

Aurora Eccles School

Curriculum Policy incorporating Examinations and Externally Accredited Courses

Policy Reference:	<i>ECS4</i>
Version Number:	<i>8</i>
Applies to:	<i>Aurora Eccles School</i>
Associated documents:	<i>ECS 4.1 Assessment reporting and recording policy</i>
Approved by:	<i>Principal</i>
Implementation date:	<i>October 2023</i>
Next review due by:	<i>October 2024</i>
<i>This policy has been reviewed to ensure it promotes safeguarding and does not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups</i>	

Summary of changes since previous version of policy

- *Inclusion of previous stand-alone policy ECS 4.2 examinations and externally accredited courses*
- *Removal of appendix 1 'supporting outreach students'*
- *Removal of appendix 2 'Intent and Implementation'*
- *Updated school day times*
- *Updated school timetables*

Introduction

Purpose

The curriculum at Aurora Eccles School intends to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, largely referencing the National Curriculum for England and Wales augmented by opportunities for personal and social development to students who experience a range of special educational needs and disabilities.

Students who attend the school will usually have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and prior to admission they will have been heavily supported in mainstream schools or been out of education for a period of time. Therefore, our intention is to provide a curriculum that supports and reinforces learning and helps students to connect information and experiences through a holistic approach initially based on their EHCP, but also their levels of attainment and abilities on entry to the school.

The range of special educational needs and disabilities include social and communication difficulties, mild to moderate learning difficulties, autism, speech language and communication difficulties, specific learning difficulties, or Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). This means that as part of our curriculum intentions, we will make individual changes for students to match their needs and disabilities.

Overall, the school intends that the student experience will broadly mirror the National Curriculum. However, because of our students' needs, we have also extended the curriculum by adding several more specialised, enriching subjects to meet their more individual or collective needs.

The school curriculum also intends to ensure that students' vulnerabilities are reduced and, that by the time they leave, students are more confident and less at risk. To achieve this, our curriculum intends to be broad, balanced, well planned, and to have a particular focus on safeguarding which is promoted through SMSC/PSHRE opportunities to increase personal awareness and support good decision making in the future.

In addition, the curriculum intends to support students to develop a range of coping skills helping them to build resilience and become more consistently emotionally regulated by applying learnt strategies to situations that cause stress and anxiety.

Similarly, we intend the curriculum to be able to support and develop all our students in becoming as independent as possible, and to assist them in attaining the best possible academic outcomes. This means that we want our students to see themselves as competent learners with a 'can do' attitude. To achieve this, we offer several externally accredited programmes and courses to all students according to their abilities and levels of attainments, e.g., THRIVE approach, ASDAN courses. We also offer therapies and individual support programmes as per our students identified EHCP needs, provisions and outcomes (i.e., specialist support). The therapy team also offer targeted and universal support for the development of social communication and emotional regulation skills to all students.

To support the range of special needs and disabilities on an operational level in school, the school and its curriculum is divided into two main types of class: nurture classes and chronological classes. The nurture groups provide for the more vulnerable students who have a higher level of need. The intention is to provide a curriculum that balances education, personal and social development, with access to a range of therapies to improve social communication and life skills. This curriculum would not necessarily resemble a traditional mainstream education as the needs of our students are far more complex. Exceptionally, some students have alternative programmes arranged to support them whilst they are finding it hard to access our usual or nurture curriculum offer.

Policy Statement

Curriculum content

The school provides a broad, balanced curriculum through which all students receive a full-time supervised education with a curriculum that includes a range of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative aspects appropriate to their age, aptitude and stage of development.

The importance of SMSC in the Curriculum

It is often the case that young people in special education have a higher risk of vulnerability and so the social, moral, spiritual and cultural curriculum at Aurora Eccles School plays an important part in their personal development and an understanding of the wider world that surrounds them. This means that the curriculum for PSHE, RSE, RE and Citizenship and British Values will, by utilising visits, celebrations, awareness days and guest speakers explore SMSC matters including equality, relationships and sex education, the prevention of exploitation or radicalisation, and the promotion of safeguarding and protection at an individual and collective level.

Teachers, HLTAs and TAs

There are a high number of Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Higher Learning Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) in all lessons to support students access to the curriculum, and to ensure that their individual SEND is catered for. HLTAs also lead teaching in some elements of learning, for example in art, because they have a specialism or experience in that area that can benefit the students.

