



Curriculum Intent Policy



Our school mission statement to provide **“a safe, nurturing environment which embraces and celebrates diverse learning needs through inclusivity and teamwork”** sits at the very heart of school life at Longridge and influences all we do. In the context of learners with special educational needs, differences do not merely define an individual but are viewed as a lever to motivate pupils and enable them to progress with their learning and personal development through educational stability and inclusion.

Longridge School creates a nurturing atmosphere where all young people are known to everyone and know everyone. Every learner is treated as an individual and our belief that, “If it isn’t good enough for our own children, it isn’t good enough for any child” is evident in all aspects of everyday school life.

School Aims

- To create a happy and secure learning environment rich in stimulation and challenge.
- To ensure all members of the school community can grow in self-esteem and develop to their full potential.
- To provide developmentally related experiences responding to pupils’ individual needs.
- To provide learners with an education appropriate to the world beyond the classroom.
- To develop pupils’ communication and interaction skills, promoting social and emotional well-being enabling them to make positive relationships and decisions about their learning at school and for life beyond the classroom.

Our Curriculum Intent

At Longridge School, our learners have a variety of additional learning needs ranging from moderate (MLD) to severe (SLD) learning disabilities). Most of our learners have a diagnosis of Autism and many have additional diagnoses including ADHD, Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), Sensory Processing Difficulties and Global Delay and associated Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. Prior to attending Longridge School many may also have experienced inconsistent or disrupted schooling. All our learners have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

For our learners, their stage of academic and social development upon entry to Longridge is often well below those expected of students of a similar age nationally and some of our learners are working at pre-key stage or the early stages of the National Curriculum, so our curriculum is personalised to the individual strengths and developmental needs of pupils. The curriculum is founded on the principle that our learners have *different* needs and therefore require a different approach to the curriculum. Experienced teachers deliver creative learning opportunities using individualised resources to reduce barriers to learning and enhance access to a broad and responsive curriculum that is appropriate to their age and/or stage of development.

Students are grouped according to their developmental stage rather than their chronological age and follow one of three pathways;

Streams Pathway learners are working at pre-key stage standards and benefit from a sensory based, semi-formal curriculum. There is still a daily focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills.

Rivers Pathway students are working significantly below their chronological age but can access subject based learning through a highly adapted National Curriculum where the focus is on securing functional Math and English for adult life and developing understanding about the world we live in.

Oceans Pathway students both at primary and secondary age are generally working towards but still below age related expectations and access an adapted National Curriculum.

The focus for all students, is on promoting a good life, learning to learn, acquiring relevant skills and knowledge, preparing for life beyond school, transitions and into adulthood. Our nurturing, safe environment offers a bespoke, highly practical learning experience, that affords each young person the opportunity to achieve positive social integration and reach their potential, regardless of their background or differences.

Our curriculum ensures all learners receive experiences & opportunities to develop their knowledge and acquire new skills in ways that ensure learning is relevant. The curriculum promotes learners' holistic development through inclusion of functional and subject specific skills and knowledge in a range of practical contexts. Opportunities for sequences of repetition and practice and taking extra time to promote deep learning in a range of contexts, are essential to enable our learners to extend and consolidate understanding over a longer time period which then facilitates greater fluency, independence, and maintenance as well as the transference of skills to varied contexts (generalisation skills).

Our curriculum includes a focus on developing and sustaining good physical and emotional wellbeing so learners are as healthy as possible to participate in school and beyond. Participation in practical-based, multi modal and multisensory experiences, helps them make meaningful connections with learning and the real world. It also enhances confidence, self-esteem and enables them to recognise, celebrate & feel pride in their achievements. In addition, we develop independence skills and resilience in readiness for further learning, employment or adulthood including the provision of accredited qualifications for students at KS4 and KS5. We have realistic, high ambitions for all our students.

