

HANDEL HOUSE SCHOOL
Northholme, Gainsborough, Lincs. DN21 2JB
Telephone 01427 612426



HANDEL HOUSE SCHOOL

CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

This policy applies to the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and is available to parents, pupils, staff and other interested parties through the school website or from the School Office.

Document Details:

Information Sharing Category	Public Domain
Version	V3
Date Published	September 2026
Authorised by (if required)	Proprietor, who is also the Headteacher, and Advisory Board
Review/Update Date	September 2027
Responsible Area	Headteacher and Early Years Foundation Stage Co-ordinator

1. Policy Statement

Handel House School is committed to providing a broad, balanced, ambitious and appropriately challenging curriculum which enables every pupil to develop academically, socially, physically, morally, spiritually and culturally. The curriculum is designed to reflect the School's ethos, values and educational aims while taking into account pupils' ages, aptitudes, abilities, interests and individual needs. The School recognises that every pupil is an individual. Our curriculum therefore seeks to provide appropriate challenge and support so that pupils can make good progress from their individual starting points and develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and personal qualities required for the next stage of their education and for adult life. The curriculum is delivered within a safe, supportive and stimulating environment in which pupils are encouraged to develop confidence, curiosity, independence, resilience and a lifelong love of learning.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has regard to the requirements of the:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, particularly Part 1 – Quality of Education;
- Department for Education Independent School Standards Guidance, April 2026;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework applicable from 1 September 2026;
- Development Matters;
- Statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance applicable from 1 September 2026;
- National Curriculum programmes of study, where adopted by the school;
- Statutory requirements relating to religious education;

- Relevant safeguarding and Prevent requirements.

The School will review this policy and its associated curriculum plans and schemes of work whenever statutory requirements or significant guidance change.

3. Curriculum Intent

The intent of the Handel House School curriculum is to ensure that pupils:

- acquire secure knowledge and understanding across a broad range of subjects;
- develop strong literacy, numeracy and communication skills;
- develop curiosity and a desire to learn;
- develop independence, resilience and confidence;
- learn to think critically, creatively and logically;
- develop physical, practical and technological skills;
- understand and respect themselves and others;
- appreciate different cultures, beliefs, backgrounds and perspectives;
- understand their responsibilities as members of the school and wider community;
- develop an understanding of the world in which they live;
- develop positive attitudes towards health, safety and wellbeing;
- develop appropriate digital and online safety skills;
- experience success while being appropriately challenged;
- are prepared effectively for transition to senior school and the next stage of education.

The School aims to ensure that pupils leave Handel House as confident, articulate and well-rounded young people who possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to flourish.

4. Curriculum Entitlement

Handel House School provides a curriculum which is broad and balanced and which is appropriate to the ages, abilities, aptitudes and needs of all pupils. The curriculum incorporates the National Curriculum programmes of study where appropriate, alongside additional content determined by the School's independent curriculum, the needs of its pupils and preparation for senior school.

The curriculum includes appropriate provision for:

- English;
- mathematics;
- science;
- computing and digital technology;
- history;
- geography;
- religious education;
- art and design;
- design and technology;
- physical education and games;
- music;
- modern foreign languages;
- PSHE and citizenship;
- relationships education and age-appropriate RSE;
- health and wellbeing;
- personal development;
- enrichment and educational visits.

Handel House School also provides opportunities for pupils to participate in drama, music, sport, clubs, competitions, performances, educational visits, residential experiences and other enrichment activities.

5. Curriculum Organisation

The school is organised into:

- Early Years Foundation Stage;
- Preparatory Department, Years 1–6.

Curriculum organisation reflects the age and developmental stage of pupils. In EYFS and Key Stage 1, subjects may be taught through carefully planned thematic or interdisciplinary approaches where this strengthens connections between areas of learning. In Key Stage 2, subjects are increasingly taught discretely while appropriate cross-curricular links are maintained. The School ensures that pupils experience sufficient breadth across the academic year and that curriculum planning identifies progression in knowledge, vocabulary and skills. Curriculum time is reviewed regularly to ensure that pupils have appropriate access to all areas of the curriculum.

