

# School Curriculum Policy

This policy outlines St Piers School's approach to the school curriculum for all the children and young people we teach. We focus on developing skills and understanding across four key areas of the SEND Code of Practice:

- My Communication and Interaction (Communication and Interaction, English/Literacy)
- My Creativity, My World and Community, and My Maths (Cognition and learning)
- My Personal Development and Wellbeing (Social, emotional and mental health)
- My Physical Development (Sensory and/or physical)

Our approach is responsive to individual strengths and interests, creating engaging and creative learning experiences through a rolling programme of themes, contexts, and lessons. Literacy, maths, and some curriculum areas are often taught discretely, but always with the student's needs at the centre. The EYFS, National Curriculum and Post-16 vocational accreditation guide our curriculum decisions.

## INTENT

Our curriculum enables every student to achieve their full potential by developing independence, communication, cognition, physical and sensory skills, and emotional wellbeing. We provide meaningful, real life learning experiences that build confidence, resilience, and curiosity.

We aim to create motivated, engaged learners who explore, problem solve, and make connections through play based, active, and experiential opportunities. Students are supported to sustain good physical, mental, and emotional health so they can participate as fully as possible in their communities.

We teach core literacy, numeracy, functional skills, and ICT to support lifelong learning and safe online participation. We encourage creativity, scientific curiosity, teamwork, and an understanding of the wider world, including cultural heritage, diversity, citizenship, and moral decision-making.

Students learn how to stay safe, who to talk to if they feel unsafe, and how to develop positive relationships. We promote equality, respect, student voice, and active involvement in the school community.

Through strong collaboration with parents, carers, external agencies, and wider multidisciplinary teams, we ensure a cohesive and personalised approach. Our curriculum prepares students with essential life skills, high aspirations, and the confidence to contribute to their local and wider communities during and beyond their time at St Piers School.

## IMPLEMENTATION

St Piers has a three-tiered curriculum: Learning for Life, Skills for Life and Specialist Skills (and a specialist skills + pathway for a small percentage of our students). These are called our learner journeys, and they run across all phases from primary (lower school), secondary (middle school) and 16-19 (upper school).

Our infant school (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) students follow a curriculum based around guidance from Development Matters (Nationally recognised guidance for early years) that supports our students well at this age and stage. We have adapted this with our three-year cycle infant curriculum maps that aim to support our youngest students to develop a curious engagement with their learning through play and that is led by students' outcomes before being placed onto a learner journey for their Y3 lower school phase. [Development Matters - Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage](#)

In St Piers School we have chosen to organise the students into 4 main phases:



We have three main learner (student) journeys, and an extension journey called Specialist Skills + for some pupils who are exceeding expectation during their KS4 phase.

Our students are placed within one of these from Year 3, the start of the lower school. Our infant phase supports extended early years learning based on the Development Matters Guidance giving a strong foundation for learning.

Phase Leaders and teachers hold curriculum responsibilities for overseeing specific subjects across the school and complete reviews of their subjects as a continuous process annually.

St Piers has an overarching 'curriculum map' overview for the Infant Phase, the Lower and Middle school, and our post-16 provision. This is updated annually considering the small cohort of students within the school and the class groupings that inevitably need regular organisation and discussion due to age/stage and SEND profile, with the curriculum tailored for their needs whilst maintaining high expectations and ambition for learning.

This agreed long-term plan for each phase which is then underpinned with more detailed medium-term planning/termly planning. We provide a series of themes for our Learning for Life students as we know that they learn best via an immersive experience providing opportunity for lots of exploratory investigative learning enhancing communication and interaction, social skills, cognition and learning. Our learning for life teachers continue to use Development Matters as guidance for planning within lower and middle school. In our upper phase we have found that Quest for Learning guidance has given additional support for teachers to focus in on micro-steps of achievement for our students with PMLD.

