sequencing of all topics and outcomes.
- Long-Term Plans (LTP) outlining topic coverage and establishing the spiraling/revisiting of the skills and contents.
- Medium-Term Plans (MTP) with detailed lesson plans for each half-term, customised by teachers to meet individual needs to all learners ensuring highest progress.

Learner Stickers

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.

Learning Outcome				S / I
Success Criteria				
Learner voice: I liked it 	I didn't like it 	I loved it 	I seemed to enjoy it 	I didn't seem to enjoy it 

Learning Objective:		Teacher	Learner
Success Criteria			
I understand.		I enjoyed this lesson.	
I needed some help.		This lesson was ok.	
I found this hard.		I didn't like this lesson.	

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.

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, and GCSE qualifications.

Data collection around learners' progress and wellbeing is updated by teachers 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 are put in place.

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

Coombswood 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 (Twinkl) 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

Coombswood 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. The RSE curriculum at Coombswood recognises that today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way.

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 Coombswood 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.

Life Skills and Careers

Coombswood 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 Coombswood 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

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.

Impact

The impact of our curriculum is measured through:

- Regular assessment of academic progress is done using subject knowledge tests, a range of different assessments (e.g. phonics assessment, White rose end of unit assessments etc.) and BRAG ratings for individual topic/lesson taught.
- Improved engagement and emotional wellbeing are tracked through pastoral support and behavior monitoring.
- Increased confidence and self-esteem, reflected in learners' willingness to participate in lessons and school activities.
- Readiness for further education, training, or employment, supported by targeted interventions and life skills development.
- Holistic progress in social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) development, ensuring that learners leave with the resilience and independence necessary for adult life.
- Progress made towards EHCP outcomes –these targets are linked relevant subjects including the Life Skills and Careers curriculum

By implementing a flexible, structured, and nurturing approach to learning, we provide our learners with the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, preparing them for a successful future.