

The Marlborough



Curriculum Policy

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Introduction

In this document we will outline the curriculum at The Marlborough. Information will be given about our vision and aims as well as the pedagogy underpinning our teaching and the assessment tools used to measure progress and attainment. This policy is presented in line with the National Curriculum in England 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2014 (and all revised updates as of 2020).

Our curriculum shape changes from child to child according to their needs, abilities and current challenges. Our curriculum and teaching are flexible, focused and sequential to reflect the individual and bespoke nature of our offer as is suited to our particular setting. Our school values of Courage, Confidence, Respect and Belonging drive everything we do within The Marlborough.

Due to diverse and changing needs of our learners, the curriculum at The Marlborough is continually evolving as we adapt and refine it to ensure the best outcomes for all.

Teaching and learning statement

At The Marlborough we centre teaching and learning around the individual presentation of each child. We assess each learner's strengths and challenges regularly and provide learning opportunities appropriate to their needs. Class teachers are expected to be familiar with their learners needs and how they learn best and to structure their room and timetable to best accommodate the range of needs in their class to the best of their ability and resources. Class teachers will use assessments and observations to suggest whether a formal or non-formal curriculum would be best suited for learners and whether any therapy/interventions are required.

Class teachers are expected to plan weekly targets to be broken down daily for individual learning. Learning should be planned to meet academic and wellbeing needs of learners offering a fun, varied and broad range of presentation of activities where appropriate.

Learning is delivered within small group and 1:1 settings as well as delivered through play based activities where appropriate. We would not expect to see traditional whole class input sessions within classes as this would not meet the needs of our learners.

Ethos and Values

At The Marlborough . . .

- We believe in every child's innate right to an education which enables, inspires and enriches
- We believe every child brings something unique and wonderful to our community and to the world they inhabit
- We believe families have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share with us, as partners, in their child's educational and personal development
- We believe it is our duty to always seek to improve and bring the best of ourselves in order to provide the best for our children

In order to achieve this, we ensure our **Values** apply equally to both staff and pupils. We believe, all members of The Marlborough community should...

Have the **Confidence** . . .

- To have a voice and know their voice counts
- To continue learning and developing by trying new things, seeing new places, sharing new experiences and meeting new people
- To be aware of their skills, knowledge and gifts. That these make them a valued and unique member of our community and therefore to have the confidence to share and celebrate who they are

Have the **Courage** . . .

- To know that they are safe to try and that failure is only the first step of a new journey of discovery
- To make choices that enable us all to live and learn in a safe place, even when this is really hard to do
- To speak up and reach out when they need help or support; know that they matter

Show **Respect** . . .

- By always trying their best, trying that little bit harder and being open to new ideas
- By caring for their environment and the world they live in
- By listening to others and being kind

Show **Belonging** . . .

- By joining in and being part of Centre life
- By sharing, caring and appreciating all members of our community

- By upholding our Values, living our Ethos and helping others to do the same

Curriculum Intent

At The Marlborough we believe in the potential of each and every one of our learners. We are aspirational, creative, focused and dedicated to developing not only learning in academics but developing learners as a whole to benefit from all the world has to offer them. Our areas of intent for our curriculum are:

- **Communication** – Our driving focus is to develop learner's communication skills so that they can make their needs and wants known as well as purposely engaging with the world around them.
- **Pre-Requisite Skills** – Recognising, that for an increasing number of our learners, skills such as listening, understanding and following direction, taking part in work at tables, working as part of a group and emerging reading and writing skills need to be embedded across our curriculum offer so that children have the best possible chance of accessing academic learning.
- **Key Academic Skills** – A focus on achieving sound foundational knowledge in the key academic areas. Learners begin to curate skills, knowledge and understanding at their level across their curriculum. This focuses in the majority on core subject learning in Reading, Writing, Maths and Science.
- **Resilience** – Preparing our learners for an increasingly complex and challenging world is a key consideration for us. Being able to cope with physical changes to their day/structure as well as emotional resilience when things seem difficult or challenging.
- **Community Links** – Exploring and exploiting community links for our learners to engage and experience different areas of their community. Delivering our other areas of intent within a curriculum rich in community involvement.
- **Life skills** – Preparing children for life beyond The Marlborough through focus on the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to solve problems and fully participate in everyday life.

At the centre of everything we do is the uniqueness of the child. Our curriculum and teaching time reflect this where fundamental needs and skills need to be addressed before layering new knowledge.

The Marlborough Pathway Assessment **Compass (MPAC)**

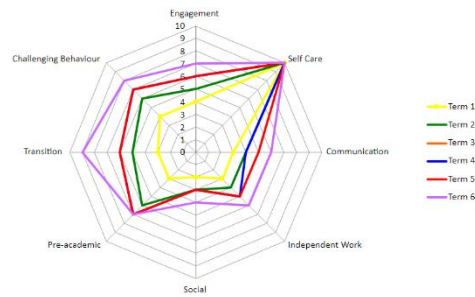
We developed the MPAC as a way of looking in a broader, more holistic way at the development of our learners. It allows us to identify potential barriers to learning as well as more holistic areas to focus learning on outside of traditional curricula. It is our first assessment, which guides us to an appropriate learning pathway. The MPAC also allows us to identify where key areas need particular focus and therefore each learner benefits from an individualised curriculum offer.

There are eight areas within the MPAC. These are:

- Engagement
- Self-care
- Communication
- Independent work
- Social
- Transition
- Pre-academic
- Challenging behaviour

Through ongoing assessment against the statements in these areas, we are able to ensure that each learner is placed upon the appropriate pathway for their current needs and abilities. As with all elements of our curriculum, this is flexible and learners may move up and down the MPAC scales in response to circumstances or events in and outside of school. This is something which we recognise and accommodate through movement between pathways, and in particular through the implementation of our “Intervention pathway.” By reviewing a learners MPAC alongside their learning progress it allows the whole profile of a learner to be seen.

