

School Curriculum Intent Statement

1. School Context and Learner Cohort

Educ8 Liverpool is an independent special school providing an alternative to mainstream education for learners in **Year 9 to Year 11**. Students typically arrive with varied prior educational experiences and low starting points, often marked by significant disruption to their attendance and engagement. The cohort reflects a high density of complex needs, with the most common SEND and EHCP profiles being **ADHD, ASD, Trauma, and Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)** challenges. Securely rooted in its local context, the school receives referrals from across the Merseyside area, aiming to foster high aspirations among young people and empower them to make meaningful contributions to society. Consequently, the curriculum is fundamentally shaped by **Trauma-Informed Practice**, focusing on re-engagement, therapeutic support, and targeted academic pathways to bridge learning gaps and build emotional resilience.

2. Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum is strategically designed to re-engage learners with education by delivering a broad, balanced, and ambitious program of study tailored to the complex needs of students with ADHD, ASD, SEMH and histories of trauma. Grounded in our core institutional values of **compassion, respect and resilience**, the curriculum utilizes a specialist **trauma-informed approach** to establish safety and regulation, providing appropriate, individualized challenge from each learner's unique starting point as an alternative to mainstream education. This holistic model is underpinned by targeted therapeutic interventions, including **speech and language therapy, occupational therapy** where appropriate, **ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)** sessions, and access to an **onsite Counsellor**.

We integrate these therapies with academic, vocational and personal development. The curriculum systematically builds foundational knowledge, skills, self-confidence and autonomy. We comprehensively prepare learners for adulthood and life in modern Britain while ensuring sustainable progression to further education, employment or training.

3. Curriculum Entitlement and Structure

a) Curriculum Model and Rationale

The school provides an ambitious, high-quality, and fully accessible curriculum model designed for learners **Year 9 to Year 11**. Our rationale is rooted in re-engaging pupils who may have experienced disrupted education. The curriculum model balances robust core academic standards with high-value technical and vocational pathways. These pathways directly align with local employment opportunities and training requirements.

We structure curriculum time through a balanced allocation of academic blocks, intensive practical workshops and dedicated Personal Development sessions. This deliberate organisation ensures that learners receive their full statutory entitlement without compromising on the depth of their elective or vocational studies.

b) Learner Profile, Starting Points, and Aspirations

The school welcomes a diverse student cohort with diverse starting points. Many exhibit complex profiles and specific SEND designations, including:

- **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**
- **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**
- **Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs**
- **Trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)**

To ensure accessibility and appropriate challenge, our curriculum adapts to accommodate these starting points. We avoid unnecessarily narrowing the curriculum, ensuring all learners maintain high aspirations. The curriculum model directly reflects learner interests and career ambitions. It builds a bridge between past educational gaps and future destination requirements. This includes further education, apprenticeships, and training.

c) Subjects, Vocational Pathways, and Accreditations

The school offers structured qualification and accreditation pathways designed to maximise pupil outcomes and progression:

- **Academic Core:**
 - **Pearson GCSE:** Provided for learners demonstrating the capacity to meet higher academic benchmarks in English Language, English Literature, Maths and Combined Science
 - **Pearson Functional Skills:** Provided from Entry Level 1 through to Level 2 in English and Mathematics. These ensure an accessible, employment-focused alternative that secures baseline competency for all students
- **Technical and Vocational Qualifications:**
 - **City & Guilds Construction:** Providing hands-on, practical learning in trade skills, safety, and industry methodologies
 - **City & Guilds Hair & Beauty:** Developing professional practical skills, client care, and salon operations within dedicated, industry-standard facilities
 - **BTEC Level 1 Art & Design**
 - **BTEC Level 1 Public Services**
- **Staffing and Specialist Expertise:** All pathways are delivered by subject specialists and qualified vocational instructors. They possess the specific expertise and therapeutic awareness required to support learners with SEMH and trauma-related needs.

4. Core Curriculum, Literacy, and Numeracy Development

Core Provision and Adulthood Preparation

The core academic curriculum focuses on securing recognized qualifications and functional accreditation through **Pearson**. This framework acts as a baseline requirement for life after Year 11. Our approach links abstract concepts to practical and applied opportunities. For example, we teach functional maths also through construction measurements or salon financial management. This design directly supports progression and prepares learners for independent adulthood.