This planning allows our team of staff to ensure that groups are differentiated for through a wide range of resources and approaches and that each student's ability is catered for and assessment opportunities and personalised to be meaningful and relevant. Students' individual needs are addressed through target setting related to their EHCP and next steps academically to ensure that they reach their full potential.

The post-16 students follow a broader curriculum that is linked into their work across each year to promote their life skills, independence, and preparation for adulthood.

Residential students access our waking day curriculum through collaborative working with school and residential staff to ensure effective teaching and learning and pupil progress. Key objectives are shared and worked on in relation to the students EHCP targets, life skills and independence. Students' progress is monitored through a Multidisciplinary approach.

Our learner journey attainments reflect student cognition and learning:

Learning for life: engagement model (typically PMLD, SLD profile)

Skills for life: students working towards or within NC year 1 and 2 outcomes.

Specialist skills: students working towards or within NC year 3 and 4 outcomes.

Specialist skills +: students who have been identified in their Y7 or 8 to work towards Level 1, 2 and/or GCSE pathway for specific subjects PE, English or Maths.

**Learning for Life – learner journey**



Non-subject specific curricular models focussing on communication, independence, functional skills and social skills. Students with complex physical, medical and sensory needs follow this pathway. High levels of support and small groups are key to achievement. Some students will be working within the top of this range and will access the start of some core subject specific learning.

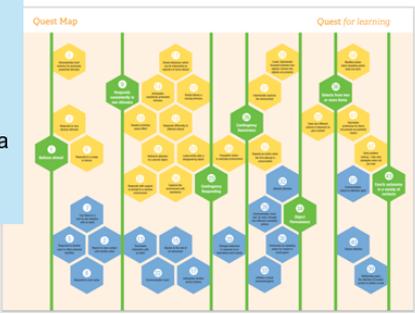
We recognise that within our learning for life pathway some of our students are working at the very earliest stages of engagement, cognition and communication. We have adopted the QUEST for learning guidance and assessment materials for profound and multiple learning difficulties students.

Our personalised planning system reflects this learner journey with continuous medium-term plans based around staff observations of student engagement. Students benefit from repeated practice with key skills within a broad, ambitious curriculum plan with a learning environment adapted to the same key skills being learnt and practiced through a wide range of themes/topics and adventures.

<https://www.pmlink.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Quest-for-learning-Guidance-amp-Assessment-Materials-Profound-amp-Multiple-Learning-Difficulties.pdf>

**Attainment:**  
students within this learner journey are learning at pre-key stage levels. The Engagement Model, QUEST steps and switch skills progress forms levels of support towards non-accredited awards such as ASDAN Lifeskills.





**Skills for Life– learner journey**



A semi-formal curriculum model focussing on learning essential skills for life whilst following a broad and varied programme of learning including topic-based subject specific learning to support skills and knowledge mastery practiced in a variety of ways. Students with significant intellectual or cognitive impairments and communication and perception difficulties follow this pathway. High levels of support and small groups are key to achievement.

**Attainment:**  
students within this learner journey are working towards end of Year 2 National Curriculum outcomes, towards entry level 1 or 2 post-16..

My Communication and Interaction	Cognition and Learning	My World and Community	My Creativity	My Physical Development	My Personal Development and Wellbeing
Phonics Literacy Communication (low-tech, high-tech) Social Skills, interaction and engagement	My Maths Science, OWLS (outdoor woodland learning) Computing ICT	RE Humanities through topics Careers Development Educational Visits Community Involvement	Music Drama Art, Design and Technology	PE Swimming Sensory processing Emotional Regulation	Personal, social development RSE

## Specialist Skills- learner journey

A subject-specific curriculum model in which students follow a timetable based within the National Curriculum, towards functional skills, and with a focus on personalisation and the aspirations of the students as they progress through school, and post-16.

Students join this journey at Y7 if they are meeting expectation and would manage the subject specific approach.

### Attainment:

students within this learner journey are working towards end of Year 4 National Curriculum outcomes, towards entry level 3 post-16.