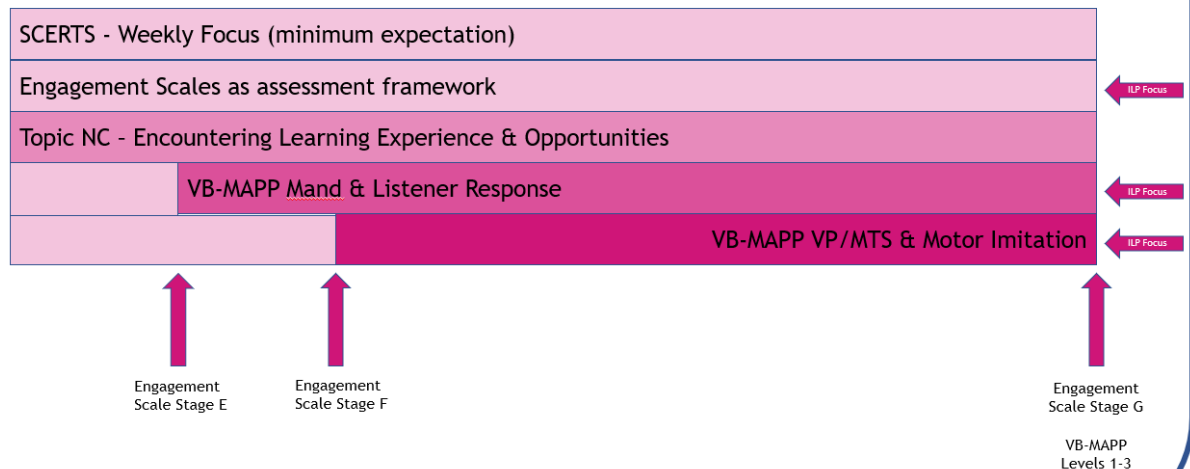
MPAC attainment is shared with a range of stakeholders through the MPAC radar diagram, exemplified below.



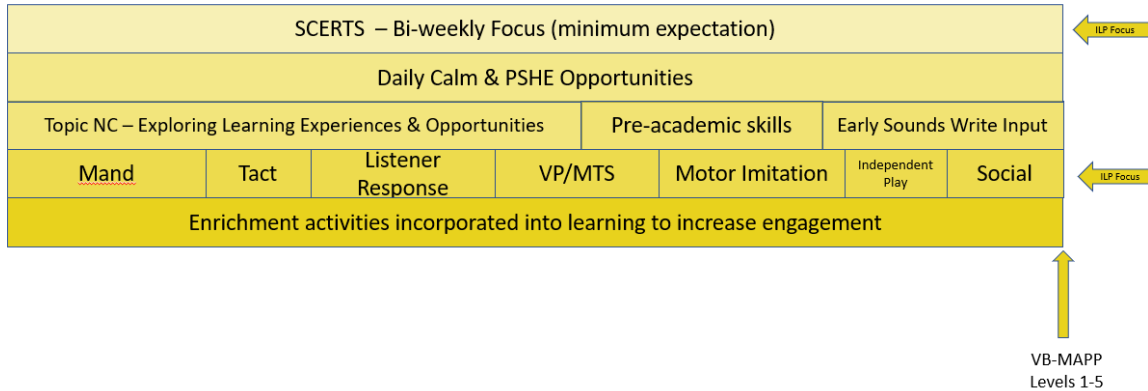
Learning Pathways

Our five bespoke Marlborough Pathways: Inspire, Initiate, Innovate, Illuminate and Intervention; are used to guide teaching and learning. This ensures that all of our learners receive the focused support that they need alongside access to a breadth of activities and experiences designed to develop them holistically. The pathways show clear sequencing and development of skills whilst assuring learners access the most purposeful curriculum design for them.