Literacy and Numeracy Across the Curriculum

Literacy and numeracy development are explicitly mapped across all subject areas, rather than being confined to English and mathematics lessons. Key vocabulary, reading comprehension strategies, and functional mathematical operations are reinforced in technical workshops and creative spaces alike. When leaders identify learning gaps through baseline assessments, they immediately deploy targeted interventions. These support packages run alongside the main timetable to ensure learners maintain full access to the broader curriculum, whether working toward an **AQA GCSE** or a **Pearson Functional Skills** qualification.

Reading Assessment and Targeted Interventions

The school maintains a rigorous framework for identifying and addressing reading barriers:

- **Assessment of Reading Ability:** All learners undergo standardized reading and comprehension assessments upon entry to identify specific deficits in decoding, fluency, or comprehension.
- **The Educ8 Group Reading Programme:** Targeted reading interventions are delivered systematically. This framework includes **That Reading Thing**, an age-appropriate, phonics-based intervention specifically designed for older struggling readers to unlock access to formal papers, including **AQA** and **Pearson** assessments.
- **Fluency, Comprehension, and Communication:** Interventions focus on building vocal fluency, inference skills, and expressive communication. These interventions help reduce the frustration often experienced by learners with ASD, ADHD, or trauma histories.
- **Reading for Pleasure and Across the Curriculum:** Reading is promoted through high-interest, age-appropriate texts embedded across all subject disciplines, creating a positive culture of reading for both pleasure and purpose.
- **Monitoring Impact:** Pupil progress is monitored through regular re-testing and tracking of reading intervention records. This continuous review ensures data-driven adjustments to support packages.

5. Personal Development, PSHE and RSE

The Personal Development and PSHE curriculum is meticulously planned and delivered in an age-appropriate, trauma-informed manner. The framework comprehensively covers:

- **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE):** Promoting healthy vs. unhealthy relationships, clear boundaries and the absolute necessity of mutual consent
- **Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing:** Explicitly teaching emotional regulation, coping mechanisms and self-care strategies. These tools are tailored for pupils navigating ADHD, ASD, SEMH, and trauma
- **Equality, Diversity, and Protected Characteristics:** Fostering a deep understanding of human and social education, citizenship and British Values

Inclusive Culture and Anti-Discriminatory Practice

The curriculum serves as a primary tool for promoting an inclusive, anti-discriminatory school culture. It proactively develops respect for difference and protected characteristics. Racism, faith-targeted abuse, prejudice and discriminatory attitudes are explicitly recognised, dismantled and challenged. This occurs through both targeted curriculum content and wider school practices. This ensures a safe, welcoming environment for all.

6. Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

Safeguarding, Risk Recognition, and Disclosure Protocols

The curriculum equips vulnerable learners with the knowledge and tools required to navigate offline and online safety risks. The curriculum focuses on:

- **Recognising Harms:** Enabling pupils to identify risky behaviors, exploitation, grooming and harmful online content.
- **Help-Seeking Behavior:** Teaching learners exactly how and where to seek help, building the confidence needed to report peer or external concerns
- **Staff Response and Disclosure Protocols:** Because of the sensitive nature of the PSHE and RSE curriculum, content may prompt a safeguarding disclosure or trigger trauma-related distress. Staff are highly trained to respond to these situations with immediate, trauma-informed care. They follow established safeguarding procedures, ensuring accurate logging and prompt referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

7. SEND, Inclusion and Adaptive Teaching

Reasonable Adjustments and Adaptive Teaching

Leaders ensure that the curriculum remains highly ambitious yet completely accessible for learners with SEND and additional needs. Teachers use adaptive teaching strategies rather than lowering expectations or reducing curriculum breadth. Classrooms and vocational spaces are optimised to support executive functioning deficits associated with ADHD, the sensory profiles of ASD and the emotional vulnerabilities of SEMH and trauma.

SEND adaption matrix	
ADHD	• Micro-sequenced tasks and movement breaks • Clear visual checklists and chunked instructions
ASD	• Predictable routines and visual timetables • Low-sensory adjustments in workshops/salons
SEMH & Trauma	• Nurture-focused spaces & low-stakes assessments • Emotionally regulated, trauma informed staff response

EHCP Integration and Removal of Barriers

The implementation of the curriculum is guided by each learner's **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) intended** outcomes. The school systematically removes barriers to participation by:

- Providing targeted interventions and specialist support (e.g., speech and language input or therapeutic coaching) directly alongside academic and vocational learning
- Implementing reasonable adjustments in formal examination formats, such as access arrangements for written **AQA** and **Pearson** examinations, as well as practical adjustments for construction tasks and hair and beauty assessments
- Ensuring adaptations facilitate full access to the standard curriculum, resisting any unnecessary narrowing of the pupil's academic or vocational entitlement

8. Online Safety and Emerging Technologies

Safe and Responsible Technology Use

Given the heightened vulnerabilities of learners with SEMH and trauma backgrounds, digital literacy is treated as a critical safety requirement. Pupils from Year 9 to Year 11 receive explicit instruction on the safe and responsible use of technology, exploring privacy controls, personal information security and the long-term impact of digital footprints.

