



*Where children will thrive, succeed, and lead happy and fulfilling lives.*

<b>Procedure for</b>	Curriculum		
<b>Associated Aspris policy</b>	ACS31 Curriculum ACS30 Assessment for learning ACS34 Spiritual, moral, social cultural development and Community Cohesion ACS17 Health and Wellbeing ACS33 Special Educational Needs and Disability		
<b>School</b>	The Ribble Autism School	<b>Signature (Author)</b>	Natalie Woods Deputy Headteacher
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## Introduction

The Ribble Autism School is an independent specialist day school for boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years who have severe autism and associated complex learning needs and learning difficulties, challenging behaviour, speech, language communication difficulties and sensory integration difficulties. All the pupils referred to the school require an Education Health & Care Plan.

Our ethos is centred around a positive, supportive and achieving culture that is essential for creating an exemplary school that meets the needs of children with autism. The school is in a refurbished building close to local parks, libraries and amenities in the Lostock Hall area of Lancashire. The school building and outdoor space includes:

- **Sensory/light room** - this space is equipped with bubble tube, cause and effect lights and fibreoptic lights. The aim for this space is to provide a calming environment for pupils to explore and learn within.
- **Group classroom** - this space is equipped with interactive screen, group area, focused areas for numeracy, literacy, mark making and small world play. The aim for this space is to encourage shared attention skills and develop numeracy skills, mark making skills and provide opportunities for play.
- **Reading room** - this space is equipped with story reading sacks, sensory story resources, tactile reading books, books which link to the termly theme, books which link to the SMSC calendar, protected characteristics stories and books from our reading scheme (Pearson Bug Club). The room has a variety of comfortable seating and provides a calm and welcoming environment. The aim for this space is to encourage joint attention skills and foster pupils love of storytelling, books and if appropriate begin to access the reading scheme and phonics.
- **Movement room** - this space is equipped with sensory movement equipment which compliments the pupils bespoke sensory diets, the room has access to the outdoor play area which has additional equipment to promote gross and physical movement. The aim for this space to allow the opportunity for pupils to regulate through movement and is a space for 1-1 direct therapy.
- **Individual classroom** - this space is available for pupils who are ready to access 1-1 learning using TEACCH work systems; it is also equipped with a desk top PC for pupils to access interactive learning resources. The aim for this space is to provide a calm, organised learning environment for pupils with the attention skills to access 1-1 work and intervention.
- **Group playroom** - this space provides areas for pupils to access creative and messy play, role play and malleable play. The group playroom has access to both of the outdoor play areas. The aim for this area is to encourage exploration and develop curiosity. It fosters independent learning and exploration, allowing pupils to make choices and engage in self-chosen activities.
- **Outdoor play area** - this outdoor space is equipped with resources to encourage role play, such as a kitchen/home area, construction, sand and water play and an investigation area with natural materials to explore. The area is covered to provide protection from the elements and is accessible throughout the school day. The aim for this area is to encourages pupils to be active learners, make independent choices, be curious and explore whilst playing. This space also provides the ideal environment for speech and language therapy.

- **Outdoor movement area** - this space is equipped with equipment to promote gross motor skills development including trikes, climbing equipment and space to mark make. The aim for this area is to promote physical skill development and offer a space for occupational therapy programmes to be delivered.

## **Curriculum Pedagogy**

At The Ribble Autism School, we offer a coherently planned curriculum; this is underpinned by a therapeutic approach and offers a balance of adult led learning and enquiry-based learning. Our ethos is centred around developing speech, language and communication, emotional regulation and personal well-being.

Opportunities for personal development and lifelong learning are woven into the curriculum. There are exceptionally high aspirations for all of our pupils; these aspirations are achieved through the construction of a bespoke personalised curriculum. Each personalised curriculum is inclusive of the pupil's interests, promotes independence and problem-solving skills, nurtures creative thinking and inspires passive learners.