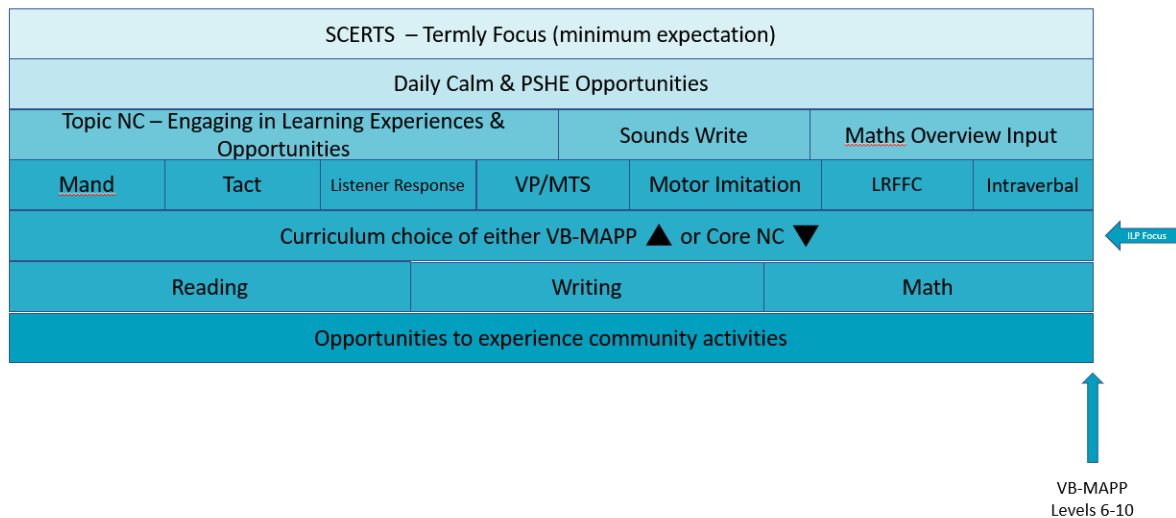
Inspire Learning Pathway



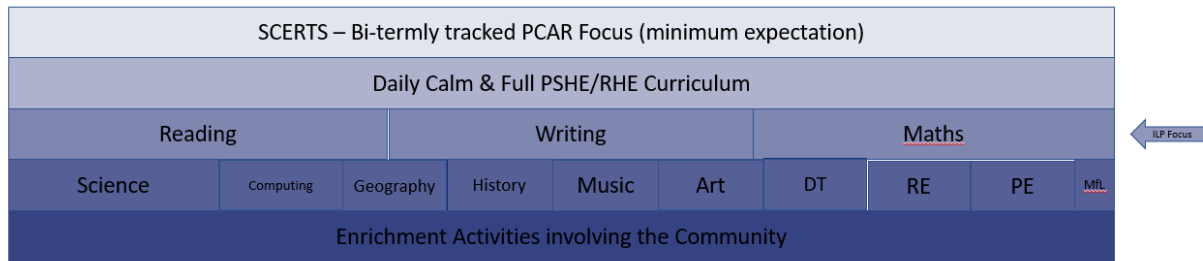
Initiate Learning Pathway



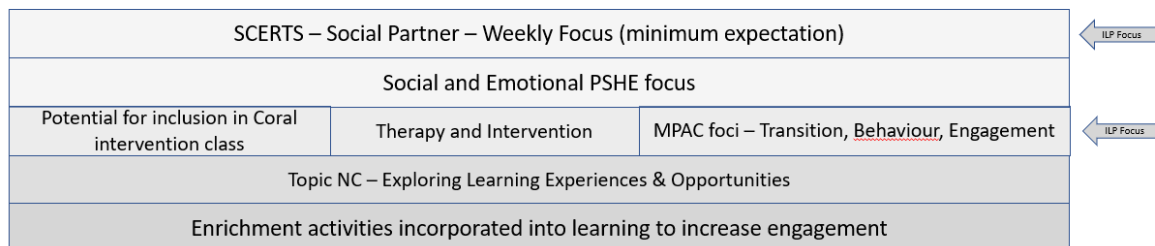
Investigate Learning Pathway



Illuminate Learning Pathway



Intervention Learning Pathway



Pupils may access the Intervention pathway for short or long term focus in discussion with the learning team. Pupils will focus on their specific areas of need before returning to a more academic learning focused pathway.

The learning in The Marlborough looks as diverse and varied as our learners themselves but all learning is valuable and all steps are significant ones. Our pathways are used to embody this ethos.

At The Marlborough a learner may start their journey at any point on our pathway model and rigorous baselining on entry to our school support us to identify these starting points. At times, it may be most appropriate for a learner to work through each pathway sequentially from Inspire whilst others will start their journeys on one of our other pathways.

Our Intervention pathway was designed to provide an intense period of focus on development of skills required to fully access classroom learning opportunities. Therefore, aside from in exceptional circumstances, a learner would only follow the Intervention pathway for a specific time period (usually a number of weeks or terms). As with all of our pathways, this is subject to continuous review.

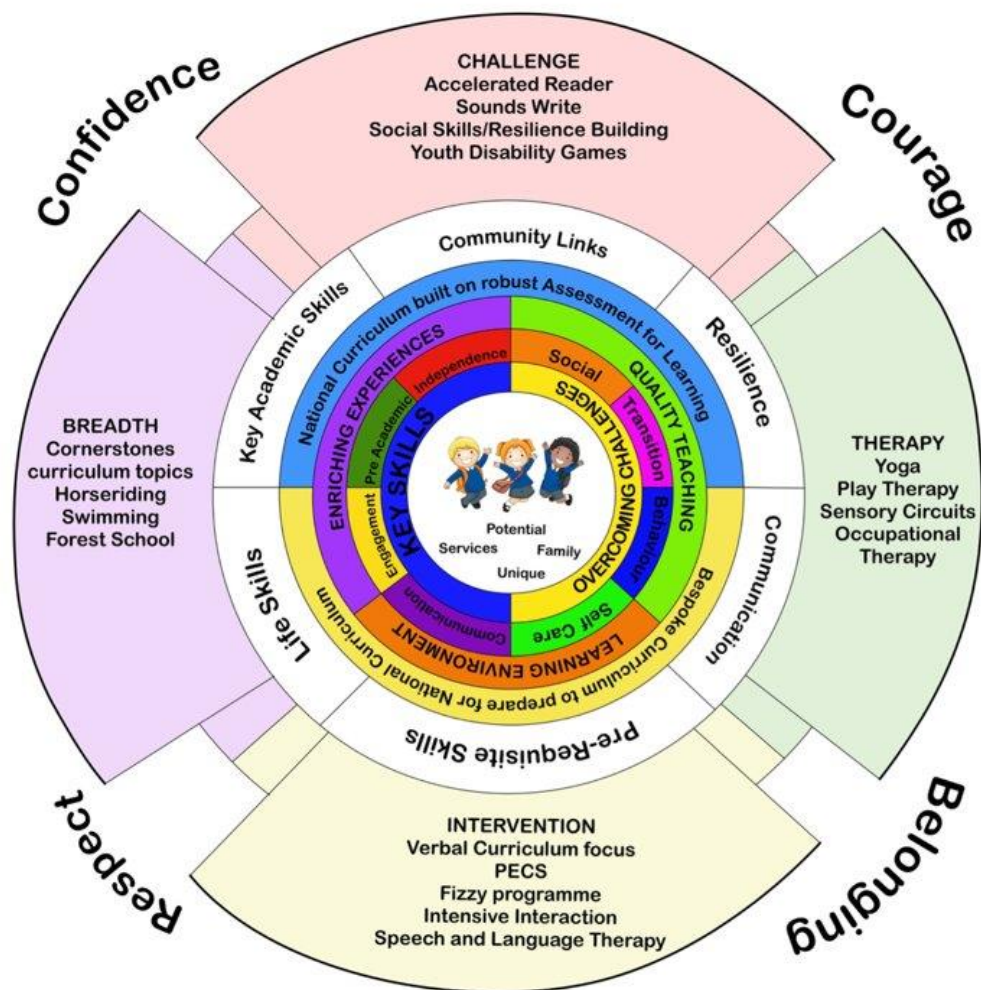
Sequencing of the Curriculum

Due to the personalised nature of our curriculum planning a learner will develop skills and knowledge at their own pace and relevant to their stage of development. It is therefore always difficult for a provision such as ours to 'map out' intended progression within each curriculum area, key stage or year group. We are confident in our ability to ensure that a learner will have the opportunity to develop their learning sequenced in a way that suits them best and reflective of their learning pathway.

Once a learner's pathway has been identified, their curriculum offer is sequenced through careful planning, always ensuring that individual next steps are considered across a full range of appropriate curricula. A learner's journey through The Marlborough is sequenced at a pace or rate that represents their developing abilities and needs. At times these journeys will share commonality and learners may walk similar pathways together but on other occasions progression may be entirely unique to an individual.

Pupils Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and foundation stage curriculum passport documents are key documents that will be able to show the individualised sequencing of their learning and skill progression through subjects and curricula during their time at The Marlborough.

The visual below brings together our curriculum offer elements and shows how all of our learning is always encompassed by our intent areas and school values.



Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)

Every learner in every class will have a unique and highly personalised set of short-term targets. These form the basis of their Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP is fundamental to ensuring that learners receive learning focused on their identified pathway and that teaching is laser focused on progress in priority areas. In this way every learner's curriculum remains dynamic and under constant review by teachers.

A child's Learning Pathway will guide the main focus areas for their ILP. This may change and evolve during the year or even during a term. There will often be a link between a child's ILP and their longer-term targets as established at Person Centred Annual Review meetings (PCARs) or by Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy professionals.

