Brimble Hill School

Curriculum Handbook

Aspire, Enable, Thrive

2026-2027

Brimble Hill School

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Brimble Hill School

Curriculum Intent

At Brimble Hill School, we believe every child and young person deserves an ambitious, personalised, and engaging education that enables them to thrive both in school and beyond. Our curriculum is designed to meet the unique strengths, needs and aspirations of every learner, ensuring that everyone achieves their full potential and develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for a successful and fulfilling future.

Through a nurturing and inclusive environment built on strong relationships, we create a sense of belonging where every learner is valued, celebrated and supported to succeed. We recognise that every learner follows an individual journey; therefore, our curriculum pathways are carefully tailored to address each learner's needs, interests and EHCP outcomes, while maintaining high aspirations for all.

Our curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, combining personalised learning goals with the development of communication, literacy, numeracy, independence, life skills and academic learning. Learning is enriched through meaningful experiences, community engagement and learning beyond the classroom, enabling learners to understand and contribute positively to the world around them.

Brimble Hill School

Curriculum Intent

Our Curriculum: Aspire, Enable, Thrive

Aspire

We are ambitious for every learner. We provide high-quality, motivating and progressive learning opportunities that build on individual starting points and promote curiosity, achievement and a love of learning.

Enable

We equip learners with the communication, functional, social and emotional skills they need to become increasingly independent, healthy and confident individuals who can participate actively in their families, communities and with future opportunities.

Thrive

We support learners to develop resilience, self-esteem and wellbeing so that they can lead enriched lives, form positive relationships and become valued members of their communities. Through personalised pathways, accreditation opportunities and preparation for adulthood, we ensure learners are well prepared for the next stage of education, employment and adult life.

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We aim for all out learners to:

- Develop effective communication skills and a strong sense of self
- Acquire the knowledge and skils needed to understand the world around them.
- Become as independent as possible in daily life.
- Achieve success through appropriately challenging and personalised learning.
- Lead, fuffilling, safe and enriching lives as valued citizens.
- Develop possible physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Build meaningful relationships and participate fully in their communities.
- Gain cultrual capital through a wide range of experiences and oppertunties.

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Individual Learning Pathways

There are three Curriculum Pathways at Brimble Hill School: Pre-formal, Informal and Semi-Formal.

Pre-formal Pathway

The Pre-formal Pathway is designed for learners with profound and complex learning needs. Our curriculum is built around highly personalised learning goals, ensuring that every learner follows a bespoke programme tailored to their individual strengths, needs, interests and aspirations.

Learning focuses on the development of early communication, social, emotional, sensory and cognitive skills that form the foundations for future learning. Through play-based, sensory and multi-sensory approaches, learners are supported to develop communication, independence and engagement with the world around them. Learning, therapy and health needs are integrated within the curriculum, enabling learners to make meaningful progress and become active participants within their communities as they prepare for adulthood.

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Individual Learning Pathways

Informal Pathway

The Informal Pathway sits between the Pre-formal and Semi-formal pathways and is designed for learners who are developing readiness for more structured learning, but who continue to benefit from a highly personalised approach. The curriculum is centred around individual learning goals, ensuring that each learners's programme reflects their unique strengths, needs, interests and aspirations.

Learning focuses on developing communication, cognition, social interaction, emotional regulation, independence and learning behaviours, while gradually introducing learners to more structured curriculum content and experiences. Learners are supported to build the skills needed to engage with learning for increasing periods of time, make choices, solve problems and apply their learning in meaningful contexts.

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Individual Learning Pathways

Through engaging, sensory and practical learning opportunities, learners develop the foundations for future knowledge-based learning while continuing to access sensory, experiential and play-based approaches where appropriate. The Informal Pathway provides a bridge between the personalised, skills-focused approach of the Pre-formal curriculum and the increasing knowledge-based learning offered within the Semi-formal curriculum, preparing learners for greater independence and participation in school, the community and adult life.

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Individual Learning Pathways

Semi-formal Pathway

The Semi-formal Pathway is designed for learners with complex learning needs who are beginning to develop the foundations of subject-specific learning. The curriculum combines personalised learning goals with a structured, knowledge-rich curriculum, ensuring that learners develop both the individual skills they need and a broader understanding of the world around them.

Delivered through engaging, thematic learning, learners are supported to develop communication, self-advocacy, functional and life skills alongside subject-based knowledge. Learning is carefully sequenced to build on prior experiences and understanding, while remaining flexible enough to respond to individual developmental needs. Opportunities to apply learning in real-life contexts help learners develop independence, confidence and the skills needed to participate successfully in their communities and prepare for adult life.