## **Intent**

At The Ribble Autism School, we provide the following:

- A broad and balanced education for all pupils - coherently planned to meet the highly individual needs of all our learners. For pupils who are able to access some independent learning (even with a high level of support), this education is based upon either EYFS, the Equals pre-formal, informal and semi-formal pathways or a combination.
- A curriculum that is continuously evolving to address the diverse needs of our pupils on roll, which is underpinned with personalised curriculums and personalised therapy plans.
- A therapeutic curriculum delivered by specialist teachers and therapists, supported with therapeutic programmes written by our on-site multi-disciplinary team. This includes speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and behaviour support input.
- Our curriculum has high expectations and is specifically designed to give pupils with autism relevant knowledge, skills and the ability to apply what they have learnt. Pupils are encouraged to achieve to the best of their abilities with increasing fluency and independence.
- A curriculum that is coherently planned and sequenced towards accumulating knowledge and skills for future learning. This also promotes a positive attitude towards life-long learning.
- A curriculum that provides pupils with the rich cultural capital they will need to reach their personal potential in life.

- A curriculum which supports pupils' sensory processing needs, physical development and wellbeing, taking as much responsibility for their own health as they can and enabling them to live an active and healthy lifestyle.
- A curriculum which develops respect for religious beliefs and moral values, an understanding of other races, cultures and religions, and respect for self and others regardless of race, gender or creed, within a framework of equality of opportunity. The framework is underpinned by British values and recognition of protected characteristics.
- A curriculum which considers the physical and mental health of pupils. This is carefully considered, appropriate learning opportunities are identified to ensure pupils are effectively supported, so that they can apply their skills and knowledge throughout school and in later life.

#### a) Core Curriculum offer and curriculum pathways

At The Ribble Autism School pupils are delivered a curriculum which is broad and balanced. It aims to develop skills and knowledge, whilst focusing on the individual therapeutic needs of pupils and their personal development.

All pupils receive a balanced timetable of:

- Thematic approaches inclusive of SMSC and protected characteristics links
- Discreet teaching of some NC subject areas (where appropriate)
- Enquiry based learning opportunities
- Child initiated learning and play opportunities
- Teacher led learning (carpet times)
- 1-1 teaching
- Small group teaching and learning

(An example of pupil timetable can be seen on our website)

We intend to provide a bespoke, individualised curriculum aligned with learner characteristics need, aspirations and the outcomes identified in a child's Education, Health and Care Plan.

The curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils have opportunities to reach their full potential. Due to the diversity of needs across our school, pupils are assigned a specific learning pathway to suit their cognitive, communication and social capabilities.

The table below provides an overview of the curriculum pathways we offer, pupils personalised curriculums are influenced by the objectives and strategies outlined within these areas. Pupils can work across multiple pathways. **Note: our current cohort in 2025 are following pre-formal and informal pathways.**

	Pre-formal	EYFS	Informal	Semi-formal	Formal
Holistic curriculum	The Ribble Autism School Core Values Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education Enrichment Activities British Values Protected characteristics PSHE & RSE				
Personal development and enrichment curriculum	<b>Enrichment accredited courses</b> - Junior Award scheme for School (JASS) and Science Crest Award (CREST) <b>Personal development opportunities</b> - Trampolining, Sensory centres, Play centres, Parks, Movement gyms, Visitors to school, Library, Shops, Museums, Farms				
Therapeutic Curriculum	Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Supports (SCERTS) Sensory Diets				