Young people are taught in small classes, with a class teacher and a teaching assistant per class. Our learners are sensitively supported (which may sometimes mean working in even smaller break-out groups or one to one) to ensure that they feel safe and secure and have the support needed to access learning. Our teachers are fully knowledgeable of the National Curriculum and are competent in linking across the core and foundation subjects to deliver teaching in a creative and inspiring way. Practical lessons and opportunities for creative and play-based activities are part of our usual school provision. Our commitment is to provide an environment where each learner can be nurtured and valued as an individual, (as well as feeling part of our close-knit school team) and their talents and interests are identified and developed.

The foundations of our curriculum for Keys stages 2 and 3, is based on an adapted primary curriculum for those who may be working towards age related expectations and we follow the utilise the Equals semi-formal framework for students with have severe learning difficulties, who are working consistently and over time, well below National Curriculum expectations.

We use a thematic curriculum across KS2 and KS3 as our main inclusive topic planning tool. An engaging, topic based curriculum delivered through creative and practical based learning wherever possible, is used to establish connections through cross curricular and contextualised learning, thus promoting independence, fluency, maintenance and generalisation of skills for our learners. Through topics, learners will be supported to develop the knowledge and skills required for future learning, work and adult life.

Our English curriculum for KS2 and KS3 learners is linked to our topic themes and supported by carefully chosen, high quality texts. Reading, developing vocabulary, speaking confidently and listening carefully are key areas. Writing can be more challenging for our learners and they are encouraged to communicate their ideas and responses through pictures, photos, scribed for them by a TA, or using single words or

phrases whilst being encouraged to develop their independent writing skills. Where appropriate, topic links are also made with Maths (we use relevant elements of the 'Kangaroo Maths Scheme') and regular opportunities are created for pupils to apply their computing skills and knowledge.

Our Key stage 4 and 5 curriculum aims to develop the skills needed for employment and develop life skills to live happily and confidently in the community. Students will begin to be prepared for adulthood, by making healthy decisions about their own future, and enabling them to progress to the next stage in their education, training or employment. All students will follow programmes of study towards accredited qualifications in Maths, English and Science, and additional opportunities to experience a programme designed to reflect their interests and needs and may choose vocational subjects such as Computing, Art, Food Tech and Horticulture. Students' Personal Development is also a focus and Students may gain ASDAN accreditation through My Independence, Life Skills Challenges and a variety of Vocational Short Courses. Where appropriate, learners will have the opportunity to access work related learning experiences.

At KS5, learners will remain at Longridge school where it is deemed the most suitable environment to continue their education. The curriculum is based on the principals of the Department of Education's, "Preparing for Adulthood" programme. Our aim is to prepare our learners for adult life and to ensure they have the confidence, independence, knowledge and skills to move onto further education, training or employment. At KS5, the curriculum builds on the skills the students have already acquired during KS4. Learners will develop functional Literacy and Numeracy and follow suitable courses to prepare them for the next stage of their lives and access work related learning and work experience placements. Learners can gain qualifications ranging from Entry Level to Level 2 in Maths, English and Science and a range of ASDAN qualifications.

We are committed to making good use of the outside environment because we understand that spending all day in a classroom can be overwhelming and that our young people learn best through concrete, multi-sensory experiences. Our teachers are skilled at being able to adapt learning so that the same content can be delivered outdoors and through a diverse range of activities. We take our duty seriously to develop future citizens and we seek opportunities to develop environmentally aware young people through our approaches to the curriculum and in the careful selection and use of resources. All staff seek opportunities to challenge any forms of exclusion, extremism or racism within the materials they use.

PSHE, SMSC and British Values are key themes which are firmly embedded across all aspects of school life. We are ideally situated to make very good use of the local and surrounding areas (e.g. visits to the Black Country Museum, Blists Hill Victorian Town and Ironbridge Museums etc) and we use trips and other events to create memorable learning experiences that our learners can relate to during their classroom based lessons.

