AHS Curriculum Policy
Prepared by: The Central Team
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1. INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

Abingdon House School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education, the Proprietary Body also known as the Governing Body. Any reference to Governors means any Director of Cavendish Education.

This policy document is one of a series of AHS policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive, formal statement of AHS's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each and every one of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures being put into place to achieve this.

Accordingly, this policy cross-references and should be read in conjunction with the following key policies and strategic documents:

- Curriculum maps & Subject schemes of work
- Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEND Policy
- Three-Year Accessibility Plan
- Equality Objectives & Equality Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) Policy & Consultation Information
- Reading and Phonics Policy
- Careers Programme (Secondary)
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Promoting British Values Policy

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other regulatory requirements (including Independent School Standards), but to evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core principles.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility updated August 2023, considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part-time, and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

2. OVERVIEW & CORE VALUES

At Abingdon House School, we are committed to providing a quality learning experience for students with specific learning difficulties and neurodiverse profiles. We achieve this by providing a stimulating and exciting learning environment that develops each child holistically and equips them with the necessary social skills and life skills required to become independent and responsible citizens. Teaching and learning are influenced by the promotion of SMSC education, and students are encouraged to develop personal skills that reflect Fundamental British Values and the values of our school community.

3. AHS CURRICULUM INTENT & SCOPE

The curriculum at AHS is ambitious, broad and balanced, designed to serve pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) without setting artificial limits on attainment or opportunity. It provides comprehensive coverage across all key statutory areas of learning:

- Linguistic: Developing language, communication, reading, writing, and oracy skills through structured literacy, phonics, speech therapy integration, and literature.
- Mathematical: Developing numeracy, logical reasoning, calculation, and practical problem-solving applicable to real-world contexts.
- Scientific: Cultivating scientific enquiry, observational skills, and knowledge of biological, physical, and chemical processes.
- Technological: Developing digital literacy, computing, ICT application across subjects, home cooking, and practical design/construction.
- Human and Social: Fostering historical, geographical, economic, and civic understanding, combined with humanities and community involvement.
- Physical: Promoting physical health, motor skill development, sportsmanship, and life-long fitness through planned physical education.
- Aesthetic and Creative: Expressing creativity through visual art, drama, music, and multi-media production.

Key curriculum aims:

- Ensure all students make progress in line with their age, aptitude and additional need, with reference to their individual starting points.
- Provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum adapted to individual needs without limiting opportunity.
- Build up each student's confidence and motivation to learn through the use of multi-sensory teaching techniques.
- Embed key skills in order to prepare students for real-life, everyday situations and preparation for adulthood.
- Stimulate natural curiosity, giving students the confidence to explore engaging topics.
- Develop students' skills as effective communicators through a structured oracy framework (Voice 21) and Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) integration.
- Deliver robust instruction in English, Maths, Computing, and Digital Literacy.
- Enable students to recognise interdisciplinary connections across subjects.
- Encourage the seamless integration of ICT and responsible technology use across all areas of learning.
- Develop social and life skills that encourage students to become active, responsible citizens within the school community and wider society.

- Make students aware of their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development, the rights of others and the distinction between right and wrong.
- Foster an understanding of truth, fairness, and fundamental equality, promoting respect for all people regardless of background or religious belief.
- Prepare students for independence, further education, employment and adulthood.

4. CURRICULUM SEQUENCING & IMPLEMENTATION

The curriculum at AHS is thoroughly planned and systematically sequenced to enable pupils to build knowledge, skills, and understanding cumulatively over time. Long-term plans, medium-term plans, and schemes of work clearly identify the specific knowledge, concepts, and skills to be acquired in each subject and year group.

Planning Hierarchy

- Long-Term Plans: SLT and curriculum leads establish a long-term curriculum framework for each class/ability pathway. This outlines the subject themes, key knowledge, and skill sequences taught each half-term. The Headteacher and Head of School review long-term plans to ensure appropriate vertical sequencing and intellectual ambition. Long-term plans are accessible via the school office upon request.
- Medium-Term Plans**:** Subject leaders and teachers translate long-term plans into half-termly objectives, detailing week-by-week learning steps, essential vocabulary (using Word Aware), multi-sensory strategies, and adaptive teaching methods. Subject Leads and SLT review these plans to verify coherent progression.
- Short-Term (Weekly/Daily) Plans: Lesson-level planning is documented through teaching resources and slides. Teachers conduct ongoing post-lesson evaluations to determine whether objectives were met, identifying required consolidation or extension for subsequent sessions.
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs): Led by the SENCo and multidisciplinary team, termly IEPs set personalised outcomes for each student. Outcomes are regularly reviewed and integrated into daily classroom instruction.