	<p>Sensory Circuits Speech, Language and Communication programmes Alert Programme The Real Programme Attention Autism</p>
Pre-formal Pathway	<p><b>Curriculum areas-</b> Communication &amp; Social Relationships. Cognition &amp; Challenge. Self Determination &amp; Independence. Sensory &amp; Physical Wellbeing. Creativity, Outdoor Learning Experience.</p> <p><b>Engagement Focus</b> – Areas of persistence. Anticipation. Initiation. Exploration. Realisation.</p> <p><b>Delivered</b> through a thematic based curriculum.</p> <p><b>Following</b> Equals Pre-formal schemes of learning (or a combination).</p> <p><b>Development assessment-</b> SCERTS and The Real Assessment.</p> <p><b>Assessment-</b> The Engagement Model.</p>
Informal Pathway	<p><b>Curriculum areas-</b> Independence, Play &amp; Leisure Communication, Language &amp; Literacy Thinking, Problem Solving &amp; Maths, Social Play &amp; Shared Attention Stories &amp; Narratives, The World About Me, Expressive Arts, Physical Well-being.</p> <p><b>Engagement Focus</b> – Areas of persistence. Anticipation. Initiation. Exploration. Realisation.</p> <p><b>Delivered</b> through a thematic based curriculum.</p> <p><b>Following</b> Equals Informal schemes of learning (or a combination).</p> <p><b>Development assessment-</b> SCERTS and The Real Assessment.</p> <p><b>Assessment-</b> The Engagement Model.</p>
Semi-formal	<p><b>Curriculum areas-</b> Independence Communication, Language &amp; Literacy Thinking, Problem Solving &amp; Maths, Social Play &amp; Shared Attention Stories &amp; Narratives, The World About Me, Expressive Arts, Physical, Well-being, Relationships, Education, Outdoor Learning &amp; Forest School.</p> <p><b>Engagement Focus</b> – Areas of persistence. Anticipation. Initiation. Exploration. Realisation.</p> <p><b>Delivered</b> through a thematic based curriculum.</p> <p><b>Following</b> Equals Semi-formal schemes of learning (or a combination).</p> <p><b>Development assessment-</b> SCERTS and The Real Assessment.</p> <p><b>Assessment-</b> The Engagement Model and Progression steps.</p>
Formal	<p><b>Curriculum areas</b> - Literacy, Maths , RE, Science, Independence, Stories &amp; Narratives, The World About Me, Expressive Arts, Physical Wellbeing, Relationships, Education, Outdoor Learning &amp; Forest School.</p> <p><b>Engagement Focus</b> – Areas of: Persistence., Self-initiation, Cross-contextualisation (realisation developed to true cross contextualisation).</p> <p><b>Delivered</b> through a thematic based curriculum, with subject specific teaching.</p> <p><b>Following</b> Equals formal schemes of learning (or a combination).</p> <p><b>Development assessment-</b> SCERTS and The Real Assessment.</p> <p><b>Assessment-</b> Progression steps, Phonics Screening check year 1, Times Tables check in year 4.</p>
Early Years Foundation Stage	<p><b>Early Learning Goals- Early Years Foundation Stage</b></p> <p><b>Curriculum Focus-</b> Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design. Delivered via thematic based curriculum and often through pre-formal and informal curriculum.</p> <p><b>Following EYFS key principles-</b> The Unique child, Positive relationships, Enabling environments, Learning and development.</p>

(see our website for Provision pathway -on-a-page examples)

## **b) Planning Expectations**

Teachers' and therapists planning is monitored through our internal school quality assurance system (HEX)

Planning expectations include:

- Long term planning - Personalised curriculums, links to EHCP and therapeutic goals.
- Medium term planning - termly schemes of work, taken from Equals schemes of learning and individual pupil plans.
- Short term planning - weekly plan with pupil focused 1-1 work and group focuses.

There is an expectation that teachers plan sequenced learning opportunities for pupils with carefully planned learning objectives and outcomes taken from the schemes of learning provided. In addition, adult observations provide planned next steps for pupils. Emotional regulation and emotional well-being is always a priority, therefore the SCERTS curriculum underpins and takes prevalence on every occasion. All the adults working with the pupils know their individual SCERTS priorities and targets.

## **c) Legislation and Guidance**

This policy booklet reflects the requirements of the programmes of study for all our learners at The Ribble Autism School. The only dis-application is for those pupils with the most complex and multiple needs who are operating at the earliest stages of development (i.e. from birth up to 5 years). It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010 and refers to curriculum related expectations of governing boards set out in the DofE's Governance Handbook.

## **d) Promoting Equality and Diversity**

At The Ribble Autism School, we ensure that our pupils are given opportunities to develop age-appropriate knowledge and understanding through a well-planned and delivered curriculum. We believe that children should be able to recognise themselves and their circumstances so they can see their lived experiences are validated and valued. We do this through our holistic curriculum which is supplemented by the SMSC calendar.

