Curriculum Policy

Senior Leader responsible	Miss S Manning
Date approved by LGB	28/01/2026
Next review date	Spring 2027

Contents

1. Curriculum aims 2
Vision 3
Values 3
Ethos 3
2. Legislation and guidance 3
3. Roles and responsibilities 4
4. Organisation and planning 5
5. Inclusion 6
6. Monitoring arrangements 7
7. Links with other policies 7

1. Curriculum aims

Our curriculum aims/intends to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Develop literacy, numeracy and use of information technology by all pupils
- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high ambition for all pupils
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Develop pupil self-esteem, self-worth and self confidence
- Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Provide a broad curriculum prioritising a strong academic core of subjects
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment
- Develop a pupil understanding of Fundamental British Values

These curriculum aims are underpinned by our vision, values and ethos:

Vision

We aspire to be the best, or with the best, in everything that we do. By working hard and supporting each other, every member of our community will flourish and achieve great things.

Values

In our school community, we live our lives by these five core values:

COMPASSION	• We are kind. • We support each other. • We treat others as we would wish to be treated.
HARD WORK	• We try to do our best at all times. • We show resilience when things are tough. • We never give up.
RESPECT	• We are polite to others and we show impeccable manners. • We treat our environment with care. • We take pride in our appearance and in our achievements.
INTEGRITY	• We do the right thing, even when no-one is looking. • We are honest and we trust each other. • We are upstanders, not bystanders.
FAIRNESS	• We treat each other equally regardless of difference. • We play by the rules. • We make sure that everyone can benefit from disruption-free learning.

Ethos

Our ethos is 'learning without limits'. We are passionate in our belief that every child can be supported to thrive academically and in wider life beyond the classroom. Everyone is welcome in our highly inclusive school community, regardless of background or needs. Our hardworking, highly-qualified and dedicated staff will do all they can to support every pupil throughout their time with us so that they reach their full potential.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010, and the National Curriculum programmes of study which we have chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related

expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's academy trust governance guide.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Local Governing Board (LGB)

The LGB will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum) to account for its implementation.

The LGB will also make sure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, science, PE and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) religious education, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in line with Statutory and Neatherd High School requirements.
- All courses that the school provides for pupils below the age of 19 and that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, have been approved by the Secretary of State
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment, recording and reporting arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Pupils from year 7 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

3.2 Headteacher

- Will ensure all required elements of the curriculum policy are adhered to
- Will ensure the school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- Will delegate the review and implementation of the curriculum policy to the Assistant Headteacher - Curriculum

3.3 Assistant Headteacher - Curriculum

The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets, in order to make informed decisions

- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including pupils with SEND

3.4 Other staff

Other staff will make sure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy:

All staff

Members of staff are expected to promote and actively seek to secure the curriculum aims and principles and in particular to:

- have the highest expectations of pupils
- employ appropriate teaching and learning methods that are firmly founded on conclusions from educational research
- ensure that, wherever possible, pupils are found means of access to the curriculum and given opportunities to succeed
- deliver programmes of study which build upon pupils' previous learning, providing progression and continuity, and which conform to the requirements of the National Curriculum and, at Key Stage 4, of the examining boards' specifications
- provide work which meets their pupils' needs and aspirations, which offers depth and challenge, and which motivates and inspires them
- involve the learner in the process of learning by discussing work, giving regular feedback (including verbal feedback and whole-class feedback, negotiating targets and encouraging pupils to evaluate their own achievements
- develop pupils' capacity to become independent learners
- encourage, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment
- work in partnership with other staff, parents/carers and the wider community to achieve shared goals
- keep parents/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their children.

Heads of Department

Heads of Department are responsible for effective curriculum provision, including appropriate schemes of work, the necessary resources to support them, and the maintenance of appropriate standards. They are responsible for providing appropriate in-service training for staff to improve the quality of provision in the classroom. They are expected to monitor the quality of teaching in the department, and to take steps to improve weaknesses. They are also expected to monitor pupils' standards of achievement and develop strategies to improve them.