My Communication and Interaction	Cognition and Learning	My World and Community	My Creativity	My Physical Development	My Personal Development and Wellbeing
Literacy English Phonics Communication Skills Social Skills	My Maths- mathematics ICT Computing Science Problem solving	RE History Geography Careers and work experience Educational Visits Community involvement	Music Drama Art Design and Technology	PE Swimming Sensory processing Emotional regulation	Personal and social development Relationships, sexual health and emotional wellbeing Transition Working with others

## Specialist Skills +

An **extended** subject-specific curriculum model to include specific accreditation (such as GCSE maths, English, PE as per 2024-2025) in which students follow a timetable based within the National Curriculum, towards functional skills, and with a focus on personalisation and the aspirations of the students as they progress through school, and post-16.

Students join this journey at Y7 if they are meeting expectation and would manage the subject specific approach.

### Attainment:

students within this extended learner journey are working towards end of Year 6 National Curriculum outcomes in KS3, towards entry level 1 or GCSE accreditation at the end of their KS4, or within 16-19 provision.

My Communication and Interaction	Cognition and Learning	My World and Community	My Creativity	My Physical Development	My Personal Development and Wellbeing
Literacy English Phonics Communication Skills Social Skills	My Maths- mathematics ICT Computing Science Problem solving	RE History Geography Careers and work experience Educational Visits Community involvement	Music Drama Art Design and Technology	PE Swimming Sensory processing Emotional regulation	Personal and social development Relationships, sexual health and emotional wellbeing Transition Working with others

## The Curriculum and Inclusion:

St Piers School curriculum is designed to be accessed by all the young people who attend the school. Our therapy (Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Psychology) teams help us to work together in putting plans in place to support young people where changes need to be made to adapt our curriculum to meet their broad range of needs.

Our lessons aim to be fully inclusive as we plan our learning for each student. Our staff team adapt their delivery and teaching to meet the needs of the children across the broad range of abilities we have. Whilst our groups may have varying abilities, staff will **personalise** (adapt and differentiate) to meet individual needs within each group in a timely manner.

At St Piers School, with the young person at the centre of everything we do, we strongly believe that each student should have the opportunity to reach their full potential no matter what their starting point. We have a high proportion of students with Epilepsy, Autism, severe learning difficulties and complex needs, and we have designed our curriculum to reflect / meet those needs. It is our intent that their education provides them with a love of learning and prepares them for their next steps in their own personal journey.

Each individual child will have a programme designed for them that allows staff to meet his/her needs across the curriculum, ensuring that learning is appropriate, being meaningful and relevant, engaging and fun. Every year an Annual Review is held to review the progress made and to look at any adjustments that are needed. Children in our reception year (EYFS) have one annual review meeting and one follow up review, within their first year.

Each student has a set of annual goals taken from their EHCP which are then broken down into smaller short term achievable goals working towards their long-term targets.

These education goals are delivered and worked on throughout the school day in a range of contexts including the use of specialist education staff and curriculum areas to enable the students to develop, apply and transfer their skills in a functional manner.

To support our students, we know how vital the promotion of communication is for our students. Many of our students have processing difficulties, different styles of learning, and a range of different cognitive profiles, using forms of language that do not always link in the most recognisable ways and with this some behaviours can present challenges. Through our Multidisciplinary model we work together to address the communication, sensory processing and behavioural needs of each student so that they can make progress through their own learner journey.