Groups, Lessons and the Teaching Day

The curriculum in the secondary school is taught mainly by a range of subject specialist or otherwise experienced teachers. There are 6 periods in a day and class groups, normally with a maximum of 8 students, who stay in their base room unless they are required to move to a specialist classroom or space.

In nurture classes, there are 6 lessons a day and each class have a maximum of 10 students. These groups are based in separate, specialist provisions and are supported by a specific group of teachers, HLTAs and TAs to ensure consistency. Learning can be delivered through themes and projects, though the groups also have access to a wider, more specialised, practical curriculum including swimming and outdoor and woodland learning (OWLs).

Enrichment and non-statutory additions to the curriculum.

Enrichment subjects offered include horticulture, multi-media, DT, and cookery. In addition, as part of their weekly non-statutory curriculum, students also access OWLs and swimming. In addition to their planned objectives, these subjects help meet the unique needs of the students in terms of decreasing anxiety, improving social communication skills, raising levels of engagement, and providing opportunities to develop personal interests.

Examinations and externally accredited courses – please also refer to Appendix 1

Students in Key Stage 4, including those in the nurture classes, will be able to access a range of externally accredited courses according to their abilities and levels of attainment. At GCSE, students will study English, Science and Maths as a regular part of the curriculum and through a range of options. We offer functional skills qualifications where these represent the most appropriate choice for English, Maths and Science. Students can also achieve accreditation in ASDAN. This includes subjects such as PSHE, Expressive Arts, History, AOPE or COPE and Geography. AQA Unit Awards are also offered across all year groups, often linked to life skills and cookery.

Employability, access to Work Related Learning and FE Collages

For students across Key Stage 4 the school aims to improve students' employability skills and/or extend their learning opportunities in subjects at an FE College and places of work whenever the school is unable to provide them on site. A coordinator oversees both areas, carrying out risk assessments, suitability checks, and makes regular placement visits to support students, focusing on developing confidence and independence skills, whilst ensuring that there are clear lines of communication between the student, the school, the college/placement, and the students' parents/carers. Work experience placements are organised in collaboration with an accredited provider. CEIAG meetings with a qualified guidance advisor via an organisation independent of the school.

Supporting individual special educational needs and disabilities in the curriculum

Teachers, HLTAs and TAs meet regularly to discuss and plan supportive learning strategies that will be effective in helping students to overcome their areas of difficulty, meaning that all tasks are differentiated, and individual learning styles are supported. Through assessment, student progress is monitored and evaluated, with information and evidence being used to generate new objectives as the student develops. To improve access to learning, every student has an IEP, a Behaviour Support Plan and a Risk Assessment, which aims to help each student to be better emotionally regulated and manage positively throughout the school day.

Students who experience low levels of literacy, specific learning difficulties, speech, language difficulties, or social communication difficulties, work to a more individualised programme and receive 1:1 support, or work in small, targeted groups. This may be for an intensive period, especially on entry to the school, supporting students to make rapid progress so that they can quickly begin to access the full curriculum. However, others, depending on their level of need may access these sessions throughout their time at the school.

The school has a clinical team that works closely with teachers, HLTAs and TAs to support the delivery of the curriculum to students who experience temporary or long-term difficulties with emotional wellbeing, mental health or more advanced social and communication needs.

Maintaining high quality Teaching and Learning in the curriculum

To deliver the curriculum to a high standard, it is vital that teaching and learning is maintained to a consistently high quality. As part of the quality assurance process, each subject has a curriculum lead who oversees its delivery, quality of teaching and learning, and assessment processes. In addition, teachers, HLTAs and TAs are regularly observed by Curriculum Leads and senior managers and receive feedback that then informs CPD at an individual or a whole school (education) staff level.

To ensure consistency and to identify the uniqueness of every subject taught, each subject has its own aims document, and series of pre-planned Programmes of Study/Schemes of Work across all year groups, forming an holistic curriculum map that builds sequentially on the key concepts, and the individual skills, knowledge and understanding of that subject. All lessons have plans that inform the teacher, student, and other staff who are supporting the learning of the lesson's objectives, how it links to prior learning and where it can be applied generally. Plans also include key words and concepts, and how content will be differentiated and supported through a range of learning styles.

