

High Grange

Adaptive thinking, Communication, Emotional wellbeing, Independence

Supporting learning & growth		
Curriculum Policy		
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This policy promotes ACE because;



This policy promotes ACE by embedding Adaptive Thinking, Communication Skills, and Emotional Well-being across all aspects of learning. Through integrated therapy, personalised learning, scaffolding, and purposeful assessment, pupils & students develop independence, resilience, and self-confidence. Every curriculum decision is designed to enhance life skills, social-emotional growth, and long-term success, reflecting High Grange's ethos.

Contents

1. Curriculum Overview
2. Ethos
3. Whole-school Curriculum Aims
4. The Learning Environment
5. Integrated Therapy and Personalised Learning
6. Quality Teaching: Why This, Why Now
7. Sequencing & Progression
8. Equal Opportunity to Access the Curriculum
9. Literacy, Language & Numeracy
10. Curriculum Offer, Key Stage 1 & 2
11. Curriculum Offer, Key Stage 3
12. Curriculum Offer, Key Stage 4
13. Curriculum Offer, Key Stage 5/Post 16
14. Curriculum Review
15. Overview for Parents

This policy links to;

- Assessment Policy
- SMSC Policy
- RSE Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Individual Subject Policies

1. Curriculum Overview

High Grange maximises the potential of every pupil & student, ensuring access to an ambitious, balanced curriculum across academic and vocational pathways. The curriculum combines core, specialist, vocational, offsite, and enrichment opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, and independence. From Key Stage 1 to 3, learning follows a bespoke spiral model; Key Stages 4 and 5 offer a more traditional yet inclusive, personalised curriculum.

Key Stages 1 & 2

Learning begins through structured play at Key Stage 1, building engagement, confidence, communication, and emotional regulation. Upper Key Stage 2 gradually increases structure, preparing pupils for Key Stage 3. Core subjects are delivered by class teachers, supported by specialists, with weekly offsite and enrichment activities developing social, emotional, and life skills. Scaffolded, therapy-informed teaching ensures learning is accessible and matched to each pupil's needs, removing barriers and developing foundational ACE skills.

Key Stage 3

Pupils experience a broader secondary-style curriculum while retaining a consistent classroom teacher for core subjects, with specialist input in areas like PE. Offsite experiences, House activities, and the super curriculum continue to support academic, social, and emotional development. Scaffolded learning shifts toward guided independence, with therapy embedded to support communication, emotional regulation, and resilience, ensuring decisions about teaching and support are tailored to each pupil's developmental stage and readiness for responsibility.

Key Stages 4 & 5

The curriculum progresses into personalised academic and vocational options, allowing pupils & students to prioritise learning according to their strengths, goals, and developmental needs. A broad range of subjects, from practical Design Technology to A Level Maths, ensures bespoke pathways aligned to accreditation, employability, and preparation for adulthood. Post-16 provision focuses on independence, life skills, vocational experiences, and MDT-informed planning, ensuring support and learning decisions are tailored to each student's pathway toward successful real-world transitions.

2. Ethos

High Grange School provides a highly specialised environment for children and young people with autism spectrum conditions. Our ethos prioritises high expectation and high achievement while addressing individual needs through our ACE framework:

- **Adaptive Thinking**
- **Communication Skills**
- **Emotional Well-being**
- **Independence** (overarching aim)

Core values focus on enriching lives, developing independence, and fostering self-confidence, resilience, and social responsibility.

3. Whole-school Curriculum Aims

The curriculum inspires and challenges pupils & students, encouraging active participation and engagement. It aims to develop self-confidence, self-belief, self-worth, and self-esteem, enabling pupils to live independent, purposeful lives. Key aims include:

- Ensuring pupils know more, remember more, and do more.
- Providing a curriculum beyond the classroom for personal, social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development.
- Delivering an ambitious, sequenced curriculum with clear intent, aligned to EHCP outcomes and pupils/student individual needs.
- Embedding cross-curricular approaches in communication, literacy, numeracy, language, computing, and life skills.
- Promoting Fundamental British Values, cultural capital, and protective characteristics.
- Reviewing and setting ACE + independence targets to measure meaningful progress.