4. Organisation and planning

The curriculum structure can be found in Appendix 1 and is reviewed and updated, as required, annually in line with statutory requirements as well as considering our school context. The curriculum plan can be found on the school website. This plan includes the delivery of Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

The school has a separate policies/strategy statements for:

- Relationships and sex education, and health education
- Careers Education, Information and Guidance (CEIAG)
- Assessment and Feedback

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) forms part of our Personal Development Strategy

These documents can all be accessed on the school website.

Subject curriculum maps, showing a 5 year plan, are reviewed and updated annually, and these can also be found on the school website.

Each department is required to have schemes of work for all of its courses/programmes related, where appropriate, to the National Curriculum and/or examination board requirements. Schemes of work are followed by all departmental staff and delivery is monitored by Heads of Department. Schemes of work set out how the content of the course is structured, so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively, and how the teaching is organised. Schemes of work are supported by assessment strategies and methods for ensuring standardisation of the quality of teaching and learning and meet the requirements of the Assessment Policy. All subject schemes of work must also support the delivery of Relationships Sex and Health Education, SMSC, British Values, and careers guidance (as appropriate).

The school does not prescribe a single method for short-term or long-term planning. It simply expects that such planning take place in sufficient detail to ensure that pupils achieve high standards and can achieve their potential. There is, however, a list of common core expectations. These can be found in **Appendix 4**.

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and they will make sure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our Equality and Diversity Policy, and in our SEND Policy and SEND Information Report. These can be found on our school website.

6. Monitoring arrangements

The Local Governing Board monitors whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through:

- school visits
- meetings with senior staff
- meetings with the school council
- parent surveys

Heads of Department / curriculum leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- work scrutiny
- learning walks
- book scrutiny
- reviews of schemes of work/learning
- subject reviews (internal and Trust-led)

Heads of Department / curriculum leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum). At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Assessment Policy
- SEND Policy and SEND Information Report
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Pupil Premium strategy and review statement
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- Personal Development strategy
- Careers Guidance Policy

Appendix 1 - Curriculum structure

The timetable

The school operates a 50 period fortnight. There are 5 periods per day (3 in the morning, 2 in the afternoon), each of which lasts for one hour. There is a 25-minute form period each day. Each week, one of these form periods is used for an assembly. The school meets and exceeds the government's requirement that schools be open to pupils for a minimum of 32.5 hours per week.

Key Stage 3: Years 7, 8 and 9

Pupils follow a common curriculum comprising:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Design and Technology
- French/Spanish*
- History
- Geography
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Physical Education (PE)
- Religious Studies (RS)
- Computer Science
- Personal social, health and economic education (PSHEE) – Society & Ethics

* Most pupils study French and a short taster course in Spanish in Year 7 and then go on to specialise in one language from Year 8 onwards.

Time allocations per subject are shown on the curriculum plan. This is updated annually and can be found on the school website.

Key Stage 4: Years 10 and 11

At Key Stage 4, pupils take courses from a common core and three further option choices. They also follow a course in Society and Ethics, which includes Relationships Sex and Health Education, PSHE, Citizenship, drugs education, careers education and RE. The common core comprises:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science (either the double award Combined Science or the triple award Separate Sciences in biology, chemistry and physics)
- Physical Education (PE)
- Society and Ethics

- Pupils will take either history or geography as their "humanities" option. On rare occasions pupils *may* be exempted from this requirement following discussion and agreement between the SENDCO, the Assistant Headteacher, pupils and their parents.
- The majority of pupils will take a GCSE course in a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish). The study of a foreign language forms an important part of children's education, providing them with much sought-after communication skills and cultural capital, and preparing them for life as global citizens in the 21st Century. Pupils who begin a GCSE course in a Modern Foreign Language will be required to complete this course and the GCSE examinations associated with it.