The ILP will guide all adults working with a learner to see what their primary area of focus is on any given week. For some learners, this will detail what they are working on in academic lessons such as English, Maths or VBMAPP activities. For others, it may describe behaviour, communication or social targets.

Regardless of the focus of the ILP, teachers are asked to assess progress weekly or fortnightly. Parents and carers can expect to be informed about the things that a child is focussing on through use of Evidence Me to share photos and messages each week.

Where appropriate, we also aim to share targets with the learners themselves and help them to identify and celebrate their own successes.

Almost all learners in The Marlborough have an area of need linked to communication and many of our learners also have significant difficulty regulating themselves emotionally. We recognise that the ability to communicate one's needs and feelings to those around them is a basic necessity for both physical and emotional well-being and this is at the forefront of much of our early work at The Marlborough. We also know that when children are well regulated emotionally, they are ready and available for learning to take place. To support our learners in both of these key areas, we follow the SCERTS® Model.

The SCERTS® Model is a research-based educational approach and multidisciplinary framework that directly addresses the core challenges faced by children and persons with autism and related disabilities, and their families. SCERTS® focuses on building competence in **S**ocial **C**ommunication, **E**mootional **R**egulation and **T**ransactional **S**upport as the highest priorities that must be addressed in any program, and is applicable for individuals with a wide range of abilities and ages across home, school and community settings.

The acronym SCERTS refers to:

Social Communication: the development of spontaneous, functional communication, emotional expression, and secure and trusting relationships with children and adults;

Emotional Regulation: the development of the ability to maintain a well-regulated emotional state to cope with everyday stress, and to be most available for learning and interacting;

Transactional Support: the development and implementation of supports to help partners respond to the child's needs and interests, modify and adapt the environment, and provide tools to enhance learning (e.g., picture communication, written schedules, and sensory supports).

(SCERTS website)

SCERTS (continued)

At the start of their time in The Marlborough, each learner is baselined using a short teacher assessment in order to establish their current communication stage. The SCERTS model has three levels or stages of communication: Social Partner, Language Partner and Communication Partner. These stages are used to establish a child's priorities and set developmentally relevant social and emotional focus areas. These priorities inform the setting of targets for a learner's ILP. To aid in understanding of these communication stages, SCERTS® provide the following descriptors.

Social partner – "I am using body language, gestures and facial expressions to communicate."

Language partner – "I am using single words and brief phrases to communicate with speech, signs or pictures."

Communication partner – "I am using creative language to communicate and I am learning how to succeed in a range of social settings"

Once a learner's communication stage has been established, strategies will be agreed and developed to support them in learning new social and communication skills. Learners who are social partners should be seen to access their learning in a different more appropriate way than a learner who is a communication partner. Staff at all levels work together on establishing and implementing effective transactional supports to support development of key skills and understanding. These supports are put in to place across the school day to enable to learner to begin to generalise new learning.

SCERTS based targets will frequently be seen on ILPs for learners who are following the Inspire and Initiate pathways. However, it is important to note that all learners in The Marlborough will be assessed on their progress against the SCERTS model at key points during the year.

The National Curriculum

For learners following our Investigate and Illuminate pathways, the core subjects of English and Mathematics are taught daily. This can be through 1:1 work with an adult or through participation in group or whole class learning activities. As with everything else, skills and knowledge are taught on an individual and highly personalised basis as part of each child's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) with the individual needs and abilities of the learner taken into account at every point in the process. Objectives for English and Mathematics learning are taken from our Marlborough Progress Steps assessment framework. (See page 33 for further details on this.)

Mathematics

Our Mathematics framework provides clearly sequenced small step objectives guiding a learner's progress through each strand of mathematical learning. There are individual sections and assessment criteria for each of the following areas:

- Number and place value
- Addition and subtraction
- Multiplication and division
- Fractions, decimals and percentages
- Algebra
- Ratio and proportion
- Measurement
- Property of shapes
- Position and direction
- Statistics
- Using and applying mathematics

Our framework was designed using the National Curriculum (NC) objectives and pre-existing descriptors for individuals working at pre-NC levels. At its earliest MPS levels, it also fits closely with our other pre-academic curricula. For example, through focus on sorting, matching and following key word instructions, our maths framework echoes some of the foci of the VB-MAPP curriculum.

For learners on the Investigate and Illuminate pathways, where appropriate, The White Rose Maths curriculum is used to support development of a breadth of mathematical skills and mastery of key concepts.

English

Our English framework follows the National Curriculum (NC) areas of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening. In order to develop a clearly sequenced

progression model through each area, we used existing National Curriculum objectives alongside existing performance descriptors for individuals working below the NC levels. These were reviewed in order to remove or reduce barriers linked to the specific needs of our learner before being broken down in order to provide a small step model. This model allows us to track individual progress as well as supporting teachers in identifying clear and appropriate next steps in a learning sequence.

Our MPS framework for Speaking and Listening should always be viewed alongside other communication focused frameworks such as VB-MAPP, SCERTS and individual Speech and Language Therapy Plans.

Reading

Sharing stories, promoting a love of reading and supporting children to develop functional reading skills are key aims for us at The Marlborough. We recognise that reading is an essential life skill, providing access to the experiences of people from different places, cultures and times. Reading allows learners to access information that will support their development in all curriculum areas and beyond the classroom, developing their understanding of the wider world.

Through our provision, our intent is:

- To ensure all children have the opportunity to develop as readers.
- To ensure all children acquire a solid foundation of phonetic knowledge.
- To develop enthusiastic readers who enjoy engaging with a range of texts.
- To provide our families with high quality reading resources and information to support home-school learning.
- To support children and families in overcoming barriers which may prevent full enjoyment of or engagement with texts (including those linked to their specific SEND).

We recognise the importance of teaching children the pre-requisite skills required in order to begin to approach the learning of traditional reading skills. As such, children are first taught vital visual discrimination skills before learning to recognise and name objects, photographs and finally pictures/symbols.

Positive attitudes to reading are fostered through carefully designed teaching activities and classroom provision. On our Inspire and Initiate pathways we promote an enjoyment of reading through the use of topic-based class texts, interactive stories, stories that engage listeners through the communication system PECs and sensory stories.

On our Investigate and Illuminate pathways, teaching activities focus on the skills required to decode written language at word and sentence level, and to search for meaning in the text. At higher levels, our reading framework also reflects the need for children to engage imaginatively with texts; empathise with characters and develop their specific interests in the world around them through their reading.

