

West Kirby School



Curriculum & Teaching and Achievement Policy

Owner	D Flanagan	Updated May 2026
Board approved		
Date of use	September 2026	

Context

West Kirby School and College is a non-maintained Special School located in West Kirby, Wirral, providing education for pupils aged 5 to 19 across Primary, Secondary and Post-16 phases. West Kirby School and College has achieved Beacon Status Autism Accreditation from the National Autistic Society — the highest level available — reflecting our deep commitment to high-quality, specialist provision.

We serve pupils with a range of complex Special Educational Needs, including Autism, Social Communication difficulties, ADHD and Attachment difficulties. The majority of pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), which sets out their individual long-term outcomes and guides the support they receive.

Given the complex and diverse needs of our pupils, West Kirby School and College recognises its responsibility to deliver an education that goes beyond academic learning. The curriculum is designed to promote life skills, personal development, and Social, Health, Citizenship and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education — ensuring each pupil is supported to flourish and reach their full potential.

Overall responsibility for the implementation, development and monitoring of Curriculum and Teaching across all Key Stages lies with the Headteacher, supported by the Deputy Headteacher and the Education Team Leaders (ETLs).

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1: Curriculum Intent and implementation

Intent:

At West Kirby School our intent is to provide a curriculum that changes pupils' lives; through offering a broad, ambitious and adaptive curriculum that follows the National Curriculum. We believe that a pupil's diagnosis or starting point in life should not be a limiting factor to their future.

Our curriculum from Key Stages 2- Key Stage 5 is designed to meet the needs and aspirations of our pupils and provide them with the necessary skills to live independent and fulfilling lives. At West Kirby School our intent is to provide a curriculum that supports our pupils' personal and academic development.

Our curriculum aims are:

- **An Ambitious, Broad and Aspirational Curriculum for All** that aims to ensure all pupils achieve 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent by the end of year 11.
- **A Personalised and Adaptive Approach to Learning** pedagogy and practice are adapted to support personal and academic progress.
- **A Holistic Approach that Supports Wellbeing and Independence** going beyond academic achievement to develop life skills, social skills and cultural awareness.
- **Supporting the Development of the Whole child** pupils are supported to develop the personal, social and emotional skills needed to navigate adult life.

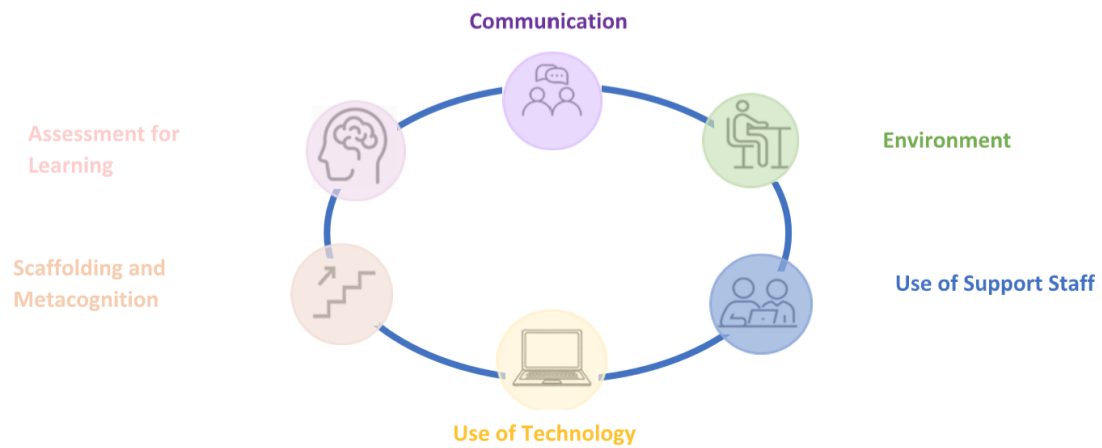
Implementation

West Kirby School and College offers an ambitious, broad and adaptive curriculum, with the aspirations and interests of the pupil at the centre. We aim for all pupils to access the National Curriculum with a range of qualification opportunities, to cater for pupils' diverse needs and abilities, including:

- Entry Level Certificates
- Functional Skills
- BTEC
- Cambridge Nationals & Technicals
- GCSEs
- A Levels

Our approach

Our pupils have a range of needs and varying academic starting points, we support pupils to make personal and academic progress through adapting our pedagogy and practice. The curriculum is implemented using our own Teaching and Learning approach, the ***“Adaptive Teaching Toolkit”*** summarised below.