We use a range of teaching approaches, curriculum choices, extra-curricular choices and nationally recognised schemes to ensure access and engagement for all. Here are a few examples:

AAC: Examples- Visual timetables / now and next, eye-gaze technology (where appropriate), Makaton, Grid 3 (thinksmartbox).		
Software to enhance learning via iPADS, laptops, IWB, Imaginarium and sensory rooms	Trauma informed approaches	Swimming Sensory swimming
Twinkl Phonics programme (Little Wandle from April 2026 onwards)	TACPAC	Interactive Musica Drama specialist lessons Music specialist lessons
White Rose Maths Scheme	White Rose Science	Twinkl Handwriting (Little Wandle from April 2026)
TT Rockstars LEXIA	Rebound therapy	Exploratory and sensory play
ELSA	Extra-curricular clubs such as lego, Makaton choir, book club, football	Positive behaviour support
Physiotherapy Occupational Therapy Speech and Language Therapy	Horse riding (RDA) Therapy Donkeys	Sensory stories
Intensive interaction	Outdoor woodland learning, trikes, bikes, farm access.	Play based learning

Sensory circuits	PE specialist lessons including- rock climbing, golf, boccia, Panathlon events.	Post-16 options including horticulture, hair and beauty, media studies, catering.
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### Impact

We use an assessment platform called iASEND (iTRACK) to evidence and track students' progress in English, Maths and PSD. Additionally in music, science, and EYFS where appropriate. Our frameworks have been developed with iASEND to enhance a bespoke provision for St Piers. This platform allows for both formative and summative attainment monitoring. We can therefore link students learning to key criteria that is relevant to our students and carry out interventions to raise attainment where required. The assessment system supports tracking of depth of learning where learning isn't necessarily linear, informing good practice and narrative conversations with parents/carers/stakeholders about progress.

A key responsibility as educators is to teach our students the skills to develop greater independence across a range of useful functional and practical skills and to develop the knowledge that goes along with this. These must be skills and knowledge, that each student can use now but that is also useful for their lives beyond school and in preparation for adulthood. It must give them the skills they need for their future. As such, it must be delivered based on individual needs and developed as the world we live in changes.

The contexts for learning therefore change in the different phases but the skills need to be worked on at all stages of learning as they are a continuum. All students need to develop deep learning that they can apply across a range of contexts and with different materials for it to be truly functional.

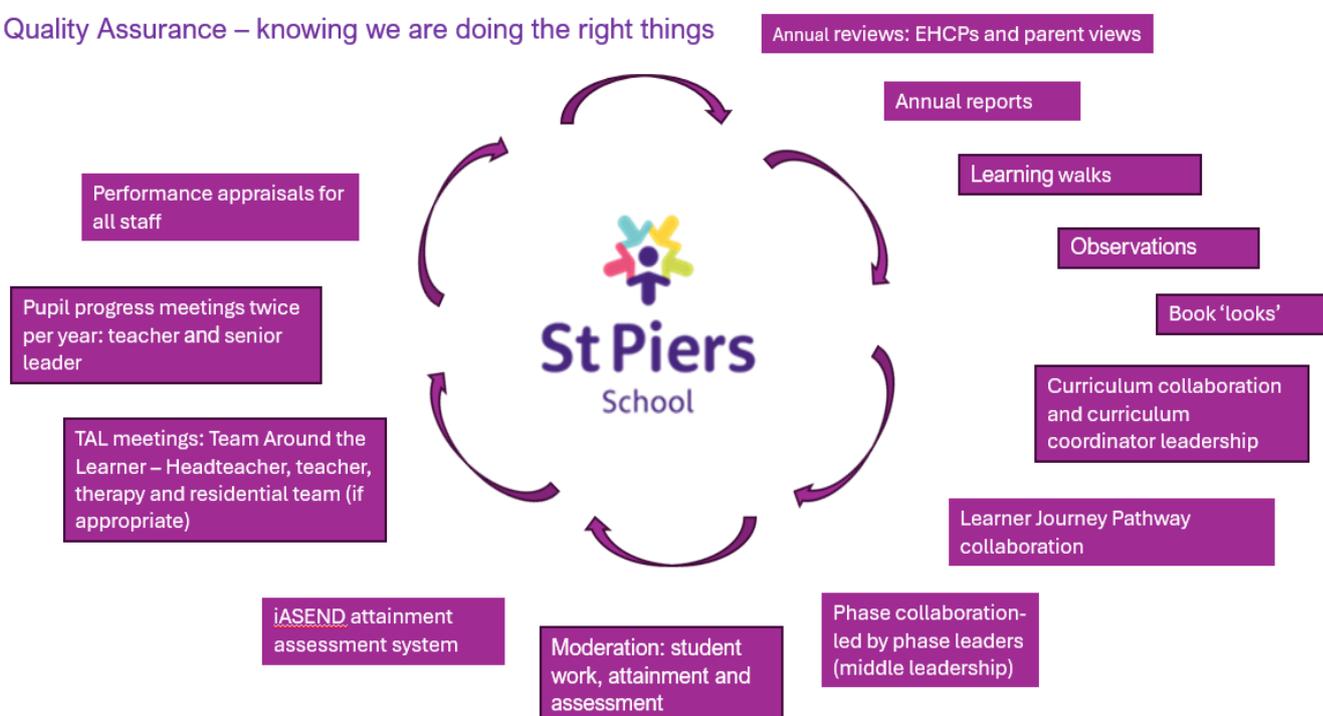
Our personalised curriculum goes far beyond differentiation. It is identification of each individual pupil's needs at their current point in life. The process of assess, plan, teach, assess, review is deeply embedded and evidenced in practise. We actively ask questions and seek out answers for how to best help students learn and take their next steps. This process actively involves the students, their families and our Multidisciplinary team.