At The Marlborough, we use Accelerated Reader (AR), which is a programme that aims to develop independent reading skills and foster positive attitudes towards reading. AR gives teachers the information they need to monitor learners' reading practice and make informed decisions to guide their future learning. It also allows learners to celebrate their own achievements and supports them in making appropriate choices when selecting reading material

A variety of teaching strategies are employed to teach reading both inside and outside the English lesson. Every classroom has access to a variety of books to promote the idea of reading for pleasure and reading is incorporated within our topic-based curriculum. Reading celebrations such as World Book Day are used to emphasise the importance of reading and encourage children to engage in book-based activities for pleasure.

All children will take home reading books to share at home. For children who are working at a pre-academic level these will be picture books to share for pleasure. We start early readers on the Dandelion reading scheme, before children move on to home-school reading materials that are drawn from a range of reading schemes.

Phonics

To support our learners in development of skills linked to reading and writing we use the synthetic phonics programme, Sounds Write. Sounds Write provides a highly structured, systematic approach to supporting children to learn about letters and their sounds. It is based on the sounds in speech and linking these to the written word. Reading and writing go hand in hand in Sounds Write and both skills are taught simultaneously as part of every session. We chose Sounds Write as our phonics delivery curriculum as it suits the strengths of Autism well. Its consistent and highly structured format works well for our learners.

As stated on the Sounds Write website, *“(Sounds Write) teaches all key elements of conceptual understanding, factual knowledge, and the three essential skills of blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation necessary for learning to read and spell and it does so until all children achieve the automaticity that underlies the fluency of every successful reader.”*

Learners following our Investigate and Illuminate pathways have access to daily Sounds Write sessions and will continue to do so until they have the skills and knowledge required to read a range of words fluently. Teaching staff have flexibility to adapt materials, pace and instructions in order to make the sessions accessible to learners but the basic principles and structures of Sounds Write remain the same across the school ensuring consistency and continuity for all.

Learners following our Inspire and Initiate pathways will be regularly exposed to experiences which support the development of early phonic skills. These may contain (but are not limited to):

- Opportunities to listen to sounds and distinguish between them
- Opportunities to explore sounds made with our voices and bodies
- Opportunities to engage in activities linked to rhythm and rhyme
- Access to activities linked to early sound discrimination e.g. the initial sounds in words

At The Marlborough, we also use the Dandelion Reader scheme books which support learning using the Sounds Write programme. Generally, a reading book will be selected from the unit below the unit being worked on in class. This ensures that the content of reading books should be consistent with the reading knowledge and skills a learner has already mastered, allowing focus on fluency and comprehension. Higher ability readers also access the Accelerated Reader programme to further support reading comprehension.

Other National Curriculum subjects

Science

All learners in The Marlborough will have the opportunity to access scientific based activities. The Marlborough Progress Steps for science support in ensuring suitable levels of challenge for all learners, regardless of their levels and understanding. Science learning may start for learners on our Inspire pathway as an exploration of the world around them or a growing appreciation of a range of external stimuli. As a learner's understanding of science increases, they will take a more active part in a full range of investigative activities, learning a wide variety of skills including making and recording observations, setting up a fair test and using scientific ideas to make predictions or draw conclusions. Alongside this a range of scientific knowledge is taught from all strands of the National Curriculum.

Computing

Weekly computing sessions will take place in all classes where children will have the opportunity to develop IT and computing skills using a range of equipment. As with all other areas of learning at The Marlborough, teaching and learning content is bespoke to individuals or small groups and small steps of progress are measure through use of our own Marlborough Progress Steps.

PSHE/RSE

At the Marlborough PSHE is taught throughout the school day and is not confined just to a specific timetabled occasion. PSHE objectives are covered continuously through much of our day to day practice in classrooms and across the school with learners being encouraged to show independence at all times.

Our Marlborough Progress Steps for PSHE allow us to ensure all children have access to appropriate support whatever their ability in this area. On some occasions the most appropriate way to deliver PSHE teaching will be through use of individualised targets and activities. However, teachers will also plan in opportunities for direct teaching through group or class PSHE lessons and where appropriate these will be based on our Marlborough PSHE learning sequence document. When planning PSHE/RSE learning, teachers will always take in to account a learner's chronological age as well as their developmental stage.

Our Marlborough PSHE learning sequence is there to enable coverage of specific PSHE and RSE skills and knowledge needed for understanding situations, other people and challenges in life. The curriculum is shaped around statutory PSHE and RSE content and current safeguarding topics. It also allows for coverage of additional subjects such as learning about autism, charitable acts and cycling proficiency. Although the curriculum may not directly discuss the more complex areas of all subject matter, it provides firm foundations for our learners. For example, in developing awareness around county lines, we must

first make sure our children have the communication skills to say no to someone or tell someone about something bad that is happening or happened to them.

Alongside class and individual RSE/ PSHE learning, the Marlborough has a Therapy and Intervention Team who run small group or 1:1 intervention concentrating on Social, Emotional, Mental Health and Wellbeing goals for individuals. This intervention comes about post referral from class teacher or parent and offers to drive PSHE success for our learners.

Assemblies at the Marlborough have a weekly focus linked to the four values. Each week the school looks at one value together and then at the end of the week a child from each class receives a certificate based on their achievements linked to that weekly focus value. This is shared with the school centre and with our families.

For further information on PSHE and RSE at The Marlborough, please see our PSHE/RSE Policy which can be found on our website.

PE

We recognise the importance of PE lessons both in terms of health and physical activity but also in terms of the opportunities provided for collaborative work and communication skill development. All learners will have access to weekly PE sessions based on a learning sequence specifically designed for young people with Special Educational Needs. These sessions provide clear sequenced steps to build upon prior skills and knowledge in a range of activity specific lessons, ranging from agility and dance to boccia, football and more. Once again, our Marlborough Progress Steps provide clear opportunities to ensure relevant level of challenge by extending or scaffolding individual learners within these sessions. In addition to their weekly class-based PE lessons, learners will be given the opportunity to take part in dance, yoga, swimming and horse-riding sessions with a variety of specifically trained coaches.

RE

All classes will deliver weekly Religious Education sessions in line with the Medway Agreed Syllabus guidance. These sessions will provide opportunities to learn about a variety of world religions as well as learning about values associated with religion should as community, charity and faith. We used the Plan Bee scheme of RE resources to support RE development of our bespoke RE curriculum in The Marlborough in order to ensure appropriate levels of challenge and support for all our learners.