Subject leaders, in conjunction with the Deputy Head Teacher (C&T/A), have a responsibility for the implementation, development and monitoring of their particular subject area across the key stages, thus ensuring continuity and progression throughout the whole school.

Primary Curriculum



West Kirby School and College's Primary curriculum is designed to support our youngest learners in developing the learning, social and emotional skills they need to thrive in school and beyond. The Primary department comprises three classes —

- Pathfinders
- Adventurers
- Navigators

Each representing a stage in the pupils' Primary journey. Each class follows its own bespoke curriculum built around learning pathways that reflect the school's core aims and values, supported by a highly experienced and specialist team. Central to all classes is a focus on building pupils' social communication and self-regulation skills, recognising these as essential foundations for meaningful learning. Classrooms are well-equipped for learning, play and life skills, including sensory rooms, a Lego therapy area, phonics hub, reading spaces, intervention rooms and outdoor provision.

Core Curriculum

All classes follow the 2014 National Curriculum, with a focus on daily phonics, reading, writing and maths to build the skills pupils need for later stages of education.

- **English** is taught daily using Literacy Counts to support pupils reading and writing skills alongside a dedicated Primary library
- **Phonics** we use Read to Write inc daily for all pupils needing support with phonics
- **Maths** is taught daily using the White Rose scheme to support development of pupils numeracy skills
- **Learning Means the World** Foundation subjects are delivered through "Learning Means the World" (LMTW) curriculum, a thematic curriculum built on four core themes: Communication, Culture, Conflict and Conservation. These themes develop pupils' language and collaborative skills, cultural awareness and tolerance, understanding of responsible behaviour, and appreciation of environmental issues at local, national and global levels.
- **Wellbeing, Enrichment and Specialist Provision** Pupil wellbeing is supported through the myHappyMind programme, building resilience, self-esteem and confidence across five modules. Every Friday afternoon, pupils take part in Wellbeing and Life Skills Adventures on

and off site, using the local park, beach, marine lake and Wirral Way to develop community connections.

Primary pupils also benefit from specialist subject staff delivering food technology, music, Mandarin Chinese and PE, and weekly holistic learning sessions provide wider opportunities to develop cultural capital and social communication through community visits and trips. Swimming lessons are offered termly to ensure pupils are at a safe standard by the end of Ks2.

Secondary Curriculum

Key Stage 3

The KS3 curriculum follows the National Curriculum and is taught by specialist subject staff across a broad range of subjects, including English, Maths, Science, Computing, History, Geography, Design and Food Technology, Art, Music, Drama, German, Mandarin Chinese, PE, PSHE and Animal Care. All schemes of work are adapted to ensure pupils can access the curriculum, with EHCP targets and recommendations embedded into planning and delivery.

Where pupils have more complex needs, bespoke timetables are developed in collaboration with the school's clinical team. Additional intervention sessions support pupils who require extra help, ranging from phonics (Step Up) and reading comprehension programmes and numeracy interventions. All KS3 pupils take part in daily reading sessions and have timetabled library lessons to develop literacy skills and a love of reading.

Key Stage 4

All pupils study a core curriculum of English, Mathematics, Science, PSHE and Citizenship, Physical Education and Religious Studies. Students then select four options from a wide range of additional subjects, with qualifications available across academic, vocational and skills-related pathways.