There are 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and all schools should be able to demonstrate that no form of discrimination is tolerated and that pupils show respect for those who share the protected characteristics.

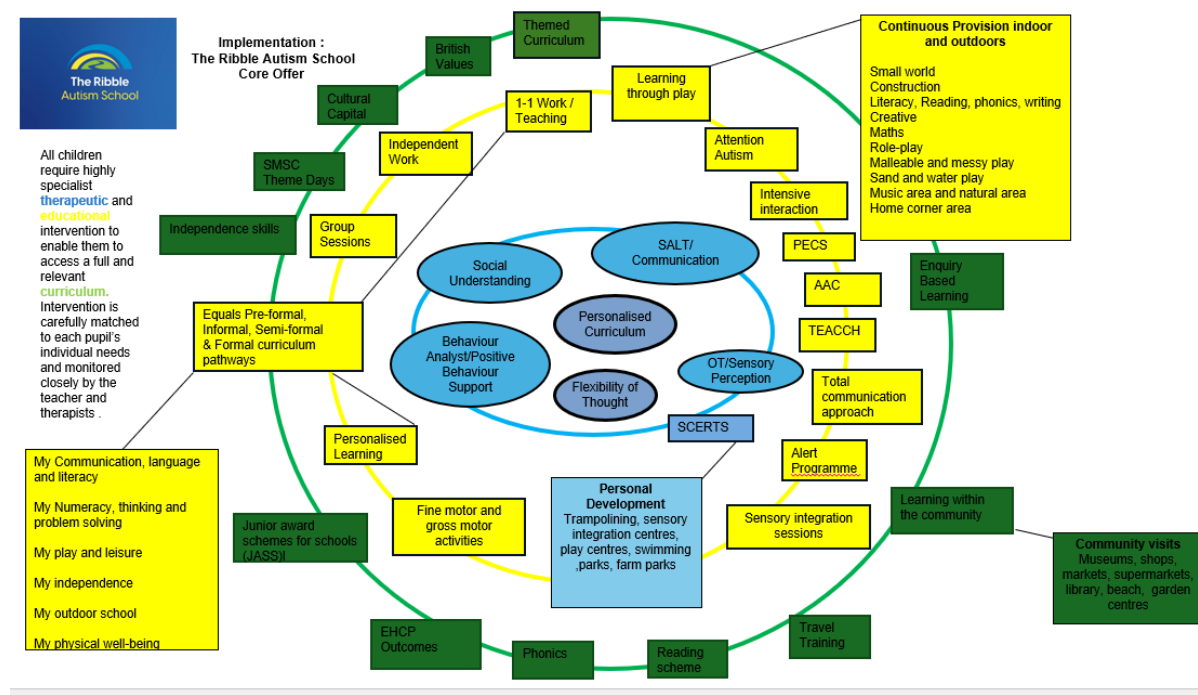
The 9 Protected Characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

## Implementation

### a) Curriculum Implementation and Personalised Curriculums

At The Ribble Autism School our curriculum is implemented through individual personalised approaches. Each pupil has a personalised curriculum written and designed with them specifically in mind.



(Example of The Ribble Autism School personalised curriculum which is further differentiated according to individual needs with EHCP and assigned curriculum pathway)

### b) Teaching Implementation

At The Ribble Autism School teaching implementation involves:

- Personalised learning activities (1-1 work) to match the ability and special educational needs of the individual pupil
- Careful planning and well-structured individual and small group activities are planned for throughout the day, these include carpet time, 1-1 work, activities provided through continuous provision and personal development activities off-site.
- Well resourced, scaffolded resources and materials that are Dyslexia friendly, including differentiated yet challenging work tasks.
- Supports which incorporate a variety of verbal and visual SaLT strategies e.g. True Object Based Icons (TOBI), symbols, mind maps, blank level questioning, thinking time, talking mats, opportunities for oracy and an appropriate level of teacher talk.
- Staff providing consistent positive behaviour support strategies from pupil behaviour support guides. Staff are aware of pupil alert arousal levels.
- Teachers and TAs providing regular verbal and written feedback to pupils within learning journals and on completed work to systematically check for understanding and acquisition of new skills.