We value academic learning and developing functional learning for adult life in all its guises including the importance of developing learners' social and emotional skills which prepare them for further learning and functioning in the wider community. This work is underpinned by our behaviour management approach which encourages students to develop their emotional literacy; to communicate their thoughts and wishes in an appropriate way, rather than act out. Regular opportunities are available throughout the school day for students to think about and practice more effective ways to manage their emotions in the future. Alongside this, we are committed to the development of the children's metacognition skills, so they start to understand how they learn best and start to build on the skills needed to create resilient learners who can be more successful when faced with challenge. Weekly "Well-being Wednesday" sessions promote emotional literacy and students receive a high level of pastoral support from key adults who form strong and trusting relationships with the students enabling regular opportunities to talk

through any worries or issues. This is frequently completed through crafts or play based activities where learners feel relaxed and able to communicate their thoughts. Our learners are also encouraged to use a mood board or similar, regularly through the day. Our morning routine of telephoning each young person's home (either care homes, foster placements or home) before they arrive and sharing key new information with staff during the daily staff meeting prior to the start of the school day, means that we can be proactive, rather than reactive, if we need to adjust the day in order for the young person to settle more quickly.

We value the importance of all our young people feeling safe and secure at school, as well as the importance of providing challenge, so all young people can achieve personal growth, as well as develop the skills of team work and tolerance that will ensure their success in later life. Opportunities to engage in indoor and outdoor play based and adventurous activities are incorporated into the academic curriculum for learners to develop their social and emotional skills including making and maintaining friendships and working alongside, and in collaboration with peers.

Our bespoke Induction programme for new learners

Longridge school welcomes young people who have varying educational needs: we embrace their uniqueness and the challenges they present and they are met with a nurturing and personalised response. The purpose of our bespoke induction programme is for the staff to find out as much as possible about a young person – their interests, what they can do, rather than what they can't, so that an individualised plan can be drawn up. Our aim is for all of our tests/information gathering to be carried out in the first four weeks or sooner. From the student's first visit to school, their entire programme is designed to respond to their individual requirements, with a clear understanding that those needs will develop and evolve as they settle in.

We are mindful that some learners may have experienced adverse childhood experiences and our induction process can be modified/personalised, to meet the needs of each young person. Learners may have experienced a fragmented approach to their education, so a clear induction process where all relevant information is collated and communicated with key staff is vital.

The Induction Process

- Key staff meet with the young person – either on or off site depending on the young person's needs.
- The young person is given a personalised tour and introduced to key staff who will be working with them throughout the school day.
- The learner will have had some settling time with a key adult, to build a relationship with the student and to ascertain likes and dislikes and to complete some informal assessment of strengths and needs through games and other activities. Any sensory requirements will be discussed and the student will be able to design and make a personalised box to keep their relevant resources for use in the classroom needed and can be added to by the young person as appropriate.
- A reduced timetable will be considered as part of the individualised induction programme, if required.
- Contact is made with the previous setting in order to obtain as much information (both verbal and written) as possible.
- We use the national database 'Key to Success', which allows us to check the results of any formal assessments such as EYFS, phonics screening and KS1/2 SATs data.
- We complete a full special needs baseline assessment and as part of this we use the Wide Range Skills Assessment (WRAT5) and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) where appropriate, to assess how our students learn best and ascertain their capabilities. We use this detailed analysis to pitch initial lessons at the right level. For some of our learners with more complex

needs, access to formal testing is not possible. In this case, information from previous settings, including the most recent EHCP and teacher observation will inform a starting point for their curriculum and set a baseline on our assessment tracking system Bsquared.

- If appropriate, a Sensory Profile is completed with the young person and shared with key staff
- We complete a discrete, detailed phonics assessment and the results of this are used to formulate individualised phonics programmes where required.
- We complete a baseline maths assessment – which includes reading and writing numbers, place value knowledge and times tables as a minimum.
- In addition, we talk to the young person about what books they have previously read and books they enjoy reading.

Transition

Just as we gather information when a learner arrives, we are fully committed to ensuring that we provide as much detail as possible to the learner's next setting when they move on from Longridge. We have a comprehensive check list to ensure that nothing is missed and where possible, we try to personally talk to key staff at the receiving education provider. We believe that endings are important and our aim is to involve the young person as much as possible in this process and to ensure that their final day is marked in a mutually agreed way.

The School Day

Longridge School operates a five-day teaching week. Curriculum planning for the academic year is based on the standard thirty-nine-week cycle and the school adheres closely to Staffordshire Local Authority's school holidays, with five Inset days: first day of Autumn Term, first day of Spring Term plus three other days throughout the school year.