Options are discussed with pupils and families through a dedicated options evening in Year 9, ensuring choices reflect each pupils' aspirations, strengths and intended pathway. The aim is that all pupils leave KS4 ready to progress to academic, vocational or training routes linked to their future goals.

List of options offered is shown below:

Option Group	Subject	Staff
1	Animal Care - SEG Level 1 Award	Miss Ellis
	Art and Design - GCSE/Arts Award	Mrs Davies
	Classical Civilisation - GCSE	Mr Hulme
	Digital Information Technology - GCSE	Mr Macdonald
	Health and Social Care - BTEC	Mrs Brown
2	Creative iMedia - Cambridge National Level 1/Level 2	Mr Saunders
	Drama - Arts Award	Ms Millington
	History - GCSE	Mr Dowds
	Horticulture - ASDAN Short Course	Mr Jones/Ms Harris
	Sport - BTEC	Mr Musgrave
3	English Literature - GCSE	Ms Spence
	Geography - GCSE	Mr Cox
	Music - GCSE/Arts Award	Mrs Dooley
	Three Dimensional Design - GCSE/NCFE	Mr Saunders
4	Duke of Edinburgh Award	Mrs Draycott
	Food Technology - BTEC	Ms Meegan
	German - FCSE/GCSE	Mrs Brown
	Graphics - GCSE	Mr Macdonald

Key Stage 5 — Post 16

Post 16 provision offers a continuation of inclusive education for students aged 16 to 19, with programmes of study designed around academic learning, Preparation for Adulthood and Personal Development and Wellbeing. All timetables are adapted to meet individual needs.

Students continue to study English and Maths at the appropriate level where required, alongside two option subjects which may be resits or new qualifications up to A Level standard. Preparation for Adulthood is delivered through a City and Guilds qualification, covering areas including accessing the local community, healthy eating, keeping fit, shopping and understanding relationships. Work experience placements, college taster visits and travel training further support transition into adulthood and the wider world.

Personal development

All pupils from Key Stages 2-5 have weekly PSHE and Preparation For Adulthood lessons. These lessons are designed to prepare pupils to live safe, independent and fulfilling lives in modern Britain. They are designed to enable pupils to make informed and safe decisions. Statutory guidelines around PSHE/RSHE are followed with pupils being taught the skills and knowledge appropriate to their age and stage of development. Lesson planning, delivery and expectations are in line with all other subject areas of the school, with us viewing Personal Development as a particularly vital element of our curriculum due to our pupils' needs and vulnerabilities.

Assemblies, form time and special curriculum events are used to give pupils a broader range of experiences and support the teaching and understanding of Protected Characteristics and British Values as defined by The Equality Act 2010. External agencies are used to provide appropriate and expert knowledge for certain areas of our PSHE curriculum.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from some aspects of sex education within the Personal Development curriculum up until three terms before a child's 16th birthday. Full schemes of work and examples of the content covered can be requested from school at any point.

2: Impact and assessment/monitoring

Achievement at West Kirby School is not just evidenced through academic progress.

The impact of the curriculum at West Kirby School is evidenced in the work pupils produce and their progression over time, alongside pupils' progress towards their EHCP targets. All of our pupils have diverse and unique needs, meaning achievement can look/happen at very different rates for each pupil. Our systems are designed to ensure pupils achieve the best they can and staff are able to implement the most suitable adaptations needed.

Assessment methods and materials

Formal and informal strategies are used to track pupils' progress. These include:

- Adapted schemes of work for all subject areas
- Low stakes quizzes in class
- Questioning
- Marking and feedback of pupils work
- Mock exams for older pupils

A range of programs are used to provide information on pupils abilities and progress, including:

- CAT4 for pupils from Key Stage 3 and above
- Progress through English and Maths (PTE/PTM) completed up to year 10
- DRA to provide reading ages

Reporting

Progress reports are sent in the autumn and summer term. All years have parents/carers evenings alongside annual reviews to discuss pupils' progress. Form/class teams are also able to provide weekly updates on pupil progress in all areas. SLT offers further meetings/communication with parents/carers where required.

