Curriculum policy



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| **Approved by:** | Daniel McCann (Headteacher) |
| **Date effective from:** | December 2023 |
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# 1. Curriculum aims

Music Stuff Education (MSE) is a specialist independent secondary school which is based across Greater Manchester. MSE operates as a full-time school for children with SEMH needs. Additionally, we Full-time alternative provision. Our school opened in 2012 and now spans across 7 learning centres; Cuthbert 1, Cuthbert 2, Cuthbert 2B, Cuthbert 3, Fog Lane 1, Fog Lane 2 and Wilbraham Road. Many of our students have needs around SEMH (either met or currently unmet) which can act as potential barriers to learning. Many too will have experienced developmental and environmental issues and many experience high levels of deprivation, with the majority of our students not experiencing the range of more rounded, cultural and developmental opportunities available to peers elsewhere.

In line with our ethos of Intervene, Support and Succeed, we aim to provide our students with a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment, where everyone is valued and given a fresh start and the chance to achieve success. All students are entitled to a curriculum that meets their needs and prepares them for life’s opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences. Our aim is to provide a curriculum that is ambitious, broad and balanced and one that nurtures and encourages everyone to achieve their full potential. We hope to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and cultural capital they need to access further education, employment or apprenticeship, preparing them for adulthood.

* Our curriculum is designed to:
* Be ambitious, broad and balanced and allow all students to access a range of academic, vocational and creative subjects that inspire, motivate and foster a curiosity to learn
* Enable all students to make progress form their individual starting points and to achieve success in their learning
* Be underpinned by the national curriculum but flexible enough to adapt to the needs of our students
* Have a strong focus on improving students literacy and numeracy
* Support students social, emotional and mental health and develop confidence, self-esteem, independence, social skills, and teamwork
* Support all students to lead healthy and safe lifestyles
* Be inclusive, encourage respect, celebrate diversity and uphold the fundamental British values
* Prepare our students for the next stage in their education and for adulthood

The Curriculum aims are underpinned by our values; Ready, Respectful, Safe and Successful, and the six principles of nurture:

* Childrens learning is understood developmentally
* The classroom offers a safe space
* The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
* Language is a vital means of communication
* All behaviour is communication
* The importance of transition in children's lives

# 2. Legislation and guidance

The policy reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25) and [Equality Act 2010](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/part/6/chapter/1), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education’s [Governance Handbook](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook).

# 3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

* A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
* Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
* The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
* It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
* Pupils are provided with careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

3.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

* All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
* The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
* They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
* The school’s procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
* The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
* The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
* Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND

3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

# 4. Organisation and planning

Heads of Department are experts in their subject, they lead on the content, specifications and delivery of the curriculum in each subject. At the heart of curriculum design is a shared commitment to constructing programmes of study that pupils find interesting and challenging but are coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge. Our curriculum has the ambition of the national curriculum but is flexible to meet the needs of our students. Key knowledge and skills are identified through our end point document at KS3, or the course specification at KS4, and children have regular opportunities to revisit, recall and apply key knowledge and skills in order to deepen their understanding. When teaching new content and skills, teachers provide explicit support and guidance and fully explain the concepts and skills that students are required to learn in manageable smaller steps. Formative, ongoing assessment is inextricably linked with our curriculum method. Teachers use quality first teaching strategies and Students’ are given time to practise new knowledge and skills across all areas of the curriculum, enabling children to know more and remember more and move from basic, to deeper understanding and ensure that there is a sustained change in their long term memory.

Students can arrive at Music Stuff Education at any time in their school career and we have in place a baselining process which accurately assess students’ prior knowledge, identifies gaps and allows students to make progress no matter what their starting point, with a personalised and ‘gap lead’ approach. Prior attainment data and knowledge of students’ SEND needs are used alongside baseline assessments in English, reading, maths, science and art to set quantitative and qualitative targets. Gap analysis is used in core subjects to identify students’ gaps in learning and starting points and set individual targets. Reading is assessed using the GL New Group Reading Test and reading ages and age standardized scores are shared with all staff and interventions put in place as necessary.