4. The Learning Environment

High Grange School's purpose-built environment reduces anxiety and promotes learning. Classrooms are spacious, well-resourced, and tailored to sensory, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic needs. Specialist facilities include Sports hall, fitness suite, astroturf, swimming pool , art, music, DT (wood & metal), food technology, science, computing. Therapy rooms, sensory integration suites, hydrotherapy pool & a sixth form hub and preparation for adulthood facilities

Interactive displays, reading corners, and dedicated learning areas support engagement and reinforce classroom learning.

5. Integrated Therapy and Personalised Learning

Therapy underpins our curriculum. High Grange School integrates Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Clinical Psychology, and Counselling into teaching. Each therapy discipline informs classroom strategies, scaffolding, and planning, ensuring pupils & students' cognitive, social, and emotional needs are met.

Therapy teams work closely with educators to set termly ACE targets with 1:1, small group, and class-based interventions. Therapy enables teachers to scaffold learning, build resilience, reduce barriers, and personalise pathways across academic, vocational, and life skills domains.

Pupils and students engage in a wide range of learning activities, including investigation, research, and problem-solving; group, paired, and independent tasks; offsite visits and community experiences; creative arts and physical activities; vocational learning, structured feedback and reflection to develop responsibility for their own learning.

6. Quality Teaching: Why This, Why Now

High-quality teaching at High Grange is purposeful, evidence-informed, and responsive. Every lesson is designed with the question: Why this, why now; To make sure that teaching decisions are rooted in pupil/students' current knowledge, gaps, developmental stage, and next steps for learning.

Teachers implement the curriculum well by:

- Creating learning experiences with clear intent, purpose, and impact.
- Motivating pupils through positive reinforcement and aspirational expectations.
- Demonstrating pedagogical best practice aligned to EEF evidence (scaffolding, retrieval practice, cognitive load theory).
- Using assessment to inform teaching and next steps (assessment of pupils/students' progress, attainment, and ACE outcomes is outlined in our Assessment Policy).

Teaching is characterised by:

- Clear learning objectives and outcomes
- Explicit modelling and scaffolding (EEF-recommended approach)
- Retrieval practice and curriculum sequencing
- Adaptive support informed by therapy and assessment
- Encouragement of independence and engagement in learning choices
- Integration of literacy, numeracy, computing, and communication
- Opportunities for social, emotional, and moral development alongside academic learning

Teachers regularly reflect on 'why this' content is taught now, ensuring relevance, engagement, and transferability. This approach supports pupils/students to acquire knowledge and skills for future adult life, including vocational and life skills.

Planning ensures sequencing, appropriate pace, and targeted scaffolding. Teachers monitor engagement, understanding, and progress using formative assessment, half-term learning journeys, and where necessary confidence checkers. This evidence informs subsequent planning and ensures learning is meaningful and progressive.

Scaffolding for Learning

Teachers scaffold learning instead of differentiating. Approaches include:

- Breaking complex tasks into smaller steps
- Guided modelling and worked examples (WAGOL's)
- Use of Multisensory Learning
- Peer and adult support in structured settings
- Independent, paired, and group work

7. Sequencing & Progression

At High Grange School, each subject is carefully sequenced to ensure knowledge and skills build progressively year-on-year. Learning starts with foundational concepts and skills, often delivered through play or scaffolded, therapy-informed approaches in early stages, and gradually moves towards more formalised and independent learning as pupils develop. A spiral curriculum and the deliberate revisiting of key concepts ensure reinforcement and mastery, while therapy-informed scaffolds allow pupils to access learning in line with their social, emotional, and cognitive needs. Clear sequencing supports ACE skill development, enabling pupils to transfer knowledge, problem-solving, and independence across subjects and stages. Regular reviews ensure the sequencing remains relevant, purposeful, and aligned with evolving educational standards.