6. Curriculum Planning and Progression

The School's curriculum is supported by:

- whole-school curriculum maps;
- subject curriculum plans;
- long-term plans;
- medium-term plans;
- short-term/lesson planning where appropriate;
- schemes of work;
- assessment arrangements;
- intervention plans;
- individual learning plans (ILPs), where appropriate.

Planning identifies the knowledge and skills pupils are expected to acquire and provides appropriate progression between year groups. Teachers take account of pupils' prior attainment and starting points when planning learning.

Curriculum plans are reviewed regularly to identify:

- curriculum coverage;
- progression;
- repetition;
- gaps in knowledge;
- appropriate challenge;
- opportunities for retrieval and consolidation;
- opportunities for practical learning;
- SEND and accessibility requirements.

Subject leaders/co-ordinators, where designated, contribute to curriculum development and monitoring.

7. Teaching and Learning

Teaching at Handel House is designed to enable pupils to acquire knowledge securely, develop understanding and apply their learning.

Teachers are expected to:

- have high expectations of all pupils;
- demonstrate secure subject knowledge;
- plan appropriately sequenced learning;
- build upon prior knowledge;
- explain new concepts clearly;
- use appropriate questioning;

- provide opportunities for pupils to practise and apply learning;
- provide appropriate challenge and support;
- check pupils' understanding;
- use assessment to inform subsequent teaching;
- provide timely and constructive feedback;
- promote independence;
- encourage pupils to think critically and creatively;
- use resources effectively;
- manage behaviour consistently;
- promote positive attitudes to learning.

Teaching approaches are selected according to the subject, age and needs of pupils rather than requiring a single prescribed teaching style.

Appropriate approaches may include:

- direct instruction;
- discussion;
- questioning;
- investigation;
- practical activity;
- problem solving;
- research;
- collaborative learning;
- independent work;
- fieldwork;
- debate;
- role play;
- presentations;
- creative activity;
- educational visits;
- use of digital technology.

8. Learning Environment

Handel House School aims to provide learning environments which are:

- safe;
- welcoming;
- calm;
- purposeful;
- inclusive;
- stimulating;
- appropriately resourced;
- accessible to pupils with additional needs.

Classrooms and other learning spaces should support pupils' independence and reinforce current learning where appropriate. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work and their learning environment.

9. Assessment, Feedback and Progress

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. Handel House School uses a combination of:

- baseline assessment;
- teacher assessment;
- formative assessment;

- questioning and observation;
- marking and feedback;
- end-of-unit assessments;
- internal assessments;
- standardised assessments where appropriate;
- statutory assessments;
- work scrutiny;
- pupil discussion and pupil voice.

Assessment is used to establish:

- what pupils know;
- what pupils understand;
- what pupils can do;
- what they have remembered;
- where misconceptions or gaps exist;
- what pupils need to learn next.

Teachers use assessment information to adapt teaching, provide additional support and identify opportunities for further challenge. The progress of pupils is monitored over time. Where pupils are identified as making insufficient progress, appropriate action is taken. Assessment information may be used to identify patterns relating to particular groups of pupils, including pupils with SEND, pupils with EAL and pupils requiring additional challenge.

10. SEND, Inclusion and Accessibility

Handel House is committed to providing an inclusive curriculum. The curriculum is designed to enable pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to participate as fully as possible. Teachers take account of pupils' individual needs and make reasonable adjustments where required.

Support may include:

- differentiated teaching;
- adapted resources;
- changes to the presentation of information;
- additional explanation or modelling;
- visual or practical resources;
- appropriate use of technology;
- additional adult support where available;
- movement or sensory opportunities;
- adjustments to assessment arrangements;
- individual learning programmes.

An individual learning plan (ILP) may be used where appropriate to identify:

- strengths;
- barriers to learning;
- individual targets;
- reasonable adjustments;
- teaching strategies;
- interventions;
- review arrangements.

The provision of appropriate support is not dependent upon a pupil having a formal diagnosis or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Where appropriate, the school works with parents/carers and external professionals to identify and review effective support. The School seeks to ensure that pupils with disabilities are able to access the curriculum through reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

11. More Able Pupils

The school recognises pupils who demonstrate high prior attainment, particular aptitude or the potential to work at greater depth. Teachers provide appropriate challenge through:

- increased depth;
- more complex questioning;
- problem solving;
- independent research;
- application of knowledge;
- extension activities;
- leadership opportunities;
- enrichment opportunities.