We run several accredited and non-accredited courses related to the contextualised learning of English, Maths, PE and My Creativity. These are listed in the table below.

Exam board	Key Stage	Course	Level
OCR	KS4	Life and Living Skills	Entry level 3 to Level 1
Edexcel (current students 24-26)	KS4	Functional Skills English and Maths	Entry L3 to Level 2
	KS5	Functional skills English and Maths	Entry L3 to Level 2
	KS4*	English, Maths, PE	GCSE*
NCFE (new students 2026 >)	KS4	Functional Skills English and Maths	Entry L3 to Level 2
	KS5	Functional Skills English and Maths	Entry L3 to Level 2
	KS5	Occupational Studies for the Workplace	Entry L3 to Level 2
ASDAN	KS5	Life Skills Challenge	Working Towards Entry L 2
		Personal Social Development	Entry Level 1- Level 2
		Employability	EI2- Level 2

LASER LEAP (Learning, Employability, Achievement, Progression)	KS5	Construction at Crawley College	Entry level 3
TRINITY	KS5	Arts Award	Bronze, Silver, Gold
Youth Sports Trust	KS4 and 5	PE base	Non-accredited award
Duke of Edinburgh	KS4 and 5	Community, personal skills and social skills	Non-accredited award: bronze, silver
*A small % of specialist skills students may be identified in their Year 7/8 to be able to work towards a GCSE in PE, English and maths. This will be in discussion with parents/carers from Year 8.			

Quality Assurance – knowing we are doing the right things



This policy is agreed by the Executive Principal and will be implemented by the school.

Signed:

Jeremy Law  
Executive Principal

Date: 25 April 2025

Date of next review:  
3rd September 2027

## Version table

**Creation: -**

**Ginnie Batten-Evatt (Headteacher), Clare Lewis (Deputy Headteacher)**

**Approved by: -**

<u>Version No.</u>	<u>Date of changes</u>	<u>Reason for change</u>	<u>Changes made by</u>
1	7/12/21	N/A	
2	28/01/22	Additional content and restructure of document	Ginnie Batten-Evatt (Headteacher)
3	02/12/23	Amendments to some wording and content	Ginnie Batten-Evatt (Headteacher)
4	05/01/26	Updated for accreditation, phonics programme, learner journey information and assessment system.	Clare Lewis (Deputy Headteacher)
5	2.3.26	Branded colours for information diagrams, paragraphing previous bullet pointed information so more succinct.	Clare Lewis (Deputy Headteacher)