The end points for each Key Stage are carefully planned and clearly defined. Curriculum planning identifies the knowledge, skills, and ACE outcomes pupils/students are expected to achieve by the end of each stage. This ensures that learning is purposeful, coherent, and builds towards meaningful progression, supporting pupils/students' academic, social and emotional development. Therapy-informed teaching strategies underpin this planning, ensuring that pupils/students can achieve these outcomes and transition successfully to the next stage of their education or life beyond school.

Detailed, year-by-year subject content is published in individual subject policies, available on the school website.

8. Equal Opportunity to Access the Curriculum

High Grange offers an inclusive curriculum with scaffolded learning. Scaffolds are personalised, such as visual supports, modelling, task chunking, and guided practice. To make sure that every pupil/student can access and engage with learning at their level. Therapy-informed strategies, integration and targeted interventions ensure all pupils/students have equal opportunities to succeed academically, vocationally, and socially.

9. Literacy, Language & Numeracy

Literacy, language, and numeracy are embedded across the curriculum and delivered through a combination of high-quality teaching and targeted interventions. Core skills are explicitly taught in lessons, with teachers modelling communication, vocabulary, reading, writing, and mathematical strategies that are aligned with pupils' ACE targets and EHCP outcomes.

Specialist interventions, including literacy programmes, communication support, and numeracy catch-up, complement classroom learning and provide personalised support where needed. There is a seamless link between classroom teaching and intervention: staff share assessment information, adapt planning, and reinforce strategies across both settings to ensure consistency, enhance progress, and secure strong long-term outcomes.

10. Curriculum Offer, Key Stages 1 & 2

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from RE lessons, at any stage of the curriculum. Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Early years and primary learning focus on building foundations for academic success and social-emotional growth. Therapy-informed teaching ensures pupils can regulate emotions, engage with peers, and access learning at an appropriate level.

Core Offer:

- National Curriculum subjects: Literacy, Numeracy, Science, PSHE, ICT/Computing, World Studies.

- Specialist subjects: PE, Swimming, Music, Food Technology, Design & Technology (Wood/Metal), Art, Forest School
- Enrichment: Offsite visits, Enrichment Mornings, House activities, Super Curriculum, MFL (drop-down/enrichment days).
- Therapy integration: Individual and group sessions in SLT, OT, Psychology/Wellbeing

EYFS focus (for pupils at early stages):

- Personal, Social & Emotional Development; Communication & Language; Physical Development
- Specific areas: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts & Design

Learning Approach:

- Early learning through play, gradually moving to formalised learning by upper Key Stage 2
- Scaffolded, therapy-informed teaching develops ACE skills, independence, and resilience

Building emotional regulation, social skills, and early academic foundations ensures pupils are ready for secondary learning and life experiences beyond the classroom.

11. Curriculum Offer, Key Stage 3

Transition to a secondary-style curriculum while maintaining supportive structures ensures pupils can broaden their knowledge, develop independence, and explore wider interests.

Curriculum Offer:

- Core subjects: English, Maths, Science, Computing, PSHE
- Additional subjects: RE, Geography, History, Citizenship, PE, Swimming, Music, Food Technology, Design & Technology (Wood/Metal), Drama
- Enrichment: Offsite visits, House activities, Super Curriculum, Horse Riding, MFL (drop-down/enrichment)
- Therapy integration: SLT, OT, and Psychology/Wellbeing support continues in learning activities
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Learning Approach:

- One classroom teacher for core subjects, specialist teachers for others
- Scaffolded teaching ensures pupils with ACE develop independence, resilience, and transferable life skills
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KS3 is a pivotal stage to embed independence, extend social-emotional skills, and consolidate core learning in preparation for GCSEs and vocational study.

12. Curriculum Offer, Key Stage 4

Pupils aged 14–16 consolidate skills for adulthood through a flexible curriculum with academic, vocational, and life skills elements. Therapy continues to inform scaffolding, enabling pupils with ACE to succeed academically and socially.