Challenge is designed to deepen learning rather than simply increase the quantity of work.

12. English as an Additional Language

Handel House School recognises and values the linguistic diversity of its pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported to develop their spoken and written English while maintaining and valuing their home languages and cultural experiences. Support may include:

- pre-teaching vocabulary;
- visual resources;
- adapted texts;
- modelling;
- opportunities for structured speaking;
- appropriate use of bilingual resources;
- targeted intervention;
- additional adult support where available.

EAL pupils remain entitled to the full curriculum. Teachers take account of the distinction between language acquisition and underlying learning difficulties when assessing progress.

13. Early Years Foundation Stage

The school's EYFS provision is fully aligned with the statutory EYFS framework applicable from 1 September 2026. The EYFS curriculum is informed by the educational programmes within the statutory framework and by Development Matters. Learning is delivered through a balance of:

- child-initiated learning;
- purposeful play;
- adult-led activities;
- exploration;
- practical experiences;
- structured teaching;
- interaction with adults and other children.

The seven areas of learning are:

Prime Areas

- Communication and Language;
- Physical Development;
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Specific Areas

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the World;
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Handel House School recognises that the areas of learning are interconnected and plans experiences which enable children to develop across several areas simultaneously. Children's individual starting points, interests, developmental needs and experiences are considered when planning learning. The Early Learning Goals are used as end-of-Reception assessment criteria and are not treated as a curriculum in themselves. The School has regard to current DfE guidance concerning screen use in early years settings.

14. Modern Foreign Languages

Handel House School provides a progressive programme of Modern Foreign Languages. As of September 2026:

- French is taught in Years 1–4;
- Spanish is introduced in Years 5–6.

The MFL curriculum develops pupils' confidence in:

- listening;
- speaking;
- reading;
- writing;
- pronunciation;
- vocabulary acquisition;
- cultural understanding.

The study of languages is intended to promote communication skills, cultural awareness and an appreciation of linguistic diversity.

15. Computing, Digital Literacy and Online Safety

Computing is taught as a discrete subject and is also used to support learning across the curriculum.

Pupils develop:

- computational thinking;
- digital literacy;
- information and research skills;
- responsible use of technology;
- understanding of online risks;
- critical evaluation of online information;
- appropriate digital communication;
- awareness of privacy and personal information;
- knowledge of safe and respectful online relationships.

Online safety education is reinforced through computing, PSHE, relationships education and other appropriate curriculum areas. The School's Online Safety and Acceptable Use arrangements provide additional guidance.

16. PSHE, Relationships Education, RSE and Health

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) contributes to pupils' academic, personal and social development. The programme enables pupils to develop:

- self-awareness;
- confidence;

- resilience;
- emotional literacy;
- healthy relationships;
- understanding of personal safety;
- respect for others;
- understanding of rights and responsibilities;
- knowledge of healthy lifestyles;
- age-appropriate understanding of relationships and sex education;
- awareness of financial and economic matters;
- citizenship skills.

Handel House School's Relationships Education/RSE provision has regard to the revised statutory DfE guidance applicable from 1 September 2026. The School provides age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate content and works in partnership with parents/carers. The School's separate RSE Policy sets out the curriculum content, teaching arrangements, monitoring, evaluation and parental arrangements. Any safeguarding concerns arising through curriculum discussions are managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

17. Religious Education

Religious Education is taught as part of the school's curriculum and contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding of:

- Christianity;
- other principal religions and belief systems;
- different religious and non-religious perspectives;
- religious practices and traditions;
- ethical questions;
- respect for differing beliefs.

The curriculum promotes respectful discussion and enables pupils to develop an understanding of the diversity of beliefs within contemporary society.

18. SMSC and Fundamental British Values

The curriculum contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to:

- distinguish right from wrong;
- understand and respect the law;
- consider the consequences of their actions;
- develop empathy and respect;
- appreciate different cultures and beliefs;
- participate positively in their community;
- understand democratic processes;
- value individual liberty;
- develop mutual respect and tolerance.