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Our Curriculum Approach

- A Curriculum with Purpose
- Thematic Curriculum
- Designed Around Our Learners

A Curriculum with Purpose

At Brimble Hill, we believe that the curriculum is much more than a collection of subjects. Our curriculum acts as the vehicle through which pupils make progress towards their Personal Learning Goals (PLGs), develop independence, build communication skills and prepare for adulthood.

Every learning experience is carefully planned to support individual outcomes. For many of our learners, success is measured through the achievement of personalised PLG targets, ensuring that learning is meaningful, relevant and directly linked to each learner's needs, strengths and aspirations.

Alongside the development of PLG targets, our curriculum also enables learners to build their knowledge and understanding of the world. Where appropriate, learners are supported to develop subject-specific knowledge, vocabulary and skills, helping them make connections across different areas of learning and preparing them for their next stage of education.

A Thematic Curriculum

Our curriculum is delivered through a thematic approach, with exciting topics that run on a five-year cycle. This ensures that learners who remain within the school for a number of years continue to experience fresh, engaging and varied learning opportunities.

The themes provide meaningful contexts for learning, allowing learners to develop and apply skills across a range of curriculum areas while exploring subjects in depth. By revisiting broad concepts through different themes over time, learners strengthen their understanding, deepen learning and make connections between ideas.

The five-year cycle also helps us maintain a curriculum that remains dynamic, motivating and enjoyable, whilst avoiding unnecessary repetition for those learners who spend multiple years within the same phase of the school.

Designed Around Our Learners

The curriculum has been carefully designed around the needs, interests and aspirations of our learners.

Our curriculum balances academic learning, personal development and practical life experiences. This ensures that learners develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to be successful in school and beyond.

We recognise that learners learn best when learning is engaging, purposeful and connected to real life. For this reason, our curriculum themes have been chosen to inspire curiosity, encourage exploration and create memorable learning experiences.

Through carefully selected topics, visits, enrichment activities, community experiences and practical learning opportunities, learners are given opportunities to apply their learning in meaningful contexts. Themes are broad enough to spark imagination whilst remaining relevant to learners everyday lives, future ambitions and the world around them.

By combining personalised learning goals, knowledge-based learning, preparation for adulthood and exciting thematic experiences, we provide a curriculum that is ambitious, relevant and responsive to the needs of every learner.

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Subject Overviews

- A Curriculum with Purpose
- Thematic Curriculum
- Designed Around Our Learners

A Curriculum with Purpose

All learners weekly timetables are focused on their Personal Learning Goals (PLGs) and, where appropriate, knowledge-based learning. This provision ensures that learners have regular opportunities to develop key skills, increase independence, and deepen their understanding across a broad range of curriculum areas. Weekly sessions include PSCHE, Travel Training, My Outdoor School, Phonics, Literacy and Reading, Physical Wellbeing, Cooking, Expressive Arts and Maths. These planned learning opportunities support each learners individual pathway while promoting progress towards their long-term outcomes.

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Subject Overviews

PSCHE, RSE, Fundamental British Values and Citizenship

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) sits at the heart of our curriculum and supports learners to understand themselves, build positive relationships and navigate the world around them safely and confidently. Learning is carefully sequenced and tailored to meet the developmental needs of our learners.

Through PSHCE and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), learners explore a range of important topics including managing feelings and relationships, staying safe, online safety, families and people who care for us, public and private behaviours, consent, emotional wellbeing and personal responsibility. For those learners where it is appropriate, learning also includes intimate and sexual relationships, ensuring they have the knowledge and understanding needed to make safe and informed choices.

The purpose of this curriculum is to help learners develop self-awareness, resilience, confidence and independence whilst equipping them with the skills needed to form healthy relationships, recognise risks and understand their rights and responsibilities.

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Subject Overviews

PSCHE, RSE, Fundamental British Values and Citizenship

Fundamental British Values are embedded throughout the curriculum and wider life of the school. Learners learn about democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths, beliefs and backgrounds. These values are explored not only within PSHCE lessons but across a range of subjects, assemblies, enrichment activities and everyday interactions.

Citizenship education helps learners understand their role within school, their local community and wider society. Learners are encouraged to express their views, make choices and contribute positively to the lives of others. Opportunities such as School Council, pupil voice activities, community visits, fundraising events and leadership roles enable pupils to experience citizenship in meaningful and practical ways.

Together, PSHCE, RSE, Fundamental British Values and Citizenship provide the foundation for learners to become safe, respectful, responsible and active members of their communities, both now and in the future.