Assessment and the curriculum

Assessment for Learning (AfL) will form a regular part of all learning activities to identify how secure students learning is from lesson to lesson, identifying areas for development and correcting misconceptions. AfL evidence will also be used to inform next lesson planning either for individual student level, or in relation to the content, delivery or resources needed to improve the next lesson.

Students will be assessed through various methods at the end of every programme of study/scheme of work, theme or project, and any data collected will be uploaded to Earwig or a similar recording system. Where this is not appropriate, information and evidence of progress will be recorded through a more specialised process. Information collected will also inform next steps planning at a student or subject level.

Summary assessment information will be used to complete end of term and end of year reports and will be sent to parents/carers and any other professionals or agencies who support the student. Curriculum Leads and teachers will also use the summary information to reflect on curriculum delivery and content and then used to inform future planning.

Impact

We believe that the impact of our curriculum will inspire each student to develop their individuality, helping them to grow and develop in their own unique way, and to achieve their full potential - educationally, socially and personally.

Through the high-quality delivery and range of opportunities provided by our curriculum, we believe its impact will ensure that young people are prepared for their future, and that it will provide them with a well-rounded education and range of strategies to improve their choices in life – whether that is further education, which includes being able to access mainstream settings, training, or to explore job opportunities.

Times of the School Day

8.45 – 9.00	Arrival
9.00 – 9.30	Tutor time/registration
9.30 – 10.15	Lesson 1
10.15 – 11.00	Lesson 2
Morning Break 11.00 – 11.15	
11.15 – 12.00	Lesson 3
12.00 – 12.45	Lesson 4 / lunch 1
12:45 – 13:25	Lunch 2 / Lesson 4
1.25 – 1.30	Registration
1.30 – 2.15	Lesson 5
2.15 – 3.00	Lesson 6
3.00 – 3.30	Tutor time and Sign Out

Appendix 1: Master timetable

Yellow 1	Arrival 8:45 - 9:00	Reg 9:00 - 9:30	Lesson 1 9:30 - 10:15	Lesson 2 10:15 - 11:00	Break 11:00 - 11:15	Lesson 3 11:15 - 12:00	Lunch 12:00 - 12:45	Lesson 4 12:45 - 13:30	Lesson 5 13:30 - 14:15	Lesson 6 14:15 - 15:00	Sign Out 15:00 - 15:30
Monday	Arrival	Registration / Thrive	English HK	Maths HK	Break 11:00 - 11:15	OWLs SS		Lunch	Humanities HK	PSHRE HK	Thrive / Sign out
Tuesday			Maths HK	PE RC		M & D	Lunch	English HK	Creative AM,MW	LifeSkills HK	
Wednesday			ICT HK	English HK		Maths HK		Science HK	M & D		
Thursday			English HK	Maths HK		Science HK	Swimming KW	Lunch	PSHRE HK	Humanities HK	
Friday			Creative AM,MW	English HK		Maths HK	Lunch	Science HK	Art HK	Art HK	

Pink 1	Arrival 8:45 - 9:00	Reg 9:00 - 9:30	Lesson 1 9:30 - 10:15	Lesson 2 10:15 - 11:00	Break 11:00 - 11:15	Lesson 3 11:15 - 12:00	Lesson 4 12:00 - 12:45	Lunch 12:45 - 13:30	Lesson 5 13:30 - 14:15	Lesson 6 14:15 - 15:00	Sign Out 15:00 - 15:30
Monday	Arrival	Registration / Thrive	Maths JH	PSHRE CCo	Break 11:00 - 11:15	M & D AM,ES,?F	English PM	Lunch 12:45 - 13:00	Creative AM,MW	PE RC	Thrive / Sign out
Tuesday			M & D AM,ES,?F			English PM	Maths JH		Science RA	LifeSkills JB	
Wednesday			Maths JH	Geography JP		Music CCh	Science MC		PSHRE CCo	English PM	
Thursday			Creative AM,MW	Swimming KW		English PM	History HW		ICT IC	Maths JH	
Friday			OWLs SS			Maths JH	Science PD		English PM	LifeSkills CCo	