Moderation

As a school we work with a number of local schools and organisations to complete moderation sessions around pupils' progress as well as termly moderation sessions as a staff body to ensure that pupils' learning is at the centre of what we do and any issues identified swiftly.

Interventions

We understand that there may be times where pupils may need additional support. To support pupils we can put in place a range of interventions to address gaps in learning and offer booster/strengthening sessions for pupils who are identified as potentially benefiting from additional input. Interventions from our Clinical and PCT teams are also available for pupils needing these.

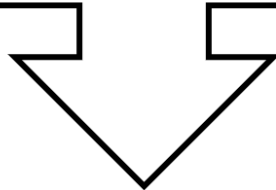
List of interventions:

- Specific clinical led interventions (led by SLT and clinical team)
- Literacy interventions (Phonics, comprehension and fluency)
- Subject specific interventions focused on gaps in knowledge
- Specialist interventions focusing on supporting pupils with specific learning/cognitive conditions

QoE Interventions

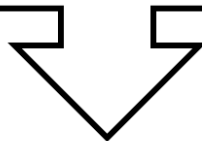
Interventions

- Overseen by DHT QoE with focus on specific interventions based on data and specific gaps in knowledge
- Data reviewed by subject leads
- Half termly meetings with subject leads and ETLs to allocate slots and review progress
- Review of why pupils need it, quality first teaching must come first
- DHT QoE to manage and only person to be able to allocate slots
- Subject leads to set out what gaps are needed to be addressed
- Weekly overview of sessions to be on SIMS



Learning mentors

- Maths/English weekly specific sessions with trackers and monitored by subject leads and DHT QoE
- Focus on specific areas of need tied to curriculum gaps
- Sessions planned and delivered based on subject SOW
- Delivered to targeted pupils



Booster sessions

- Sessions targeted at identified KS4 pupils based on data
- Specific focus on exam preparation and practice
- Targeted at high ability pupils

Feedback

The effective use of feedback techniques can have a powerful influence on pupils' learning and progression. Feedback is adaptive to pupils needs, with staff using verbal feedback and written feedback where appropriate.

Due to the diverse nature of our pupils' needs and abilities we understand that in depth written feedback is not appropriate for all pupils. Our expectation is that all pupils receive timely feedback that supports them to make progress and addresses any misconceptions or misunderstandings.

Workload

WKET understands that marking and providing feedback is a large contributor to the workload of teachers; therefore, teachers will ensure that their marking and feedback is only done to positively impact the learning. If a teacher is unsure about the effectiveness of their own practices, the Education Team Leaders will help with developing an approach to marking and feedback that is more suited to the teacher.

Quality Assurance

To ensure that pupils are receiving the best possible education quality assurance takes place consistently across the school, overseen by the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (C&T/A). The table below shows the range of activities that take place each term. The focus of each activity is on ensuring that pupils are learning, safe, happy and an ambitious curriculum is being implemented across the school. ETLs take part in all elements of QA and all staff have the opportunity to see each other teach. After each activity next steps and areas of development are shared which are followed up to ensure a continuous cycle of reflection and improvement.

Half Term	Activity	Staff completing moderations
Autumn term	Book Scrutiny x 2	SLT/ ETLs
	Curriculum conversations	SLT/ ETLs
	Learning Walks	SLT/ ETLs/ Subject Leads
	Pupil Progress meetings	SLT/ ETLs/ Subject Leads
	Moderation	All staff
Spring term	Book Scrutiny x 2	SLT/ ETLs
	Curriculum conversations	SLT/ ETLs
	Learning Walks	SLT/ ETLs/ Subject Leads
	Pupil Progress meetings	SLT/ ETLs/ Subject Leads
	Moderation	All staff
Summer term	Book Scrutiny x 2	SLT/ ETLs
	Curriculum conversations	SLT/ ETLs
	Learning Walks	SLT/ ETLs/ Subject Leads
	Pupil Progress meetings	SLT/ ETLs/ Subject Leads
	Moderation	All staff

Homework

We understand that due to our pupils' neurodiversity they struggle to differentiate between home and school and as such homework can be a struggle. We set homework in a variety of forms and offer it weekly on a rotation for each subject. Bespoke homework can be requested and is suggested for certain pupils, alongside the opportunity to complete homework in school time or on site after school.