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Subject Overviews

Travel Training

All learners have dedicated timetabled Travel Training sessions each week to support the development of independence and personal safety skills. Through these sessions, learners learn how to stay safe in public spaces, develop awareness of potential hazards, and build confidence when travelling in the community. Learning includes pedestrian skills such as walking safely and crossing roads, as well as understanding how to travel safely by car and train. learners are also taught how to use public transport, including buses, and develop practical skills such as planning journeys and knowing what essential items to pack when leaving the house. These experiences help prepare learners for greater independence and successful participation in everyday life.

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Subject Overviews

My Outdoor School

My Outdoor School is a timetabled element of the curriculum that provides learners with regular opportunities to learn through hands-on experiences in the natural environment. These sessions encourage learners to work creatively, solve problems, and develop practical skills while engaging with the outdoors. Learners explore a range of topics and activities, including building and investigating dens and structures, working with and understanding different weather conditions, planting and growing, and outdoor cooking. Through these experiences, learners develop confidence, resilience, teamwork, and a greater appreciation of the natural world, while working towards their Personal Learning Goals and wider curriculum outcomes.

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Subject Overviews

Physical Wellbeing

Physical Wellbeing is a timetabled element of the curriculum that provides learners with regular opportunities to develop their physical health, fitness, and movement skills through a wide range of accessible activities. Sessions are adapted to meet individual abilities and accessibility needs, ensuring all learners can participate and achieve success. learners engage in a variety of sports, exercises, and physical activities covering areas such as striking and kicking skills, spatial awareness, balance and agility, core strength, stability, and coordination. Opportunities are also provided for outdoor exercise, fitness activities, and partner and team games. Through these experiences, learners develop confidence, resilience, teamwork, and an understanding of the importance of leading an active and healthy lifestyle. learners also have opportunities to represent the school in team competitions and sporting events with local schools and charities, promoting inclusion, cooperation, and community engagement.

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Subject Overviews

Expressive Arts

Expressive Arts is a timetabled curriculum area that enables learners to explore and communicate ideas through art, music, and drama. Learners develop a wide range of skills and experiences across these disciplines, including mark making, painting, drawing, sculpture, and other creative techniques, often inspired by the work of a focus artist each term. In music and drama, learners build key skills such as listening, exploring, collaborating, creating, and performing. Across all areas of Expressive Arts, the emphasis is placed on the creative process, encouraging independence, imagination, self-expression, and confidence. Success is measured not solely by the finished product, but by learners' engagement, creativity, skill development, and willingness to experiment and share their ideas.

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Subject Overviews

Maths

Mathematics plays a key role in preparing learners for everyday life by developing their understanding of number, quantity, measurement, and problem-solving.

Throughout the year, learners explore a wide range of topics, including time, geometry, measurement, comparison, shape, and data handling. Key areas such as number and money are revisited every term to promote consolidation, fluency, and confidence. To support the development of number knowledge across the curriculum, learners engage with number rhymes and maths-focused core texts, helping to build familiarity with mathematical language and concepts in meaningful contexts. Teaching is practical, engaging, and accessible, drawing on the strategies and approaches developed by Les Staves alongside the White Rose Maths schemes of learning. Through hands-on experiences, real-life problem-solving, and structured learning opportunities, learners develop confidence, independence, and essential mathematical skills that support their future learning and everyday life.

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Subject Overviews

Cooking

Cooking offers learners meaningful opportunities to develop practical life skills that will support greater independence both now and in the future. Through engaging, hands-on experiences, learners learn a range of essential skills, including measuring and quantifying ingredients, developing fine motor kitchen skills, understanding healthy eating, and following safe kitchen practices. For many learners, cooking also provides important sensory learning opportunities, helping them to become more comfortable exploring foods through touch, smell, sight, and taste. Food play and sensory experiences are used to encourage confidence around unfamiliar foods, supporting learners to gradually expand their tolerance of new textures and flavours both orally and through sensory exploration.

Cooking is a highly cross-curricular subject, naturally reinforcing learning in PSCHE, English, and Mathematics, while also supporting the development of communication skills, fine motor skills, independence, teamwork, and individual Personal Learning Goals. Learners prepare a wide variety of sweet and savoury recipes throughout the year, taking inspiration from seasonal produce as well as cuisines from around the world. Through planning, preparing, and evaluating their dishes, learners are encouraged to develop confidence, resilience, creativity, and problem-solving skills, while building a positive relationship with food and developing practical skills for everyday life.