  Pupils who have had a reduced lesson allocation (i.e. only two lessons per fortnight) for Modern Foreign Languages at Key Stage 3 will not be required to take a GCSE in the subject, although they will still be entitled to do so if they wish. These pupils have had additional support in core subjects throughout Years 7 & 8 and this will continue into Years 9, 10 & 11 with extra English, maths and science lessons taking the place of GCSE French/Spanish lessons.

  The only exceptions to this policy will be in those extremely rare cases where the school decides that studying a foreign language at GCSE level would not be in the child's best interests due to a clearly defined learning need. Any such cases should be discussed with the SENDCO and the Assistant Headteacher and there will be clear documentary evidence available to support any decision to withdraw a pupil from the study of a foreign language at GCSE level. **The school's decision on this matter will be final.**

These criteria are reviewed annually in order to balance the needs of each cohort with the government's expectations.

All pupils then make two further choices.

Their choices are from a range of subject areas including humanities, technology, social sciences and the arts. The options offer changes from year to year depending on staff expertise, pupil choice and changing government priorities (e.g., relating to qualifications reform).

Pupils choose their Key Stage 4 options in February/March of Year 9. They receive a great deal of support during this process including

- an Options Information Evening early in the Spring Term
- form tutor mentoring
- the opportunity for a careers appointment with our CEIAG adviser.

Most courses lead to GCSE examinations. The majority of pupils therefore can achieve eight to ten GCSEs. Alternative provision is made for the small number of pupils who are not able to manage this study load.

Pupils in the school's Specialist Resource Base (SRB) for Autism *may* follow a bespoke curriculum, although most pupils access mainstream lessons for the vast majority of their learning time and follow Key Stage 4 courses and qualifications. Advice on the most appropriate curriculum for each pupil is sought from a range of professionals including the SRB lead teacher, the SRB specialist support partner, Educational Psychologists and EHCP Coordinators.

Appendix 2 – Curriculum matters

Setting

In Years 7, 8 and 9, teaching groups are set by ability for maths and computer science (which are linked on the timetable). At the beginning of Year 7, and for all mid-year transfers from other schools, prior attainment data and teacher assessment data is used to determine the most appropriate set.

Setting in science begins in Year 8.

Heads of Department/Assistant Heads of Department typically meet each year in January/February and June/July to review setting.

All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups. To take account of the range of ability in any class, all staff have a responsibility when planning work to meet the needs of all pupils. This will involve, at different times, scaffolding tasks, providing different resources, developing extension work, setting individual goals, giving different levels of support, and offering a variety of ways to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

In Years 10 and 11, option group classes are typically of mixed ability (with the exception of PE theory lessons). Maths and science continue to be set by ability at Key Stage 4 with English being mixed ability apart from a set for higher ability pupils in Year 11.

A set change protocol is in place (Appendix 3) that must be used.

Class sizes

Typically in Years 7-9, the maximum teaching group size is 32 pupils. In some subjects, for example where there are health and safety issues to consider (as in design and technology), smaller groups of about twenty to twenty-four are created. Similarly in PE, where there is a need for some single sex groups, smaller groups may be formed. Wherever setting exists, the norm is to create smaller groups for pupils with additional needs, so that more individual attention can be provided.

In Years 10 and 11, groups in core subjects will not usually exceed 32 pupils. Most other subjects are options, and group sizes vary, usually from around fifteen to thirty.

Appendix 3 – Set change Protocol

General principles of set changes:

- In the first instance, most pupils' needs (whether through support or additional challenge) can, and should, be met through quality-first teaching and differentiation within their current set. Nevertheless, setting should be reconsidered on a regular basis – at least twice a year. **February half-term** and **late-summer** are the usual times for whole-cohort setting review.

- Set change decisions must be based on rigorous and holistic evidence of need. A range of valid assessment data, data suggesting potential ability (e.g. CAT scores) and, of course, colleagues' professional judgement should all contribute to decision making. **Set changes must never be made on the basis of results from one test / exam alone.** There needs to be clear evidence of the data trail used to support decisions of set move -this may be requested to be viewed before decisions authorised by Assistant Headteacher i/c curriculum.