Online Relationships, Media, and Harmful Content

The digital literacy framework addresses the complexities of the online world by providing clear guidance on:

- **Social Media and Online Relationships:** Navigating online consent, identifying cyberbullying and responding to online harassment
- **Online Exploitation:** Recognizing the signs of grooming, coercion and financial or emotional exploitation in digital spaces
- **Content and Influence:** Evaluating harmful or inappropriate content, image sharing (including the legal implications of non-consensual sharing) and the psychological impact of misinformation, disinformation and algorithmic online influence
- **Emerging Technologies:** Demystifying the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies in media and communication
- **Digital Help-Seeking:** Providing clear pathways and reporting mechanisms for pupils to flag digital distress or online exploitation

9. Careers and Preparation for Adulthood

Careers Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG)

The school delivers a structured careers and employability framework designed to support positive transitions at the end of Year 11. The programme integrates:

- **Employer Encounters and Providers:** Regular opportunities to engage with local business leaders, trade professionals and further education providers
- **Work-Related Learning:** Practical, simulated workspace experiences embedded directly into the City & Guilds Construction and Hair & Beauty courses
- **Employability and Life Skills:** Explicit teaching of teamwork, time management, interview preparation and financial literacy to support independent adulthood
- **Transition Support:** Helping learners make informed choices regarding further education, employment, training, or apprenticeships, ensuring no pupil becomes NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)

Attendance, Engagement, and Re-engagement

For learners with histories of disrupted education, curriculum design serves as a key driver for attendance and engagement. We support successful re-engagement through:

- **Personalised Pathways:** Tailoring timetables to balance academic study with high-interest vocational courses in construction or hair and beauty
- **Practical and Vocational Approaches:** Leveraging hands-on learning to rebuild a sense of competence and success in education
- **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Maintaining close, transparent collaboration with parents, carers, and external agencies to support attendance strategies
- **Barrier Reviews:** Routinely reviewing whether curriculum design, pacing or delivery models are inadvertently creating barriers to pupil participation

10. Enrichment, SMSC and Wider Experiences

Our enrichment programme extends beyond the taught curriculum, contributing significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development and understanding of British Values.

Enrichment activities are designed to build cultural capital, foster community participation, and encourage personal growth. They provide wider experiences that build confidence, resilience, and teamwork outside the traditional classroom environment.

Our school's comprehensive enrichment program is deliberately designed to foster holistic personal development and enhance students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development. By engaging in a diverse array of extracurricular activities, reflective sessions and interactive workshops, students explore their own beliefs while learning to respect the faiths and values of others.

This robust framework encourages pupils to recognise the difference between right and wrong, understand the consequences of their behaviour and develop a strong moral compass that guides their daily actions and social interactions.

Central to our school ethos is the proactive promotion of **fundamental British Values** and the purposeful building of **cultural capital**. Through a curriculum that celebrates diversity, we embed the core tenets of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect. We bridge socio-economic gaps by systematically introducing students to a rich variety of cultural experiences—including museum visits, theatre trips and exposure to the arts—ensuring every young person acquires the knowledge and cultural literacy required to succeed as informed global citizens.

We actively cultivate **community participation** and drive **personal development** by empowering students to look beyond themselves. Our pupils regularly engage in local volunteering initiatives, charity fundraising and collaborative projects with neighbourhood organizations. This helps instil a deep sense of social responsibility and civic duty. These experiences combined with our tailored

pastoral care, build vital life skills such as resilience, self-confidence, emotional well-being and leadership. They support to enable students to navigate the complexities of modern life securely.

Our strategic focus on **careers, employability, and wider experiences beyond the taught curriculum** ensures that learning extends far beyond the traditional classroom walls. Through structured work experience placements, meaningful encounters with employers and targeted career guidance we equip students with the essential soft skills:

- teamwork
- communication
- problem-solving

These skills are demanded by the modern workforce. Ultimately, our expansive offer of outdoor trips and enrichment sessions provide memorable, horizon-broadening opportunities that ignite new passions and prepare students exceptionally well for their future endeavours.