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Subject Overviews

Play and Leisure

Play and Leisure is a timetabled curriculum area that supports learners to develop the social, communication, and independence skills needed to engage positively in both structured and unstructured leisure activities. Learners learn the importance of play, socialising with others, and developing the skills to interact with and tolerate peers within shared spaces. They are encouraged to explore a range of leisure opportunities and to understand how to use free time productively and positively, both independently and alongside others. Through carefully planned activities and supported experiences, learners progress through the different stages of play, including solitary play, parallel play, turn-taking, and cooperative play. The emphasis is on developing confidence, independence, and enjoyment, with learners encouraged to engage in play and leisure activities as autonomously as possible while building meaningful social connections and life-long leisure interests.

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Phonics and Reading

At Brimble Hill, we recognise that every learner develops literacy skills at their own pace. Our reading curriculum is carefully designed to provide a structured, progressive pathway that supports the development of communication, language, phonics and reading skills, enabling all learnerss to become confident and successful readers.

Pre-Phonics

Read, Write, Inc.

Rapid Reading

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Pre-Phonics

For learners who are not yet ready to access a formal phonics programme, we deliver an in-house pre-phonics curriculum. This programme has been specifically designed to meet the diverse learning needs of our learners and combines a range of age- and stage-appropriate activities that develop the foundational skills required for future reading success.

The programme focuses on:

- Listening and attention skills
- Sound awareness and auditory discrimination
- Environmental and instrumental sound recognition
- Rhythm, rhyme and pattern awareness
- Early language and communication development
- Vocabulary acquisition and speaking and listening skills
- Turn-taking, attention and engagement in shared activities

Through carefully planned, engaging experiences, learners develop the essential foundations needed to access a systematic phonics programme when/if they are developmentally ready.

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Read, Write, Inc.

Learners who are able to access a systematic synthetic phonics programme follow the Read Write Inc. (RWI) approach. Read Write Inc. provides a structured and engaging pathway for learning to read and write, ensuring that learners develop secure phonological awareness, decoding skills and reading fluency.

- Through daily, targeted teaching, learners learn to:
- Recognise and confidently use individual sounds (phonemes)
- Blend sounds to read words accurately
- Segment words for spelling
- Read increasingly complex texts with fluency and understanding
- Develop comprehension, vocabulary and confidence as readers

Teaching is carefully matched to learners' current attainment and progress is regularly monitored to ensure appropriate challenge and support.

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Rapid Reading

When learners have successfully progressed beyond the Read Write Inc. programme, they move on to the Rapid Reading programme. Rapid Reading is a structured, SEN-focused intervention designed to further develop reading fluency, comprehension and confidence.

The programme provides:

- Tailored reading materials matched to individal needs
- Explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills
- Oppertunites to develop fluency and reading stamina
- Targeted support to address any remaining gaps in literacy learning
- A personalised pathway towards independent reading

Rapid Reading enables learners to build upon their phonics knowledge and apply their reading skills across a wide range of texts, supporting them to reach their full potential as readers and learners.

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Early Years

In the Early Years Foundation Stage at Brimble Hill, we provide a safe, nurturing and highly inclusive environment where children are supported to thrive. We recognise that every learner is unique and will need different levels of support to access learning, communicate their needs, regulate their emotions and develop independence.

At Brimble Hill we know children & young people learn best through exploration, play and meaningful experiences that build on their individual interests and strengths through strong relationships, consistent routines and carefully adapted provision.

Learners at Brimble Hill are typically working significantly below age related expectations within early developmental stages therefore our Early Years Foundation Stage provision is highly personalised and priorities communication, regulation, independence and interaction.

We have adapted the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to ensure it is meaningful, accessible and relevant for our learners. The focus within the Early Years Foundation Stage remains on personalised, meaningful learning that supports progress from each learner's starting point.

Our outdoor environment is viewed as an extension of the classroom and is carefully adapted so that learners can access it safely and successfully. Leaners have daily opportunities to develop physical skills, investigate the natural world with additional support provided where needed for sensory processing, regulation, mobility, coordination or confidence.

At Brimble Hill, we are committed to working with parents and carers to build strong, positive partnerships between home and school that support every learner's learning and wellbeing.

Each learner has Personal learning goals (PLGs), which are derived from EHCP targets and broken down into small, achievable steps. These are the main drivers of planning. High emphasis is placed on repetition, overlearning, generalisation of skills and independence through building routines and learning opportunities within structured play, adult led interactions and access to flexible continuous provision.

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Assesment

The fundamental principle underpinning the assessment process at Brimble Hill is that we measure what we value, and we value what we measure. For this reason there is an overwhelming emphasis on the development of individualised, high quality Learning Intentions based on the 4 areas of the Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) to create Personalised Learning Goals (PLGs). Accurate judgements around progress are made through the existence of a robust and transparent quality assurance process underpinning the setting of, teaching towards and demonstrating progress in PLGs for every learner which are aspirational in their nature. Each learner will have a further assessment area in Preparation for Adulthood, when this is introduced in the EHCP, typically from Year 9.