- Tasks and activities which are stimulating, engaging and exciting whilst being appropriately challenging.
- A range of evidence-based autism approaches, for example, TEACCH approach principles which are firmly embedded into practice.

### **c) Implementation via themes and cross-curricular links**

At The Ribble Autism School, we implement our curriculum using Equals schemes of learning with a thematic approach where appropriate. Continuous provision has thematic enhancements and there is a 'book of the moment' which links to the theme, word of the week and rhyme of the week. Teachers are expected to skilfully incorporate pupils' existing interests, whilst planning for new and exciting experiences linked to the termly themes.

Medium term overviews have been developed with teachers and MDT to support each theme. The maps are generic and advisory, and teachers should adapt these according to the pathway their pupils are on. Themes may be taught in any order and over a variety of durations; this is down to the professional judgement of the teacher.

(see our website for yearly thematic overview and mapping)

Should The Ribble Autism School have pupils accessing the semi-formal or formal pathway, we have Thematic based Schemes of work available. These are from the Equals curriculum.

At The Ribble Autism School, pupils following the EYFS framework will engage with a curriculum based around early learning goals that is underpinned by the four key principles of the EYFS; A unique child, Positive relationships, Enabling environments and Learning and Development. Pupils will typically be working on Pre-formal and Informal schemes of learning, this is determined using the pathway planner and considering all pupil learner characteristics.

### **d) Accredited and Enrichment Offer (see Enrichment policy for more details)**

#### **JASS and primary CREST Awards**

The Junior Award Scheme for Schools/JASS supports achievement of a wide range of learning objectives. It's designed to be easy to use and simple to run. It can bring structure and focus and be used as a great motivational tool for learners.

Activities for each section can be tailored to individual needs, interests and strengths. Completing them can build confidence, encourage teamwork and develop skills, encouraging children and young people to be active and involved in their community.

It's a great way to promote and record achievements at an individual level and can lead onto the Duke of Edinburgh award when a young person reaches 14 years of age.

Using JASS can:

- Support opportunities for all young people to experience achievement
- Encourage healthier lifestyle choices, including being active and outdoors more
- Help schools build partnerships with parents, local groups and the community
- Help with transitions from Primary to Secondary school
- Provide a platform for starting vocational learning

- Act as an umbrella award for other initiatives, awards and certificates.

### **Crest Award**

CREST is the British Science Association's flagship education programme, providing enrichment activities to inspire, engage and connect young people aged 5-19 across the UK with science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

The CREST Awards scheme inspires young people to think and behave like scientists and engineers. It can be done by any child or young person aged 5-19, regardless of ability

### **d) SCERTS- Social Communication Emotional Regulation Transactional Support Curriculum**

SCERTS is an autism specific curriculum that focuses on developing pupil's communication skills, and their ability to regulate their emotions. SCERTS is assessed and progress is overseen by the Occupational Therapist and Speech & Language Therapists alongside educational staff to develop individual SCERTS targets for all pupils based on their needs and therapeutic priorities.

Specific transactional support is considered and incorporated into the pupils' individualised learning curriculums and timetables. These are categorised using colour (blue to represent social communication and green to represent emotional regulation).

These skills are learnt in school and then generalised into a wider range of contexts as well as activities in the community.

Pupils are profiled according to need:

- Social Partner Stage
- Language Partner Stage
- Conversational Partner Stage

(see our website for SCERTS profiling)

#### **Social Partners are learning to: -**

- Enjoy spending time interacting with another person.
- Make choices of food or activities.
- Make noises which have communicative intent.
- Show another person when they need comfort or support.
- Take turns.
- Communicate their emotions using facial expression, vocalisations and body language.

***Note our current 2024-2025 cohort are working across social partner stage and language partner stage.***

#### **Language Partners are learning to: -**

- Spend time with a greater range of people for extended periods with increasing numbers of meaningful exchanges.
- Make increasing choices throughout the day – expressing likes and dislikes across a greater range of contexts.