11. Sequencing, Progression and Addressing Gaps

Curriculum knowledge and skills are meticulously sequenced over time to prevent fragmented or disconnected learning. Long-term curriculum maps establish clear lines of progression, starting from each learner's baseline. Learning activities build cumulatively toward terminal qualifications and next-step transitions. Continuous formative assessment ensures that learning gaps are identified and addressed before introducing more complex content or higher-tier accreditation requirements.

Learner Voice and Co-Construction

Learner voice, personal aspirations, and lived experiences formally inform our annual curriculum review. Leaders actively capture feedback from the pupil cohort. This input is used to refine delivery methods, adjust enrichment opportunities and select relevant vocational contexts, all while maintaining appropriate academic ambition, breadth and statutory entitlement.

Quality Assurance and Evidenced Implementation

Leaders systematically assure themselves that the stated curriculum intent is being implemented effectively across all pathways. The impact of the curriculum is evaluated against academic and vocational progress, qualification outcomes, reading age advancement, attendance improvements and destination success.

The following primary evidence base is maintained live and is available to verify the robust implementation of this policy:

- Curriculum maps, long-term plans, and subject sequencing documents
- The school timetable and staff allocation records
- Qualification, accreditation, and exam entry registries (AQA, Pearson, and City & Guilds)
- Reading and literacy intervention records (including Educ8 and That Reading Thing data)
- Personal Development, PSHE, and RSE curriculum documentation
- Careers programme mapping, tracking logs, and employer encounter records
- Enrichment participation logs
- Assessment systems, pupil work portfolios, and progress trackers
- Curriculum QA records, including learning walk findings, work deep dives, and staff CPD records

12. Attendance, Re-engagement and Personalised Pathways

Personalised pathways for our learners in Years 9–11 are strategically designed to counter disengagement and optimise attendance by aligning educational routes with individual student capabilities and aspirations. Recognising that a rigid academic framework can alienate vulnerable learners, the school offers flexible option blocks, modified timetables and tailored qualifications (such as functional skills alongside GCSEs). This bespoke structuring ensures that high-risk students or those returning from long-term absence maintain a viable, achievable route to post-16 education or employment, fostering a sense of purpose that directly drives daily attendance.

The strategic integration of **practical and vocational approaches** serves as a critical lever for re-engagement, particularly for students unresponsive to purely traditional classroom settings. By embedding high-quality technical options, BTECs and direct links to local alternative provisions or work-related learning within the weekly timetable, the curriculum grounds learning in tangible, real-world utility. This applied approach shifts the student perception of education from an abstract requirement to a practical stepping stone. This significantly reduces persistent absence among learners who thrive in hands-on environments.

To effectively **respond to disrupted education**, the curriculum framework utilises a modular, scaffolded design that accommodates significant learning gaps without overwhelming the student. Upon re-entry, diagnostic assessments are used to map missing knowledge, allowing staff to deploy targeted intervention programs and blended learning resources rather than forcing immediate integration into fast-paced GCSE specifications. This flexible pacing mitigates the acute academic anxiety that frequently triggers further truancy, allowing students to rebuild confidence and stabilise their attendance trajectories at a manageable rate.

Successful re-engagement is dependent upon systemic **collaboration with parents/carers and external agencies**, ensuring that curriculum adaptations are mirrored by a robust wraparound support network. The school maintains transparent, proactive communication channels with families to secure buy-in for modified pathways and to align home-school expectations. Concurrently, leadership actively partners with local authority inclusion teams, social care, child and adolescent mental health services

(CAMHS) and alternative education providers to dismantle the complex, non-academic barriers that prevent regular classroom participation.

Finally, senior leadership maintains rigorous quality assurance processes to **review whether curriculum design or delivery is creating systemic barriers** to participation. This involves the continuous triangulation of sub-group attendance data, behavioural metrics and regular student-voice panels specifically focused on learning accessibility. When data reveals that specific subjects or pedagogical methods correlate with spikes in truancy, the school dynamically adjusts its delivery models, refines staff training on differentiation or adapts timetabling constraints to ensure the curriculum offer remains inherently inclusive and structured for success.

13. Review and Sign-Off

Completed by	Siân Moss
Reviewed by	James McDonald
Date completed	03 October 2026
Next review	September 2027