The school day

9.30	School Starts
9.30-9.45	Tutor time
9.45-10.30	Lesson 1
10.30 -11.15	Lesson 2
11.15-11.30	break
11.30-12.15	Lesson 3
12.15-13.00	Lesson 4
13.00-13.30	Lunch
13.30-13.45	Supported reading
13.45-14.30	Lesson 5
14.30-15.15	Lesson 6
15.15	Home time

Please see information below pertaining to individual subject aims and rationale.

English

Aims

- to enable learners to express themselves creatively and imaginatively.
- to enable learners to communicate effectively in spoken and written form relevant to their individual needs.
- to develop the skills that are needed to use reading, writing and communication as a life skill in a range of social situations and for future adult life.
- to provide an engaging curriculum that captivates the learners' interest.
- to encourage learners to apply their English skills across the other subjects in the curriculum.



Rationale

Language and communication skills are essential for *all* our learners and we recognise that the skills developed in English promote learning across the curriculum.

We teach learners the skills they need to communicate in ways relevant to their individual needs, developing their skills in word recognition, reading, understanding and interpreting texts and listening and responding. We carefully select texts to link with our themes and to support us in delivering a broad, balanced and engaging English curriculum to learners who are consistently and over time working below National Curriculum expectations. The curriculum is highly differentiated for each learner with individualised targets based on the learner's ability and from their starting point.

Phonics forms an important part of the literacy curriculum. Longridge uses Read Write Inc Phonics and Fresh Start across Key stages 2 and 3. We recognise for some learners with more complex learning difficulties that alternative strategies may be required to enable learners to sight read e.g. whole word recognition and this is assessed on an individual needs basis. Learners' phonics levels are monitored every term to ensure progress in line with their EHCP targets is on track and that sessions are relevant and focused.

All learners have a reading book and a reading diary which is completed by staff when they are heard reading. In addition to the reading carried out during Read Write Inc sessions, learners read daily to a member of staff. Learners are encouraged to take home their reading books and parents/carers are asked to complete records each day. All reading is valued, encouraged and celebrated and we have a variety of initiatives to promote reading.

At the core of our English curriculum, is the daily opportunity for learners to engage with high quality children's literature to serve as a stimulus for discussion, to develop a love of reading and provide inspiration for developing creativity and imagination in both verbal and written communication.

We enhance the curriculum through the use of visiting story tellers, poets and theatre groups and provide opportunities for pupils to visit theatres.

Key grammar, vocabulary and punctuation is also taught in context, as part of daily English lessons. Teachers use a range of resources based on individual learner needs, to promote writing as a way of communicating knowledge and understanding and in sharing information and ideas.

Mathematics

Aims

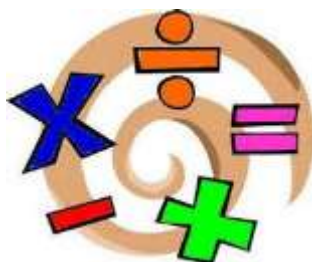
- To engage and inspire all learners so that they truly believe that they can succeed in Maths.
- To build confidence, resilience and a passion for Maths.
- For learners to make links with their classroom learning and real life so that they appreciate the importance of Maths to them.
- Equip children with a secure foundation in Maths for future learning and life.

Rationale

Mathematical and numeracy skills are an essential part of learning offering all learners powerful ways of exploring, investigating and understanding the world around them. Maths promotes independence and decision making skills. Mathematics for learners with learning difficulties can be a complex and challenging subject. At Longridge School, our Maths curriculum is based on our secure knowledge and understanding of each learner and their needs and presented through concrete multi-sensory experiences both within and outside the classroom. This might involve daily maths lessons following the National curriculum or be part of a more discrete cross curricular approach to teaching and learning for pupils who have more complex difficulties. Each lesson provides learners with the opportunity to develop their fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills, where discussion and explanation of ideas are valued.