By focussing on the Education, Health and Care plan as the basis for demonstrating progress for each learner, we are ensuring that the Learning Intentions for each learner are drawn up by those who know that learner best and who have the expert knowledge to help them to plan for making the progress which will help their transition into adulthood.

To support in the development of robust short term targets, a variety of assessment frameworks may be used which readily meet the needs of the learner and the particular Learning Intention. This may depend on the specific curriculum that the target has been drawn from; for example, Autism Education Tracker, Stages of PECS, Routes for Learning or The Brunel Assessment Continuum.

Day to day assessments includes teacher and TA assessment which is recorded on our recording system, Earwig. Targets are reviewed and reset every 12 weeks.

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Careers

Jobs and Careers is embedded throughout the curriculum from Early Years to Year 6, with meaningful links through the medium term plans, and through developing the four Core Skills for Adulthood through their Personalised Learning Goals (PLGs).

The curriculum aims to support young people developing the life skills they need with as much independence as possible, focusing on the functional aspects of learning. All staff at Brimble Hill School are involved in CEIAG for our young people; both to support their knowledge and skill development and to raise their confidence and aspirations. This takes place through:

- Talentino's Enhanced Careers at Every Level and Work Related Learning Skills for Independent Living Tasks
- Enterprise activites
- Work-related learning
- Work experience

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Careers

We aspire that through the Careers curriculum learners will:

- Have made as much progress with the four core Skills for Adulthood as possible: communication, independence, interdependence and safety.
- Be the most fulfilled version of themselves that they can be.
- Be able to successfully advocate for their own wants and needs, as a result of having been given the opportunities to recognise their own interests and skills and future choices and opportunities utilising these.
- Be as independent as possible.
- Be a valued and valuable member of the communities in which they belong.
- Have been engaged, inspired and motivated by new activities, environments and opportunities.
- Be as knowledgeable and skilled as possible to make informed choices throughout life, to keep themselves as happy, healthy and safe as possible.
- Have been effectively supported to work toward their aspirations on a personalised progression journey.
- Have awareness of different support systems and people who can help them.

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Enrichment and Wider Curriculum Oppertunites

At Brimble Hill, we believe that the curriculum extends far beyond timetabled lessons. We recognise that learning takes place in many different contexts and that valuable teachable moments can occur throughout the school day and beyond the classroom. Our aim is to provide a broad range of opportunities and experiences that enable our young people to thrive, develop confidence, and explore new interests.

Central to this philosophy is our **"50 Things to Do Before You Leave Brimble Hill"** programme. This initiative encourages young persons to take part in a variety of enriching activities and experiences that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to access. The programme includes simple but meaningful challenges designed to broaden horizons, build confidence, and create lasting memories.

We offer a range of enrichment activities to support the personal development of our young people. An active school choir meets weekly, providing young people with the opportunity to express themselves creatively and develop their confidence through the performing arts. Local community visits are regularly incorporated into our provision, helping young persons to develop independence skills and, where appropriate, participate in travel training.

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Enrichment and Wider Curriculum Opportunities

Young person voice is highly valued at Brimble Hill. Our learners Council meets termly, enabling young people to share their views, contribute to school improvement, and actively participate in decision-making. We also celebrate and acknowledge a variety of national awareness days and events, particularly those that are relevant to our school community and curriculum.

Where possible, we enhance learning through visits and special experiences. Each year, we aim to welcome visiting performance arts companies, providing young persons with access to high-quality cultural experiences. We also invite a range of visitors into school, such as the mobile farm and other community organisations, bringing learning to life through first-hand experiences.

We firmly believe that these wider curriculum opportunities enrich and broaden the experiences of our young people. For some young people, these experiences may not be readily accessible outside of school. By providing them within our curriculum offer, we help ensure that every young person has the opportunity to develop new skills, discover new interests, and build the confidence needed for future success.

Brimble Hill School

Curriculum Development Team

The development of our curriculum is a collaborative process that reflects our shared commitment to providing a broad, balanced, and ambitious education for all learner. Our Curriculum Development Team brings together colleagues from across the school who contribute their expertise, experience, and subject knowledge to ensure that our curriculum remains relevant, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of our learners. Through ongoing review, evaluation, and innovation, the team works to ensure that every aspect of our curriculum supports high-quality teaching, promotes pupil success, and embodies our school's vision and values

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