- Pupils' wider needs should also be considered and this will mean that colleagues such as the SENDCO, the Head of SRB and the EAL Co-Ordinator will need to have a say in this decision making for pupils in these pupil groups.

- Pupils with EAL status should be placed in the right set for their cognitive abilities, irrespective of language acquisition to date. Early-stage acquisition of English should be dealt with through EAL interventions, not by placing pupils in a lower-ability set.

- Set changes should **never come as a surprise** to a pupil or to parents. Effective and timely communication will ensure we do not make controversial decisions which affect our positive relationship with parents and pupils. For example - evidence of contact with parents/pupil assessments/pupil reports/conversations at parents evening would be expected expressing concerns over progress where are set move down is being made.

- Some subjects do not set on ability but it is possible that changes may be needed for other reasons in all subject areas. Clear communication is needed with pupils and parents regarding changes being made – for example if it is felt a pupil would benefit from working with a different group/teacher it must have been discussed with the pupil and parents fully aware of the rationale. Changes will always be made in the best interests of all involved – this can be the pupil, the teacher, the other pupils in the group. Prior to these changes there will be clear evidence of support, where appropriate.

- It is possible for a pupil to have a set change due to a breakdown in the working relationship between teacher and pupil or due to pupil behaviour. The AHT Curric will only authorise these following a conversation regarding the rationale and intended benefits of this change.

What needs to happen	Who
Pupils should know how they are performing in their current set. This will happen through assessment written feedback, verbal feedback, report data , progress discussions and conversations with parents where teachers have concerns about progress.	Class teacher
Decisions concerning moving a pupil from one band to another (e.g. East to West) for pastoral reasons	Student Development Team and then approved by Assistant Head (Curric)
Set change meetings may be necessary where subjects are paired on the timetable.	HoD/AHoD, Assistant Head (Curric)
Proposed set changes to be discussed with SENDCo, Head of SRB, Student Development Team and EAL Co-ordinator (as relevant).	HoD/AHoD
Data staff to confirm all set changes with the Assistant Head (Curriculum)	Data Staff
Pupils informed of the imminent set change and date that it will happen.	Class teacher of lead subject
Phone call/email home to inform parents of decision.	Class teacher of lead subject/SDT staff/HoD/AHoD
New timetable produced and passed to pupil via form tutor	Data staff and form tutor
Confirmation letter: HoD will sign set change letter which will then be sent to parents	Data team

Appendix 4 – Common core requirements for Schemes of Work

There is no set planning format for Schemes of Work at Neatherd. Subjects work in different ways and should not be forced into a one-size-fits-all approach.

We do, however, have clear expectations in terms of consistency of content. Therefore, whichever format is used, it is required that Schemes of Work will contain the following twelve points as a minimum:

1	Length / number of lessons / specific date range (as appropriate)
2	Unit objectives
3	Rationale and context for the unit. • What prior learning does it build on? • What future learning does it underpin? Why is it worth teaching this content?
4	Links with other subjects' Schemes of Work. • How does certain core knowledge in one subject underpin another?
5	Learning objectives by lesson
6	Specific core knowledge to be taught (either for the unit, by lesson or by signposting to the core knowledge organisers)
7	Development of **disciplinary** (not generic) skills in the unit. • How, for example, is literacy or numeracy developed in a **subject-appropriate** way? This includes **Explicit Vocabulary Instruction.**
8	Approach to teaching – either for the unit or by lesson. To include: • rationale for choice of pedagogy • best approaches to teaching the content • common pitfalls and misconceptions, and how these can be pre-empted • Independent Learning Tasks identified (including extended writing tasks)
9	Key resources (or signposting to where these can be found) including **Do Now Tasks** and **Explicit Vocabulary Instruction slides/sheets**
10	Homework
11	Assessment: when, what and how?
12	Exemplar work (to make desired outcomes explicit for staff and pupils) (desirable)