Cross-Phase Enrichment & Whole-School Themes

Shorter "Themes of the Week" run throughout the year to foster cross-phase collaboration and mark significant events (e.g., World Cup, Diversity Week, Teamwork, National Elections, Olympic Games). These offer opportunities to apply cross-curricular knowledge in practical contexts.

5. PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING, LEARNING & ADAPTIVE PRACTICE

Teaching and learning at AHS are governed by the following core principles:

- Application of Knowledge: Providing opportunities to apply knowledge and skills in practical, real-world contexts.
- Individualisation & IEP Integration: Shaping curriculum delivery around student IEP targets and involving learners in setting their goals.
- Multidisciplinary Approach: Integrating Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and educators to deliver tailored, multi-sensory instruction.
- Enrichment & Broadening Horizons: Expanding learning inside and outside the classroom through educational visits, expert visitors, and community experiences.
- Adaptive Teaching & Reasonable Adjustments: Differentiating tasks through scaffolding, ability grouping, flexible task design, and assistive technology to ensure full access for pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans without lowering expectations.
- Therapeutic & Pastoral Synergy: Combining educational, therapeutic, and pastoral care to remove barriers to learning and promote emotional wellbeing.

6. CURRICULUM IMPACT & EVALUATION

The impact of the AHS curriculum is systematically evaluated across multiple dimensions to ensure every pupil achieves their full potential.

Evaluation Criteria

- Pupil Achievement & Progress: Monitored through baseline metrics, formative classroom assessment, IEP target review, and formal qualification outcomes (Entry Level, Functional Skills, GCSE, BTEC, ASDAN, NCFE, RSL and the King's Trust).
- Engagement & Personal Development: Evaluated through participation in enrichment, therapeutic goals, student voice and elected Junior Leadership Team contributions.
- Attendance & Wellbeing: Tracked alongside pastoral data to ensure a supportive environment where students feel safe and ready to learn.
- Preparation for Adulthood & Next Steps: Measured by successful transitions into post-16/post-18 education, training, vocational placements, and independent living skills mastery.

For detailed marking, tracking, and grading procedures, refer to the **AHS Assessment Policy**.

7. FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, EQUALITY, SMSC

Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) Development
SMSC development is embedded across the entire curriculum, assemblies, form time, and wider school life, supporting students to develop self-knowledge, empathy, and moral responsibility.

Fundamental British Values
In accordance with statutory guidance, AHS actively promotes the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

- Non-Undermining Guarantee: AHS explicitly guarantees that all curriculum content, teaching materials, and external resources are rigorously vetted to ensure they do not undermine Fundamental British Values or promote partisan political views.
- Political Impartiality: Where political or controversial issues arise in the curriculum (e.g., humanities, English, current affairs), they are presented in a balanced, politically impartial manner.

Protected Characteristics & Equality Act 2010
In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the curriculum explicitly teaches respect for all people regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Diversity is celebrated, and discrimination is actively challenged.

Religious Education (RE)
Religious Education is delivered within Humanities and cross-curricular themes. RE promotes respect and tolerance for people of all religions, faiths, and non-religious worldviews (e.g., Humanism). An annual multicultural calendar ensures major religious and cultural festivals are marked through assemblies and form periods.

8. PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH & ECONOMIC EDUCATION (PSHE)

PSHE is delivered as a discrete subject in line with recommended guidance from the PSHE Association. The PSHE curriculum is tailored to the neurodiverse profiles of our students, focusing on:

- Self-awareness and emotional regulation
- Healthy living, personal wellbeing, and mental health
- Personal and online safety
- Growing up, physical changes, and puberty
- Careers education, financial capability, and money management
- Social skills, consent, and safety using the So-Safe framework

For full details, see the standalone **PSHE Policy**.

9. RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with Independent School Standard 2A and statutory guidance, Relationships Education (Prep and Lower Senior) and Relationships and Sex Education (Upper Senior and Sixth Form) are planned and delivered as a distinct framework, separate from standard PSHE content.

RSHE Delivery & Resources
RSHE instruction is age-appropriate and tailored to pupils' developmental needs. Resources are sourced from vetted providers including the PSHE Association, So-Safe, CEOP, and NSPCC.

Parental Rights & Consultation
Parents are consulted on the RSHE policy and curriculum content. Parents maintain the statutory right to request that their child be excused from non-statutory elements of Sex Education. Upon receiving

such a request, the Headteacher engages in direct dialogue with parents to explore potential adaptations or alternative arrangements.

10. DIGITAL LITERACY, ONLINE SAFETY, RESPONSIBLE TECHNOLOGY

AHS embeds digital technology across all subjects to enhance accessibility and independent learning. In addition to discrete IT instruction, the school delivers a coordinated Digital Literacy and Online Safety framework across the wider curriculum.