Revision materials for all pupils sitting exams are provided by school alongside revision clubs and opportunities for parents and carers to undertake revision workshops to help equip them with the skills to support their child at home. Homework is set using the Edulink app.

Primary

Reading books are available to be sent home weekly to support pupils reading, alongside homework booklets that support topic work and development of literacy and numeracy skills.

3: Reading

Reading is a vital skill that will support pupils' learning across the whole curriculum. At West Kirby School, we aim to develop a love of reading to all of our pupils. A range of fiction and non-fiction texts are available to the children in our well stocked library and the notion of everyone as a reader is promoted across the school. Reading for pleasure is at the heart of our reading ethos with 20 minute reading sessions completed on rotations daily (**DEAR**).

Throughout the year, events are planned to promote reading for pleasure in the school community. These events include national and school competitions, activities linked to World Book Day, visits to libraries, author visits to book shops and our own Literacy Festival.

Pupils are tested using the DRA twice a year until the reading age of 12yrs 10 months. Pupils are monitored by the Reading Support team and English team who report to the Deputy Head. Reading interventions are completed by Reading Support, HLTAs and TAs.

Phonics

At West Kirby School and College we use Read Write Inc. Phonics programme. For pupils Year 5 and above who require additional support e.g. children aged 9 and above who have reading ages below 9 or are below national curriculum expectation for Key Stage 2, we use Read Write Inc. Fresh Start. This teaches students to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension; also, how to spell correctly and compose their ideas for writing step-by-step.

Phonic lessons are moderated through observation by the reading phonics lead supported by a Read Write Inc Consultant.

Key Stage 1 and 2

In Key stage 1 and 2 pupils are listened to each day until they develop the skills to become a 'free reader'. Free readers are pupils who are reading above the reading age of 10 years.

Key Stage 3

Pupils in Key Stage 3 continue to have timetabled reading lessons as part of DEAR time and library sessions.

Key Stage 4 and 5

Pupils with a reading age of below 12.10 will continue to have reading interventions through the Fresh Start Phonics program.

4: Staff Development

West Kirby Educational Trust believe firmly in our core mission to “change children’s lives” through providing them with a broad, balanced and ambitious education. Our pupils are each unique, with a host of different needs and backgrounds. Despite a pupils’ starting point, diagnosis or educational background we believe each one has the right to develop the skills needed to live fulfilling and as independent as possible lives.

Our staff curriculum is designed to consistently improve, challenge and grow our staff to provide real impact for our pupils. The staff curriculum is broken down into two main areas;

1. CPD

Staff undertake CPD twice per week. This time is used to provide staff with protected time to complete necessary tasks to support pupils, undertake specialist training related to pupil needs, undertake specialist training related to developing staffs' skills and knowledge and opportunities to work collaboratively. Topics are set out in line with the school's SDP and led by staff or subject experts. Time given over to administration and data tasks support staff wellbeing and gives regular opportunities to work with wider members of the staff team.

External CPD is offered and available to staff wanting/needing further development. The range of external CPD on offer includes:

- NPQ's (from Lead learner to Headteacher providing teaching staff nationally recognised qualifications matched to their career stage and aspirations)
- National College courses (providing all staff with a bank of courses relating to education)
- Apprenticeships (from admin staff to apprenticeship routes into teaching)
- Masters qualifications
- Subject Knowledge courses
- SEND specific courses
- PRICE
- And training at staff's requests

2. Active research

Research is a key element to the development of West Kirby School and provides us with the opportunity to look at best practice in SEND and within the wider field of education. Much educational research is undertaken in/with Neurotypical settings and so is not always easily applicable to the needs of our diverse cohort and much research around SEND is form a clinical focus and not always applicable to an educational setting. Through an active research program at West Kirby School we hope to bridge the gap through this to provide our pupils with the best possible provision.