Foundation subjects

At The Marlborough we understand the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum for all learners. Access to teaching and learning of the arts and humanities form part of our topic-based learning journeys. We have created our own “Marlborough Passports” to guide teachers and learners through the knowledge, skills and experiences that will be provided throughout a child’s time with us in The Marlborough. (More information can be found about these on page 34.) This ensures that learners on all pathways have opportunities to access History, Geography, Art and Design, Design Technology and Music throughout their time in the school and once again ensures that these opportunities are pitched at a level which is appropriate to the needs of the learner.

Engagement Scales

For learners on our Inspire pathway, there is a significant focus on engagement, both with activities and with those around them. At this stage of development, children can almost be described as “learning to learn.” Much of what we focus on within the Inspire pathway is linked to the engagement model.

The engagement model has 5 areas of engagement:

- exploration
- realisation
- anticipation
- persistence
- initiation

Assessment and development of skills across these areas allows teachers to monitor learners' engagement, and as a result their readiness for developing new skills, knowledge and concepts across other curricula. In short, these skills represent what is necessary for learners to fully engage in their learning and reach their full potential.

At The Marlborough we have developed a bespoke Engagement Framework linked to our MPAC Engagement strand to ensure that the progress the children make is celebrated at every step of the way and that there are always clear next steps to work towards. Attainment is recorded as a series of stages beginning at stage A and moving progressively through the alphabet up to J. We ensured that this framework also allowed a numerical data point to be created for statutory reporting where necessary.

When the time is right for a learner to move on to the next curriculum (usually VBMAPP and then National Curriculum), we continue to assess Engagement through use of our Marlborough Pathways Assessment Compass.

VB-MAPP

The VB-MAPP is a verbal behaviour curriculum which focuses on developing secure development and use of language. It is an evidence based curriculum which can be likened to an EYFS designed with the needs and strengths of Autism in mind.

The VB-MAPP curriculum is used for learners who are not as yet displaying all the pre-requisite skills to ensure successful access to the formal curriculum. If we do

not provide these children with these skills their progress on the formal curriculum will be extremely slow if they make progress at all. Time taken to embed these pre-skills is vitally important and necessary. Some children will access a combination of Formal and Pre-Formal curriculums as they demonstrate only some gaps.

Progress on the VB-MAPP is measured in two ways for learners. When a learner is working directly with an adult on an individual skill they will be tracked on how successful their responses become in very small steps. This is directly linked to their Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to track progress across the week/term. This data informs steps against the curriculum strands in the VB-MAPP to be able to select and modify the next target to appear on their ILP.

Children work up to level 2 of the VB-MAPP curriculum (5 steps in each area) to develop needed pre-requisite skills to access a differentiated National Curriculum. The main elements of the VB-MAPP that are concentrated on include communication skills of requesting and labelling, responding as a listener, matching to examples and motor imitation. Early conversational skills and vocabulary classification are also addressed in higher levels. These skills are encouraged to be developed within teaching sessions as well as play based social sessions to allow skills to be transferred and generalised.

For further information on the VB-MAPP and its content, a "Glossary of Terms" can be found in the appendices to this document.

Cornerstones and Topic Based Learning

Our termly learning journeys are based on topics from the Cornerstones Curriculum. Selection of topics were based on developmental criteria rather than age related expectation due to the high needs of our learners which will allow for more appropriate differentiation. Within a topic there is flexibility to develop learning journeys in a direction which reflects the children's interest and prior knowledge.

The Cornerstones Curriculum model is based upon four phases or learning which are designed to give the children experience of asking questions, learning new things and also of being the experts and sharing the things that they have learnt. The four phases are:

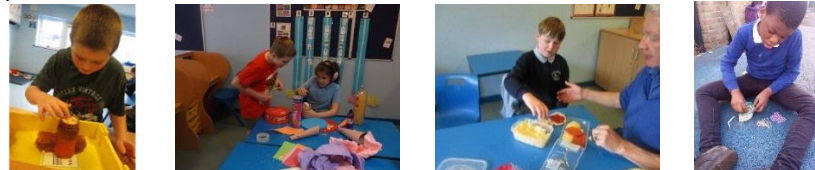
Engage – A memorable experience to grab the children's attention and motivate them to want to find out more.



Develop – A carefully structured learning journey where skills and knowledge are taught progressively and at an appropriate level/pace for the children.



Innovate – A challenge or activity where children solve real or imagined problems by applying the skills they have been taught through the develop phase.



Express – An opportunity to share their achievements with others.



Therapies and Interventions

At The Marlborough we are aware that our learners may have a range of additional needs in addition to their diagnosis of autism. These could include (but are not limited to):

- Social and Emotional Needs
- Speech & Language Needs

- Sensory Needs

In addition to support from The Rivermead Inclusive Trust's Therapy Team, we have a dedicated in-house Therapy and Intervention Team. These professionals work collaboratively and alongside class-based staff to develop strategies to overcome these barriers and to support learners to develop holistically ready to achieve their full potential.

A range of therapy and intervention options available to learners includes:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Art Therapy
- Lego Therapy
- Specific maths/English interventions
- Fine/gross motor skill support

Our range of interventions is expanding all the time and we regularly train staff members to deliver new interventions in response to the changing needs of our learners. An up to date version of our "Interventions Menu" can be found on our school website.

All learners who require an additional layer of Therapy or Intervention support will have a termly Therapy and Intervention Plan (TIP) which will track progress and ensure effectiveness of the programmes and strategies used.

Enrichment

At The Marlborough, we offer a varied enrichment timetable allowing learners to experience awe and wonder in the world around them as well as promoting physical, psychological, social and educational growth. Each will have a unique timetable of enrichment activities across a year. Some activities are offered to all classes with others carefully selected to meet the needs and abilities of a specific class or group. We regularly review our enrichment offer to ensure we offer the best possible range of experiences for all of our learners.

Some of the enrichment activities that a learner may be able to take part in during their time at The Marlborough are detailed below. Please note that activities are subject to change and not all activities will be offered to all classes.

- Forest School
- Swimming
- Horse riding
- Yoga
- Dance
- Skiing

Some of our enrichment activities take place on site whilst others are provided at external venues. Where an activity takes place off-site, travel will be on our school minibus, which allows for an additional learning focus surrounding safety when travelling.