Key Strands

- Touch Typing & Assistive Technology: Explicit instruction using touch-typing programmes (Sense-Lang, TypingClub) and screen readers/speech-to-text tools to build academic independence.
- Online Safety & Cyberbullying: Integrated teaching across IT, PSHE, and assemblies covering password security, online privacy, recognising safe vs. unsafe contacts, digital footprint, and reporting online harms.
- Responsible Technology Use: Instruction on critical thinking online, evaluating digital content, avoiding online mis/disinformation, and practicing proper netiquette.

All digital technology usage is governed by the school's **Online Safety Policy** and **Acceptable Use Agreements.**

11. MOBILE PHONE GUIDANCE & LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

To preserve a safe, distraction-free learning environment and support safeguarding and positive behaviour, AHS enforces strict expectations regarding mobile phones and personal smart devices.

- Learning Environment Rules: Student mobile phones and personal electronic devices must be switched off and stored in the student's locked phone pouch.
- Curriculum Adaptations: Personal mobile devices are not permitted for use during lessons or break times, unless an explicit, documented reasonable adjustment or assistive technology requirement is specified in a student's IEP/EHC Plan and approved by the SLT.
- Safeguarding Alignment: Mobile phone policies are cross-referenced with the school's **Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Mobile Phone Policy,** and **Online Safety Policy**.

12. CURRICULUM OUTLINE BY SCHOOL SECTION

Teaching and learning at AHS follow the National Curriculum, adapted to student needs and enhanced by an integrated therapeutic framework (Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy). Oracy is embedded whole-school in partnership with Voice 21. Modern Foreign Languages are offered through enrichment rather than compulsory discrete classes due to student SEN profiles.

A. Abingdon Prep School (Years 3–8)

Students in Abingdon Prep cover: Maths, English, Science, Interventions, IT, PSHE, RSHE, Humanities (History, Geography, RE), PE, Music, Enrichment, Fine Motor Skills, Creative Carousel (Food Tech, Textiles, Art), Life Skills, Social Skills, and Games.

A thematic curriculum is utilised in English, Science, Humanities, Art, and IT to support skill transfer.

B. Senior School (Years 7–12)
The Senior School offers adapted National Curriculum pathways transitioning into accredited qualification pathways based on student readiness.

1. Lower Senior School (Years 7–9)
Subjects: English, Maths, Science, IT, Humanities, PE, Games, Social Skills, Life Skills, Food Tech, Art, Drama, Music, PSHE, RSHE, Enrichment.

2. Upper Senior School Pathways (Years 9–12 / 3-Year Cycle)

Pathway Feature	Theta Curriculum Pathway	Sigma Curriculum Pathway
Target Cohort	Years 9–12	Years 9–12
Core Qualifications	• **English:** Entry Level 1 – Level 2 (Functional Skills) • **Maths:** Entry Level 1 – Level 2 (Functional Skills) • **Science:** AQA Unit Award • **Humanities:** AQA Unit Award / WJEC Entry Level Certificate • **IT:** AQA Unit Award • **ASDAN CoPE:** Level 1 • **Prince's Trust:** Level 1 Personal Development & Employability • **Home Cooking Skills:** Level 1	• **English:** Entry Level 1 – Level 2 (Functional Skills / GCSE) • **Maths:** Entry Level 1 – Level 2 (Functional Skills / GCSE) • **Applied Science:** BTEC Level 1/2 or GCSE • **Humanities:** AQA Level 1 / Level 2 Project • **IT:** NCFE Level 1/2 IT User Skills • **ASDAN CoPE:** Level 1 / 2 • **Prince's Trust:** Level 1/2 Personal Development & Employability • **Home Cooking Skills:** Level 1 / Level 2
Options (Choose Two)	Up to Level 1 options: NCFE Sport, BTEC Art & Design, BTEC Creative Media, BTEC Performing Arts, City & Guilds Horticulture, BTEC Hospitality & Tourism, NCFE Travel & Tourism,	Up to Level 2 options: NCFE Sport, BTEC Art & Design, BTEC Creative Media, BTEC Performing Arts, City & Guilds Horticulture, NCFE Travel &

	Duke of Edinburgh (Bronze/Silver).	Tourism, Duke of Edinburgh (Bronze/Silver).
Non-Qualification Lessons	PSHE, RSHE, PE, Games, Life Skills, Social Skills, Creative Arts rotation (Art, Music, Drama), Employability.	PSHE, RSHE, PE, Life Skills, Social Skills, Creative Arts rotation (Art, Music, Drama), Employability.

C. Sixth Form (Years 12–14)
Sixth Form focuses on vocational pathways, functional qualifications, life skills, and the Wheel of Independence framework. Subjects include Pre-vocational Studies, Functional/GCSE English and Maths, Science, IT, PSHE, RSHE, Food Tech, PE, Life Skills, Social Skills, BTEC Options, Creative Arts, and Employability.