- Name (through oral language, sign language or picture symbols) a wider range of items, people and actions).
- To use language in a creative way.
- Engage in a wider range of play sequences e.g. construction, imaginative, turn-taking games.
- Understand and use symbols or words to express a range of emotions.
- Respond positively to regulatory strategies offered by communication partners (i.e. staff, family).
- To use some appropriate self-regulating strategies.
- Ask for help.
- Ask for a break.

**Conversational Partners are learning to: -**

- Use conventional communication strategies (verbal and non-verbal) to secure attention and engage with a wide range of partners for increasing periods of time.
- To understand and use a wide range of early and advanced emotions vocabulary to describe and understand the state of themselves and others.
- Sustain appropriate conversations considering the rules of discourse and interaction such as, initiation and termination (i.e. how to start and stop a conversation), topic maintenance and shifting (i.e. how to stay on topic and then transition smoothly) awareness of listener knowledge and interests (i.e. being able to sift through information and read cues from others) and awareness of audience stature.
- Engage with peers in play, joint activities and projects bringing in skills of negotiation, compromise and the ability to follow rules.
- Understand and use increasingly complex language structures.
- Respond positively to regulatory strategies offered by communication partners (i.e. staff, family).
- To identify and use appropriate self-regulating strategies.

(see our SCERTS policy for more information)

**e) Cultural Impact of the School (Implicit Curriculum)**

At The Ribble Autism School, we maintain a strong ethos and strive towards the following principles:

- A happy, safe, positive and calm learning environment.
- A strong sense of community – i.e. mutually beneficial relationships and positive attitudes, values and beliefs which facilitate strong self-discipline and responsible citizens, who in turn value and can co-operate with others.
- A personalised approach to learning and behaviour (designed around meeting individual needs).

Our values are reinforced through the school positive and proactive behaviour approaches.

## **Impact and Charter development**

### **a) How we measure impact and what difference our curriculum makes for our pupils**

Impact at The Ribble Autism School is measured and valued in a range of ways, we have high expectations of all pupils and strive for them to achieve the absolute best of their ability. We can measure progress in the following ways:

- SCERTS data and observations at school, in the local community and at home
- Annual EHCP Review targets
- Assessment tracking
- Accreditation outcomes
- Standardised assessments in English YARC and BPVS
- SALT/OT/Behaviour Assessments

All of which is collated together in an end of year impact document

We have a focus on the holistic evidence and value progress shown over time; this is gathered in the following ways:

- Learning journals
- Videos
- Wow moments

In summary, types of evidence for ongoing use: quantitative and qualitative:

- Pupil assessments
- Tracking of internal data
- Lesson observations and changes over time of the profile of teaching (1-page profiles)
- Quality assurance of Teaching and learning – (See Teaching and Learning Policy)
- Collated information (attendance, bullying, accidents, incidents, etc.)
- Observations of behaviour and attitudes towards learning, curriculum engagement
- Views from focus groups (pupils, parents, staff)
- Sampling (e.g. work scrutiny, case studies)

In addition, we highly value progress for our pupils which cannot always be measured.

### **b) Effectiveness of learning; attainment and progress.**

Expected progress is individual for each pupil and the curriculum pathway a pupil is on in addition to their starting point and what stage of transition into school they are at.

These expectations may vary based on attendance, changes in behaviour or readiness to learn, all of these areas are monitored closely and form the data recorded.

Progress data for all pupils, across all pathways is ongoing and closely internally monitored on a regular basis. This is then reported back to teachers and therapist on a termly basis. Teachers then amend their planning accordingly to address any issues raised. If any pupils are found to be significantly below expectations, then targeted intervention work may be arranged, and other factors will be investigated. English and maths (where appropriate) are similarly externally monitored with other special schools on a termly basis.

**c) Effectiveness of curriculum on preparation for next stage of education and life**

The Ribble Autism School works to provide a holistic and highly individualised approach to help pupils prepare for lifelong learning by developing knowledge and skills relevant to their needs. All pupils have a personalised curriculum and work along one, or more, pathways towards their goals. The curriculum options include a wide range of enrichment activities, therapy sessions and life development opportunities. The personalised curriculums are frequently reviewed and amended according to progress, assessed needs and aspirations.