In addition to our enrichment, we regularly enter teams in to the Medway Disability Youth Games, allowing access to a range of sports. These events also promote our school values of Courage, Confidence, Respect and Belonging through a focus on team spirit. We always celebrate participation and effort at such events over winning prizes, however the camaraderie of entering a competition is an excellent stimulus for social development.

A range of trips, visits and visitors linked to topics or themed school weeks complement the above enrichment.

Life skills

One of key areas of intent is to ensure that children leave The Marlborough with the essential skills needed to ensure that they are able to be successful in their next steps both in and outside educational establishments. Our social times of the day are excellent opportunities to develop these and staff support children on the playground, lunch hall and in class to develop self-care skills such as eating, dressing and managing personal hygiene with increasing independence.

Adults at The Marlborough know that every minute of every day is a learning opportunity and life skills are taught organically and purposefully as an integral part of everything that we do. Break times and lunch skills also provide essential opportunities for children to learn to take turns, to share and to respect the wishes or needs of others. For those learners who are still in the early stages of developing communication, informal situations outside of adult directed learning times are a fabulous opportunity to practise the skills of requesting, commenting and questioning they have been learning in class.

Learners will also have specific life skills taught discretely as part of a termly life skills target, which is personalised to individual learners and their needs. This will be linked with Independence and Community targets from a Personal Centred Annual Review or in line with the Daily Living Skills areas of: communication; executive functioning; primary needs; secondary needs or advanced skills.

Off-site visits and opportunities to engage with the school, local or wider community provide further opportunities for all learners to develop daily living skills in a meaningful context.

Classes and group organisation

Within the Marlborough our learners are split across eight main class groups: Seahorse, Starfish, Turtle, Dolphin, Whale, Octopus, Jellyfish and Lobster. In addition to our main classes, we run a small intervention group called "Coral Class," which learners may access for some or part of the day at times when they require high levels of social, emotional or mental health support.

Groupings for classes are variable year on year with class sizes usually ranging from seven to twelve depending on the needs of the learners. Almost all of our classes are mixed age groups.

Every year the Senior Leadership Team work in consultation with class teachers and other stakeholders to consider the needs and profiles of the learners across the school. Class groupings are then decided by considering a range of criteria. These criteria may include:

- Age
- Developmental stage (socially, emotionally and physically)
- Current learning pathways
- Additional needs
- Level of support needed
- Behavioural needs
- Group dynamics and pre-existing friendships
- Any other relevant factors

Within our school community, class groups provide the learners with a sense of identity and a familiar group of peers within which to develop all important social and communication skills. Each class has a teacher as well as a team of teaching assistants who support learners in all areas of their personal, social and academic progress. We pride ourselves on our “family feel” and this is evident within class teams as well as within our whole school community. Children will have the opportunity for shared social time with other classes on a regular basis throughout the school year.

Classes and groups are subject to ongoing review across an academic year with the needs of the learners first and foremost in this process as in everything we do.

Learning Environments

At The Marlborough we recognise the importance of an environment that first and foremost meets the physiological needs of our learners. All classrooms have access to natural light and temperatures are regulated effectively through the inclusion of air-conditioning in all classes. All learners will have access to a quiet or calm area in class where light and noise levels can be reduced should the need arise.

All of our classrooms have access to both inside and outside learning environments. Teachers plan in continuous provision for both areas in order to maximise opportunities for learning at all times.

Classrooms are zoned with areas clearly labelled to support learners in developing independence. Similarly, all classes will have a visual timetable to support learners in tracking their progress throughout the day and develop an understanding of when key transitions will occur. Class timetables can show a full day, be broken down in to shorter sessions or even be a large-scale version of “Now/next” so that learners always have an awareness of their expected activity and what will happen next.

Classroom areas are kept clear and free of distraction in order to limit the possibility for sensory overload in learners. Displays in class will be functional and pertinent to the needs of the learners.

All spaces in The Marlborough are used as learning spaces. The expectation is that staff and children support each other to learn at all times, whether this be developing social skills in the corridors by greeting other and walking safely or working on communication by commenting and requesting on our playground. Beyond the classrooms, The Marlborough benefits from the following shared spaces:

- Soft Play Room
- Sensory Room
- Playground
- Dining Hall
- Smaller rooms specifically used for therapies and interventions
- Central communal area

Multi-sensory learning

Research shows that a multi-sensory approach is the most effective method for teaching children with special educational needs. At The Marlborough we recognise the value of this approach, both in engaging learners with a range of skills and interests and in embedding knowledge and skills. We provide a range of visual, auditory, kinaesthetic activities, ensuring that there are practical, hands-on activities provided at all stages of learning, regardless of what pathway a learner is following.

Due to the sensory needs of many of our learners, activities are adapted to include elements of taste, touch, smell, hearing and very importantly movement. This is also reflected in our learning environments and a key

consideration given when making decisions about which classroom would be most beneficial for a learner to be placed each year.

We recognise the role of our learning environments and sensory based activities as essential transactional supports in line with the SCERTS model and use these to support opportunities for development of essential skills in self and mutual regulation.

All of our learning environments are designed to support our learners in maintaining a regulated state in which they are ready and available for learning. This means that there are calm zones available in each classroom, designed specifically to minimise environmental sensory input and therefore minimise the possibility of sensory overload.

The significant majority of our learners benefit from a visual approach and therefore visual supports feature highly in everything we do. Key visuals are shared across the school with consistency across classes and rooms ensuring ease of continuity for our learners as they transition. We support verbal communication using Signalong and symbol use and all learners will be taught to recognise a First/Then visual before moving on to an individual timetable strip where appropriate.

TEACCH

At The Marlborough we advocate use of the TEACCH method to support learners in developing engagement, independence and resilience. The TEACCH method is a highly structured, systematic approach to supporting engagement in meaningful activities. It is based on research in to the specific learning needs of people with autism. TEACCH recognises strengths in visual information processing. It also recognises difficulties with attention, executive functioning and social communication.

Many of our classes will have some or all learners following individual TEACCH timetables. These timetables support them in recognising what their next task will be and when it is completed. Adults offer regular prompts to “Check your

timetable" so that learners can become familiar with when a transition is occurring.

A key part of our TEACCH approach is the inclusion of a "workstation" where learners are expected to work with increasing independence on a set of familiar tasks designed to enable them to practise and embed learnt skills. This could start with sitting in workstation without an adult to complete a puzzle or simple matching activity but could also extend all the way up to spending an extended period of time completing booklets and worksheets in order to consolidate English or maths activities. Learners will be provided with clear structure and routine to help them to understand where to take activities from and where to place them when they are finished. Another way to look at this is as an "in tray" and an "out tray," always taking from the left and moving to the right to ensure when finished. Once again, a clear set of expectations here ensures consistency for learners as they transition, both within the school and beyond to their secondary placements.