13. SUBJECT SPECIFIC STATEMENTS

Literacy, Reading & Phonics Statement
Literacy is taught explicitly and embedded across all subjects. Oracy (Voice 21) and vocabulary instruction (Word Aware) form central pillars. Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists collaborate during literacy instruction to address handwriting, typing, and fine motor needs.

- Phonics Programme: AHS uses the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme, adapted for SEND learners through personalised, multi-sensory strategies. Phonics is taught daily to students requiring systematic synthetic phonics support.
- Prep Reading: Utilises The Sonar Curriculum aligned with KS1/KS2 National Curriculum targets.
- Senior Reading & Qualification Pathways: Combines Functional Skills English frameworks (Entry Level to Level 2), Pearson iGCSE English Language, and Accelerated Reader to build decoding and comprehension.

For further details, refer to the standalone Reading and Phonics Policy.

Numeracy Statement
Maths is taught discretely and applied across cross-curricular contexts. Small ability-based streaming (Y1–Y9 level in Prep/Lower Senior) ensures secure mastery using visual and concrete resources. Upper Senior pathways progress through Pearson Functional Skills (Entry Level to Level 2), Pearson Entry Level Certificate, Pearson Number & Measure, and AQA GCSE Mathematics.

Intervention Framework
Daily morning intervention sessions are led by teachers and TAs, overseen by the Senior SENCo, and supported by therapists. Interventions run on a 1–2 term cycle based on baseline assessments.
Academic and SEMH programmes include:

- Academic: Sight Word Reading (Precision Teaching), Dyslexia Group (Multi-sensory approach), Accelerated Reader, Intensive Phonics, Guided Reading (VIPERS), Dynamo Maths, IDL

Numeracy, Plus 1 / Power of 2, Touch Typing (TypingClub), Nuffield Dyspraxia Sound Production, Fine Motor Group.
- Extension / SEMH: LetGrow Independence Projects, Philosophy for Kids, Debating, GCSE Revision, Fitness for Regulation.

Humanities & Religious Education
Humanities encompasses Geography, History, and RE, building critical thinking and global understanding. RE instruction adheres to statutory guidance, encouraging respect for diverse religious and non-religious worldviews.

Preparation for Adulthood & Careers Education
Delivered in alignment with the Gatsby Benchmarks. Key features include impartial advice via Scope careers advisors, tracking through the Career Education Centre's Compass tool, resources from The King's Trust and Inspiring the Future, work placements via Westminster City Council, drop-down days, and employer encounters.

Wellbeing & Enrichment
Wellbeing is fostered through structured PSHE lessons, Wellbeing Wednesdays, Children's Mental Health Week, LetGrow initiatives, and Junior Leadership Team participation. Enrichment activities occur weekly (three times weekly in Lower Senior, one afternoon in Prep), nurturing physical, creative, and community skills (e.g., British Sign Language, circuit training, horticulture, model building).

Creative Arts & Physical Education
- Creative Arts: Art, Drama, and Music are taught discretely in Lower Senior and on rotation in Upper Senior, developing self-expression, performance, and digital editing skills.
- Physical Education: PE is a timetabled, mandatory curriculum component promoting fitness, motor skills, teamwork, and competitive sportsmanship (Sports Days, inter-school fixtures).

14. TEMPORARY CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

Where temporary curriculum adaptations are required for individual pupils or specific cohorts (e.g., due to medical needs, phased reintegration, emergency conditions, or specific local authority directives):

- The rationale, scope, and duration of the adaptation must be documented formally in the student's IEP / Personal Learning Plan.
- Adaptations must be approved by the Headteacher and SENCo.
- All temporary adaptations are reviewed half-termly to ensure the pupil is supported back toward the full broad and ambitious curriculum as soon as appropriate.

15. APPROVAL & POLICY REVIEW

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed and updated annually, and whenever there is a relevant change to our curriculum offer.

Policy Approver(s)	Cavendish Education Board of Directors/Senior Leadership Team of the school

Storage Location	Online, hard copy in the school
Effective Date	October 2026
Next Review Date	October 2027

16. REVISION HISTORY

Version	Change	Author	Date of Change
1.0	September 2025	Headteacher / SLT	Annual policy review and formatting update.
2.0	October 2026	Headteacher / SLT	Full alignment rewrite following 1 July 2026 Curriculum Policy Checklist updates: explicit sequencing explanations, assessment impact evaluation, separation of PSHE and RSHE (Standard 2A), inclusion of Digital Literacy & Online Safety across the curriculum, mobile phone learning guidelines, statutory references to protected characteristics and political impartiality, explicit FBV non-undermining assurance, and cross-referencing to the 3-Year Accessibility Plan, Equality Objectives, and associated policies.