We recognise our school context and students social and emotional needs; the wider curriculum and pastoral support are as important to us as academic achievement. Our curriculum offer encompasses all learning experiences that our students receive whilst with us, including enrichment time, trips and other experiences, building confidence and aspirations for the future irrespective of their entry point and SEND. This is intended to raise self-esteem, challenge pupils at an appropriate level and to help them enjoy learning whilst achieving positive outcomes and prepare them for adulthood. All our Centres follow a ‘school themes calendar’ which looks at different themes across the year including black history month, fire safety, democracy week and religious festivals and students are able to take part in activities based around the theme, including trips and visitors, supporting students spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Statutory RSE content is taught during PSHE lessons and is provided by an external provider and British values and careers education are taught as part of the PSHE curriculum.

Our curriculum documents outline the broad and balanced curriculum that all our pupils can expect. As stated above, it outlines our emphasis on key skills and knowledge, broad and engaging experiences and a focus on personal development.

We provide the following key curriculum documents:

- ‘Whole School long-term overview’ which shares the overview of topics for every year group across our centres.

- ‘Subject long-term overviews’ which share the whole school sequence of topics that are covered in each year group for every subject.

- ‘Subject end point documents for each subject, which outline the progressive subject skills, knowledge and Concepts and work alongside progression steps.

- ‘medium term plans/unit plans’ which guide staff on the learning journey a class may take to meet the end points. These include details of how we ensure all students are able to learn and make progress.

- ‘Knowledge Organisers’ outline key knowledge and vocabulary we want children to know in particular subject areas.

**Key Stage 3 (Wilbraham Centre)**

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum builds on knowledge and skills from Key Stage 2 and provides our students with a solid foundation for KS4. We aim to provide students with a broad and balanced range of subjects. We emphasise core skills of literacy and numeracy and whilst our curriculum is broadly based on the national curriculum, it is flexible enough to ensure we meet the needs of our students, many of whom are working well below age related expectations. As well as timetabled core subjects of English, Reading, Maths and Science, all students study PSHE/RSE, History and Art and Design. To enrich their offer students also have timetabled enrichment activities including multimedia, Food and Cooking and visual arts and Physical activity. Students are supported in their social and emotional development through activities based on the thrive profile and a nurture-based ethos, with a high student to staff ratio and small classes.

**Key Stage 4 (with integrated year 9s)**

At Key Stage 4, we offer GCSE’s, Functional skills and entry level certificates, BTEC and ASDAN qualifications and these include both academic and vocational subjects. As well as the core offer of English Language, Maths, Science, Art and Design, History and PSHE/RSE qualification students have the option of studying subjects including sport, food and cooking and construction. Please see below for the qualifications that we offer. There are timetabled periods for physical activity and for enrichment activities including multimedia and offsite activities.

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| Subject | Qualifications: |
| English language | Entry Level CertificateGCSE |
| Maths | Entry Level CertificateGCSE |
| Science | Entry Level CertificateGCSE (combined) |
| Art and design | GCSE |
| History | Entry levelGCSE |
| ASDAN PDP | Bronze, silver, gold |
| Construction, Sport, Home cooking, | Entry level 3/BTEC Level 1 introductory course/BTEC Level 1 |

# 5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

* More able pupils
* Pupils with low prior attainment
* Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
* Pupils with SEND
* Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEND can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEND policy and information report.

# 6. Monitoring arrangements

Subject leaders/curriculum leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

Planning scrutiny

Learning walks,

Books scrutiny,

Lesson observations,

Student voice questionnaires,

Meetings with student council.

They also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the headteacher Daniel McCann, Deputy head for teaching and learning, Lyndsey Murray and the governors. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

# 7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

* Assessment policy
* Marking and feedback policy
* RSE policy
* Literacy policy
* Careers policy
* SMSC policy
* SEND policy and information report
* Equality information and objectives