Curriculum Offer:

- Mandatory subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Computing, PE, PSHE, Preparation for Adulthood
- Accredited qualifications: GCSEs, Entry Levels, ASDAN, BTEC, Functional Skills, vocational courses
- Enrichment & PFA: Duke of Edinburgh Award, Sports Leaders, Dance Leaders, Work-related learning, Offsite experiences, Career guidance
- Therapy integration: SLT, OT, Psychology/Wellbeing embedded in practical tasks, work experience, and social learning

KS4 ensures pupils consolidate independence, employability skills, and academic achievement, ready for post-16 pathways and adult life.

13. Curriculum Offer, Key Stage 5/Post 16

Post-16 learning is highly individualised, focusing on independence, preparation for adulthood, and flexible study pathways. Therapy-informed learning supports students with ACE to transfer skills to real-life contexts, ensuring readiness for further study, work, or independent living.

Curriculum Offer:

- Academic qualifications: A Levels, AS Levels, GCSEs, Functional Skills
- Vocational qualifications: BTEC, ASDAN, Entry Levels, Level 1-3 courses, college links
- PFA: Independent living, travel, financial literacy, cooking, career management
- Work-related learning: Onsite/offsite placements, internships, community engagement
- Specialist awards & coaching: FA coaching, lifeguard, first aid, bespoke qualifications as required
- Careers guidance
- Alternative provision: Engineered Learning/Racing, photography, animal care
- Therapy integration: MDT team supports mental health, social thinking, and functional independence

Post-16 is crucial for consolidating life skills, independence, and employability. Our flexible curriculum allows pupils to make informed choices, apply learning in real contexts, and transition successfully into adult life.

14. Curriculum Review

The curriculum at High Grange School is reviewed every two years for each subject through a structured Curriculum Review Process. Senior leaders are actively involved with subject leads, meeting with staff and pupils/students to gather feedback and evaluate the impact, relevance, and accessibility of learning. A clear action plan is produced after each review to address priorities and drive improvement. This ensures the curriculum continues to reflect our ACE ethos, supporting pupils/students' social, emotional, and academic development, and embedding resilience, independence, and positive experiences across all areas of learning.

Regular, structured curriculum reviews are essential to ensure that our teaching remains responsive to pupils/students' developmental needs, trauma-informed practice, and evolving educational standards, providing learning that is both purposeful and transformative.

15. Overview for Parents

Our Aim

Helping every pupil and student reach their full potential with an inclusive, ambitious, and personalised curriculum that prepares them for independent, meaningful lives.

Our Ethos

- Adaptive Thinking, problem solving & flexibility
- Communication Skills, speaking, listening, expressing ideas
- Emotional Well-being, confidence, resilience, self-regulation
- Independence

What Pupils Learn

Core Subjects:

English, Maths, Science, Computing, PSHE, RE

Specialist Subjects:

PE, Music, Art, Design & Technology, Food Technology, Forest School

Enrichment & Life Skills:

Offsite visits, House activities, Super Curriculum, Vocational learning, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Preparation for Adulthood

Post-16 Pathways:

A Levels, BTEC, ASDAN, Functional Skills, Independent living, Work experience, Careers guidance, Preparation for Adulthood

Therapy Support:

Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language, Psychology integrated across all learning

How We Teach

- Scaffolded & personalised lessons for each child
- Evidence-informed approaches to help pupils/students know more, remember more, and do more
- Focus on developing ACE skills, independence, resilience, and social confidence

Inclusion & Accessibility

- All pupils have equal access to learning
- Curriculum adapted to meet individual needs
- Guided by EHCP targets and therapy input

Parent Information

- You have the right to withdraw from RE: Requests in writing to the Headteacher
- Full curriculum details are available via individual subject policies on the school website

- The Accessibility Plan explains how learning is made accessible for all pupils and students and is available on the school website.
- Other linked policies: Assessment, PSHE, RSE, SMSC