Green 1	Arrival 8:45 - 9:00	Reg 9:00 - 9:30	Lesson 1 9:30 - 10:15	Lesson 2 10:15 - 11:00	Break 11:00 - 11:15	Lesson 3 11:15 - 12:00	Lesson 4 12:00 - 12:45	Lunch 12:45 - 13:30	Lesson 5 13:30 - 14:15	Lesson 6 14:15 - 15:00	Sign Out 15:00 - 15:30
Monday	Arrival	Registration / Thrive	Creative AM,MW	English DE	Break 11:00 - 11:15	PE RC,KW		Lunch 12:45 - 13:00	Science MC	Maths CJ	Thrive / Sign out
Tuesday			COPE CCo	Maths CJ		COPE CCo	History HW		Science MC	English DE	
Wednesday			PSHRE JP	Maths CJ		English DE	Music CCh		OWLs IS		
Thursday			M & D ES,PM,?F	Maths CJ		Science MC	Creative AM,MW		PSHRE JP	English DE	
Friday			M & D ES,PM,?F			Maths CJ	Geography JP		English DE	ICT IC	

Purple 1	Arrival 8:45 - 9:00	Reg 9:00 - 9:30	Lesson 1 9:30 - 10:15	Lesson 2 10:15 - 11:00	Break 11:00 - 11:15	Lesson 3 11:15 - 12:00	Lesson 4 12:00 - 12:45	Lunch 12:45 - 13:30	Lesson 5 13:30 - 14:15	Lesson 6 14:15 - 15:00	Sign Out 15:00 - 15:30
Monday	Arrival	Registration / Thrive	English LD	PE RC	Break 11:00 - 11:15	OWLs IS		Lunch 12:45 - 13:30	PSHRE LD	COPE LD	Thrive / Sign out
Tuesday			English LD	ICT BG		Maths LD	PSHRE LD		PSHRE LD	COPE LD	
Wednesday			English LD	Maths LD		Science LD			Swimming KW	Creative AM,MW	
Thursday			English LD	Maths LD		Maths LD	PSHRE LD		M & D ES,BA,?F		
Friday			English LD	Creative AM,MW		Maths LD	M & D ES,BA,?F		Lifeskills LD		

Aurora

Orange 2	Arrival 8:45 - 9:00	Reg 9:00 - 9:30	Lesson 1 9:30 - 10:15	Lesson 2 10:15 - 11:00	Break 11:00 - 11:15	Lesson 3 11:15 - 12:00	Lunch 12:00 - 12:45	Lesson 4 12:45 - 13:30	Lesson 5 13:30 - 14:15	Lesson 6 14:15 - 15:00	Sign Out 15:00 - 15:30
Monday	Arrival	Registration / Thrive	Phonics	English	Break 11:00 - 11:15	PSHE	Lunch 12:00 - 12:45	M & D		Creative	Thrive / Sign out
			AK	AK		AK		PD,ES,?F	AK		
Tuesday			Maths	Maths		Intervention		M & D	OWLs		
			AK	AK		AK		PD,ES,?F	SS		
Wednesday			Phonics	Creative		ICT		Science	English		
	AK	AK	IC	AK	AK						
Thursday	PE	Maths	Maths	Life skills	Humanities						
	RC	AK	AK	AK	AK						
Friday	Phonics	Swimming	PSHE	Maths	Self guided communication enhancing/interventions						
	AK	KW	AK	AK	AK						