Being able to follow a schedule in this manner can have huge benefits both inside school and beyond. Many adults with autism use TEACCH methodology to support them in accessing the world of work or structuring their daily routines.

Signalong

Signalong is a key word sign-supported communication system based on British Sign Language. It uses speech, sign, body language, facial expression and voice tone to reference the link between sign and word. Signalong works particularly well for our learners because of the blended nature of the spoken word and the visual sign. It supports both expressive and receptive communication, developing a child's understanding of an instruction as well as providing them with a choice of ways to express a concept or request.

All staff in The Marlborough will be expected to know and use a key bank of Signalong signs as part of everyday practice. Use of these signs by our learners is also encouraged and supported. Where sign is the main method of communication for a learner, staff will have a higher level of training from our Marlborough Outreach Team or Signalong themselves.

We also offer the opportunity for parent/carer workshops in order to support with the generalisation of skills outside of the school setting.

PECS

Picture Exchange Communication System

Many of our learners have significant difficulty with expressive communication. For many of them, this will mean that they are supported using PECS methodology. PECS forms part of everyday practise in almost all classes within The Marlborough.

The primary goal of PECS is to teach functional communication. PECS teaches children:

- How to communicate their wants, needs and thoughts
- How to form sentences
- How to comment on and ask/answer questions

PECS consists of 6 phases which must be taught in the correct sequence to be successful. The speed at which a child progresses from one phase to the next can vary. **It is important to note that PECS does not replace speech or prevent a child from developing speech. Speech will develop alongside the use of PECS.**

More information can be found in the appendices to this document in the "PECS guide."

Zones of Regulation

At The Marlborough, we recognise the importance of promoting positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing to our learners. We also understand that for many of our learners, communicating about emotions, and in fact even recognising them in the first place can be hugely challenging. For this reason, we provide support across the school to model communicating about emotions and how to manage them. We do this through implementing the Zones of Regulation curriculum.

The Zones of Regulation curriculum helps children better understand their emotions, sensory needs and thinking patterns. After initial work on identifying emotions, the curriculum enables and empowers children to explore strategies to support themselves and others in regulating emotions. Additionally, the Zones of Regulation helps children to recognise their own triggers, learn to read facial

expressions, develop problem-solving skills, and become more attuned to how their actions affect other people.

The Zones of Regulation is based around the use of four colours to help children self-identify how they're feeling and categorise it based on colour. The children learn different strategies to cope and manage their emotions based on which colour zone they're in. All classrooms in The Marlborough feature a display linked to these colours and even from an early stage whilst learners are following the Inspire and Initiate pathways, they will be accustomed to seeing adults model categorization of emotions in to these four colours. Learners on our Investigate and Illuminate pathways will take part in regular taught sessions designed linked to the Zones of Regulation. These sessions may take place in groups, as a whole class or in a 1:1 situation. Learners accessing our Coral Intervention class will have a high level of focus on the Zones of Regulation.

The four colours of Zones of Regulations can be explained in the visual below:

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
Low state of alertness	Optimum state of alertness	Heightened state of alertness	Extremely heightened state of alertness
A person may be described as sad, tired, sick or bored.	A person may be described as calm, happy, focused, or content. They feel a strong sense of internal control and are displaying "expected" behavior.	A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness. Their energy is elevated yet he or she feels some sense of internal control.	A person may be experiencing anger, rage, explosive behavior, panic, extreme grief, terror, or elation and feels a loss of control.

Assessment

With such a range of curricula on offer, it is important to have a robust tracking system in place. Our main assessment tracking system is called Pupil Asset. On Pupil Asset we are able to track data for all of our main curricula including SCERTS and VBMAPP which come with their own assessment system/objectives as well as our own bespoke Marlborough Progress Steps and Engagement Scales

The data held on Pupil Asset is used for both formative and summative assessment purposes, meaning that every child's learning objectives are taken from their exact point of need and every small step of progress is celebrated. Teachers use this information to set targets (long and short term), to inform planning at all levels and to report progress and attainment data to Senior Leaders, families and other stakeholders.

Marlborough Progress Steps

At The Marlborough we have developed our own bespoke assessment frameworks: the Marlborough Progress Steps (MPS). These are used to assess National Curriculum key areas. The MPS frameworks were created in response to the Rochford Review and the government initiative for 'life beyond levels.' They are based on the National Curriculum but with a focus on breaking objectives down in to small steps and ensuring accessibility for our learners.

Assessment begins at MPS1 and progresses numerically i.e. MPS2, MPS 3 etc. Pupil Asset enables us to judge pupil progress using small steps of measure. These steps add together to create 3 steps within each MPS level for each subject area. Therefore, a child can be recorded as *beginning*, *developing* or *secure* in each MPS level. A conversion between the MPS levels and the old National Curriculum levels can be found in the appendices to this document.

Marlborough Passports

Marlborough Passports are used to measure progress in foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. They were developed to ensure that all of our learners experience a learning journey that is broad, balanced and rich in experiences. We currently have passports for the following areas:

- Humanities (encompassing history and geography)
- Art and Design/Design Technology
- Music

All Passports have a strong link to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1 and 2, containing objectives which recognise the rights of our learners to access the same curriculum as their mainstream peers where this is appropriate for them. However, each of our passports contains additional or adapted objectives designed to reflect the needs of our learners.

In addition to this, we start each passport with a section entitled “The journey begins” where we recognise the pre-requisite skills that a learner can be supported to gain in readiness to fully access the passport objectives. These objectives are used to ensure that learners following our Inspire and Initiate pathways can access relevant experiences in the context of the National Curriculum subjects. For example, during a “humanities” lesson, a learner may first work on recognising, matching, naming and responding to images of familiar people and places.

Our Marlborough Passports provide a clearly sequenced curriculum model for each individual learner. Planning from these passports, allows teachers to pick out any individual or group of learners and identify their pre-existing knowledge and appropriate next steps in a curriculum area. This ensures that learners are challenged at an appropriate level and that they only move on to their next steps when they have secured and retained necessary precursory skills and knowledge. As such, all learners receive a uniquely sequenced curriculum journey into and across the National Curriculum.

In the appendices to this document an example Marlborough Passport can be found for reference and clarification on the above information.