Our research program is run to allow staff to undertake research into areas they are interested in and which are aligned to the school SDP. Research groups are led by a member of SLT and ETL's (middle leadership team) and are timetabled to meet at least once per half term and one twilight per term. Within these groups are further broken into sub groups to allow in depth research to take place in specific areas under a broader central theme.

Staff decide on specific actions to implement and then spend the next term implementing these into practice, coming together regularly to discuss progress and see what is working and what is not. Through this a cycle of continuous new practice and ideas is brought through school, with all staff being able to share ideas.

The use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) within our organisation.

All staff are responsible for ensuring AI is used safely, ethically, and effectively to support pedagogical, administrative, and operational functions, while rigorously upholding our duties regarding student well-being, data protection, and professional standards. As a specialist provision for children and young people who have complex social and emotional needs, children with SEND and who may be particularly vulnerable; the application of AI requires heightened consideration of individual communication styles, sensory needs, processing differences, and potential vulnerabilities.

This aligns with statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), and the SEND Code of Practice. For the purpose of this policy, AI refers to systems performing tasks typically requiring human intelligence (e.g., Large Language Models (LLMs), chatbots, AI-powered assistive technology, content generators). Primacy of Professional Judgement: AI tools are supplementary aids and must not replace staff expertise, pedagogical understanding, knowledge of individual student needs, or therapeutic relationships. Staff remain responsible for evaluating and adapting any AI-generated output.

Data Protection and Confidentiality: Strict adherence to UK GDPR, DPA 2018, and the Charity's Data Protection Policy is mandatory. Protection of student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and sensitive personal data is a fundamental requirement. Ethical and Responsible Use: AI must be used ethically, transparently, and without bias, promoting equity and inclusion for learners.

Unacceptable Use

The following uses of AI by staff are strictly prohibited:

- Inputting PII or sensitive pupil data into non-approved/public AI tools (Critical Breach).
- Using AI to generate personalised pupil plans (e.g., EHCPs, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Behaviour Support Plans, Risk Assessments). Professional judgement and knowledge of the individual students remain essential for these documents.
- Employing AI to make high-stakes decisions regarding pupils (e.g., assessment outcomes, placement decisions, disciplinary actions).
- Relying on AI for real-time interpretation of pupils' behaviour; communication or emotional states. This requires nuanced human understanding and established relationships.
- Substituting essential human interaction, teaching, or therapeutic support with AI.
- Using AI tools without due care to potential errors and inaccuracies.
- Violating academic integrity or professional standards by presenting AI-generated content as original work without appropriate acknowledgement or adaptation.

AI: Staff Responsibilities & Training

All staff must read, understand, and adhere strictly to this policy. Staff must complete mandatory training provided by the school on the safe, ethical, and data-compliant use of AI tools in our specific educational context. Staff must exercise professional judgement and extreme caution regarding any data input into AI tools, particularly concerning student information. The default position must always be maximum data privacy. Staff must consult the AI Lead, HT, DSL, DPO or DDSL if they are in any doubt about the appropriate, safe, or compliant use of any AI tool.

Organisational Responsibilities

The School (Senior Leadership Team - SLT) will ensure appropriate and relevant training on this policy and AI use is provided to all staff. The HR Team, School, via the Headteacher and DSL, will undertake necessary due diligence and vetting processes, including data protection impact assessments where required.

Non-compliance with AI policy, particularly breaches relating to data protection and unacceptable use, will be treated extremely seriously and may result in disciplinary action in according to the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, up to and including dismissal. Breaches involving personal data may also need to be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).