Appendix 2: ECS 4.2 Examinations and Externally Accredited Courses Policy

1. Introduction

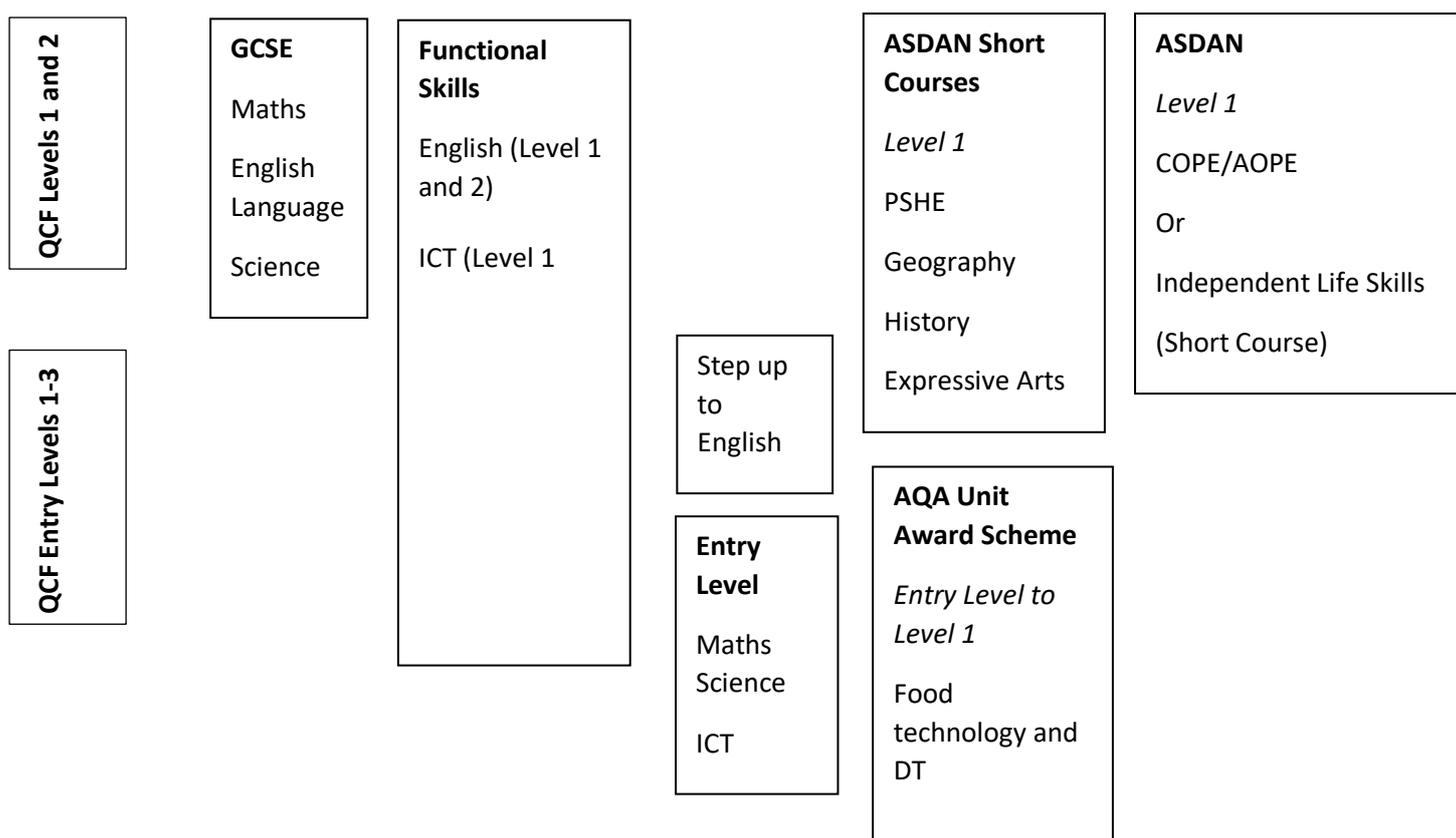
Our intention is to provide a range of accredited courses to allow and support our students to move successfully into to Colleges of Further Education, apprenticeships, or employment.

1.1 Purpose

Each student’s level of ability will be a determining factor when deciding at what level they will be entered for a subject. To support this, we have a range of course at different levels, moving from GCSE, through to Pre-Entry Courses. This allows us to create a bespoke pathway for all students irrespective of any exam board. To support this, we use a range of examination boards. See diagram for further information.

2. Scope

Graphic representation of Exam / Unit opportunities



Pearson Education		
GCSE	Combined Science	Foundation / Higher paper
	Maths	Foundation / Higher paper
Entry Level Certificate	Maths – Functional skills	
	Science	
	ICT – Functional skills	
AQA		
Functional Skills English (Level 1 and 2)	English	
Entry Level Cert - (Step Up to English Bronze / Silver / Gold at Lev1 Lev 2 Lev 3 (pre-GCSE)	English	
Functional Skills Maths	Maths	
Unit Award Scheme Pre – Entry. Level 1 /2/3	Food Tech DT	
ASDAN		
ASDAN	AOPE/COPE Horticulture: Short Course Geography: Short Course History: Short Course PSHE: Short Course Expressive Arts: Short Course Independent Life Skills	
WELSH BOARD		
GCSE	English Language English Literature	

Impact

Through this offer, we aim to empower students to access post-16 qualifications and programmes of study at levels that, for them as individuals, represent meaningful progression. We want our students to be prepared to follow academic, vocational or mixed-mode programmes according to their needs, abilities and career aspirations.