The whole class works through the same mathematical theme with teachers applying differentiation through depth rather than acceleration. Those learners who grasp concepts quickly are offered greater challenge whilst those children who are not sufficiently fluent are provided with additional support to consolidate their understanding before moving on. Learners use a range of mathematical equipment and materials, make observations and measurements, developing confidence and accuracy. Learners are able to present their ideas and responses using a variety of means from using symbols to indicate to a member of staff, using sticky symbols on prepared graphs or tables and explain what has happened by, for example, using concrete objects, three-dimensional models, photographs, symbols, tallies, drawings, diagrams, graphs, tape recorders, videos and other forms of ICT

We teach Maths skills through all learning situations that our learners encounter during the day such as playtime, snack time or lunchtime. Many opportunities are made to ensure that the pupils use their skills in practical situations such as cooking, shopping and life skills.



Science

Aims

- To provide an engaging, coherent curriculum that will build, develop and promote their knowledge of the world around them.
- To develop a sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena.
- To question, explore, plan and carry out experiments.
- To recognise and use scientific vocabulary with increasing confidence.
- To encourage learners to develop independence and problem solving skills.

Rationale

Science is taught through our carefully designed creative curriculum and covers most of the content of the national curriculum. Lessons will have a practical element wherever possible. Learners are taught how to observe, explore and ask questions about living things, materials and the world around them. Learners will work together to collect evidence to help them answer questions, find patterns, classify and group objects, research using a variety of sources and carry out simple testing. They will share their ideas and communicate them using common scientific language, drawings, pictures and photos, charts and tables. Learners will continue to build on their scientific skills as they progress through the school building up towards more independent exploration of scientific topics that are both age appropriate and academically differentiated to allow them to access these higher level topics.



Computing

Aims

- To be able to confidently use technology across a range of other subjects.
- To be able to function in today's technological society safely and competently.

Rationale

We offer a broad and balanced computing curriculum, where we focus on the following: Digital Literacy, Information Technology, programming, data and algorithms and E-Safety. E-Safety is a theme which pervades all aspects of the computing curriculum, our PSHE curriculum and through enrichment days at the school.

We also teach E-safety as a discreet unit because it is vital that we equip our children with the knowledge and skills to remain safe, whilst navigating the wide range of apps, websites and devices they may have access to. Our school has all the necessary safeguards in place regarding restricted access to keep children safe when using school technology and this is reviewed and up-dated regularly as needed.

Our young people are encouraged to learn in small steps, often collaboratively, to develop the skills of lifelong learners who are adaptable and have transferable skills. We offer learners a variety of practical elements of computing to engage them and develop their motor skills, as well as computational thinking. This will be achieved in a range of ways such as the use of logic bots and coding programmes appropriate for their ability like Scratch and Kodu. Learners will be supported to access multiple devices to enrich their learning and access image editing, and eBook creation.



The World Around Us Topic Based learning

Longridge learners will engage in topic based learning that aligns with our thematic curriculum wherever possible to assist them to generalise their learning across a range of subjects and support their literacy skills through exposure to consistent vocabulary and concrete experiences. Learners study aspects of both Geography and History through topic work. In Key Stages 2 and 3 students study Geography or History for a full term to allow teachers time to embed key knowledge and skills before students move on to Studies in Humanities studies from KS4 if chosen as a pathway option subject.

Geography

Aims

- To create opportunities for learners to experience and develop an understanding of their local area, through field work projects, as well as promoting a fascination with the wider world and its diverse places and people.
- Promote curiosity in the differences between the country and the town and the diverse people and places in the wider world through globes and atlases and Virtual Reality Software and Google Earth.
- Equipping learners to be able to ask questions and explore the planet they live on so that they can protect our fragile environment.

Rationale

Geography is delivered through our topic approach so that learners can start to make sense of the world. Regular offsite learning opportunities and use of our outdoor spaces also allow students to immerse themselves in the local environment and experience different landscapes helping to develop their appreciation of the natural environment.

History

Aims

- For learners to gain a sense of their own changing lives within their own memories.
- Ask questions about how people lived in the past and make comparisons between past and present day life.
- Develop some understanding of significant events and people of different times and places.

Rationale

Teachers carefully select topics within our thematic curriculum wherever possible, to engage their learners, using a multi-sensory approach to gain knowledge through exploring and handling artefacts, visiting museums, stories, books, photos and participation in practical crafts and activities linked to particular topics



Art

Aims:

- To foster learners' curiosity and creativity.
- To experience working with a wide range of different mediums such as clay, plaster, print, fabric, paper, glue, pastels and paint.
- To explore 2D and 3D work.

Rationale:

We believe that Art in all its forms can be experienced and enjoyed by all. Opportunities to engage in creative activities are threaded through our curriculum subjects and learners are fully supported to develop their artistic talents and are encouraged to have resilience to re-do or develop their work in order to improve it using a range of mediums. Learners will be exposed to a range of artistic styles from a range of cultures which align with our thematic topics and will be encouraged to reflect on what they personally like or dislike and explain their reasoning.



Personal, Social, Health, Relationships and Sex Education

Aims:

- To provide all learners with essential skills for life so that they have the knowledge, skills and attributes to protect and enhance their well-being.
- To equip learners with the knowledge to help them to stay safe and healthy and know when and how to ask for help.
- To provide learners with the tools to build and maintain successful relationships.
- To help young people to develop their own identity and self-esteem.
- To encourage them to be positive, confident citizens and participants in society.
- To raise their aspirations and to teach them a variety of skills to empower them to overcome any barriers they may face.
- To develop tolerance and mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs.
- To teach young people to be vigilant and to equip them with the knowledge and skills to be aware that some people may try to manipulate them into a mind-set that opposes fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty.

Rationale:

At KS2-3 our curriculum follows the PSHE Association Planning Framework for Pupils with SEND. This covers 6 areas that sit within the 3 core themes of Relationships, Health and Wellbeing and Living in The Wider World;

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Care, Support and Safety
- Managing Feelings
- Changing and Growing
- Healthy Lifestyles
- The World I Live In



Topics within these themes are usually taught in units of 6 to 8 lessons and are arranged across Key Stages 2 and 3. Each theme is progressively built upon according to learners' individual stages of understanding and development. This enables our learners to recall and build upon previous learning and to develop a wide and rich understanding.

From Year 10, learners follow the ASDAN PSHE Short Course which consists of 11 Modules which include; Emotional Wellbeing, keeping Safe and Healthy, Social Media, Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco, Sexual Health, Respectful Relationships and Families and Parenting.

Our PSHE programme supports our school ethos of prioritising physical and mental health and wellbeing, providing our young people with skills to evaluate and understand their own wellbeing needs, practice self-care and contribute positively to the wellbeing of those around them.

Provision:

PSHE lessons are timetabled weekly and our teaching methods for this subject are typically quite informal with learners working in a circle, in small groups or with chosen friends. We regularly use games, role play and discussions and often learners' achievements are not recorded as formal prose but in note form, drawings or other creative ways e.g. posters.

Physical and Emotional Well-being

Aims:

- To provide all learners with positive, regular physical learning experiences in a supportive environment.
- To expose young people to a wide range of activities that promote positive physical and mental health lifestyle that will continue into adulthood.
- To develop teamwork and resilience in an alternative setting to the classroom.
- To develop young peoples' individual skills so that they can successfully participate in a wide variety of games, sports and social activities.
- To offer at least two hours per week of physical activity with a balance of indoor, outdoor and specialist provision.

Rationale:

As a small school with a highly diverse student population traditional P.E. sessions are not appropriate. Through a range of small group or individual activities, we ensure that our young people develop the necessary skills to become lifelong participators in physical activity. Younger learners start by being introduced to basic fundamental movement skills. As they get older, learners develop skills to promote self-confidence and independence, such as mountain biking, swimming or orienteering.

Provision:

Twice weekly sessions for physical activities are timetabled into our school week. Sessions take place on our school field, a private swimming pool and other outdoor facilities.

<i>Last Reviewed</i>	<i>August 2025</i>
<i>Next Review Due</i>	<i>August 2027</i>
<i>Reviewed by</i>	<i>Head Teacher</i>