Fundamental British Values are promoted through the curriculum, assemblies, PSHE, RE, pupil leadership, educational visits and the wider life of the School. The School does not promote partisan political views. Where political issues arise through teaching or current affairs, pupils are given balanced and age-appropriate opportunities to consider different viewpoints. Extremist or discriminatory views are challenged appropriately.

19. Physical Education, Games and Health

Physical Education and Games form an important part of the school curriculum. The programme aims to develop:

- physical competence;

- coordination;
- fitness;
- teamwork;
- tactical awareness;
- resilience;
- healthy competition;
- understanding of health and wellbeing.

Pupils are expected to participate unless there is an appropriate reason for exemption or adjustment. The School provides opportunities for pupils to participate in swimming, games and other physical activities where appropriate.

20. Music, Art, Drama and Creativity

The School recognises the importance of creative education in developing confidence, expression, imagination and cultural understanding. Pupils have opportunities to participate in:

- music;
- singing;
- drama;
- art;
- design;
- performances;
- creative projects;
- competitions;
- concerts and productions.

The School's enrichment programme includes opportunities to develop individual talents and interests. Peripatetic provision, including music, dance and games, contributes to the wider curriculum.

21. Educational Visits and Enrichment

Educational visits are an integral part of the curriculum where they extend, enrich or consolidate classroom learning. Visits may include:

- museums;
- galleries;
- sporting venues;
- outdoor learning;
- places of worship;
- residential experiences;
- cultural venues;
- places of employment;
- environmental sites;
- community facilities.

All educational visits are planned in accordance with the school's Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy. Risk assessments are completed where appropriate and the school considers safeguarding, supervision, medical, accessibility, transport and emergency arrangements. The School also provides a programme of extra-curricular activities which reflects the interests and talents of pupils and staff.

22. Homework

Homework is used appropriately to consolidate and extend learning. Homework may include:

- reading;
- mathematics practice;

- spelling and vocabulary;
- research;
- project work;
- revision;
- preparation for future learning.

Homework is set according to pupils' age, ability and curriculum requirements. Parents/carers are encouraged to support reading and learning at home while recognising that responsibility for teaching remains with the School.

23. Transition and Preparation for Senior School

The School recognises the importance of effective transition. Pupils are supported when moving:

- between year groups;
- between key stages;
- from EYFS into Key Stage 1;
- from Handel House to senior school.

Transition arrangements may include:

- meetings with new teachers;
- transition afternoons;
- sharing of relevant information;
- discussions with parents/carers;
- liaison with receiving schools;
- additional support for pupils with SEND;
- preparation for entrance assessments and examinations.

Years 5 and 6 pupils are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop study skills, revision techniques, examination strategies, organisation and resilience. The School provides age-appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of the world of work and future educational pathways through visitors, discussions, visits and enrichment.

24. Curriculum Leadership

The Headteacher/Proprietor has overall responsibility for ensuring that the School provides an appropriate curriculum and meets the relevant requirements of the Independent School Standards. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- curriculum implementation;
- curriculum monitoring;
- staff deployment;
- curriculum evaluation;
- ensuring appropriate curriculum plans and schemes of work;
- monitoring pupil progress;
- identifying curriculum development priorities.

Subject leaders/co-ordinators, where designated, support the development and monitoring of their curriculum areas. The EYFS Co-ordinator has responsibility for ensuring that EYFS provision meets statutory requirements. All teaching staff have responsibility for implementing the curriculum effectively within their areas of teaching.

25. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the curriculum is monitored through a range of evidence. This may include:

- lesson observations;
- learning walks;
- planning scrutiny;

- curriculum audits;
- work scrutiny;
- assessment information;
- pupil progress meetings;
- pupil voice;
- parent/carer feedback;
- discussions with teachers;
- subject reviews;
- review of intervention;
- monitoring of SEND provision;
- review of enrichment;
- analysis of transition and destination information.

Monitoring is proportionate to the size and structure of the school. Formal lesson observations are not regarded as the sole means of evaluating teaching quality. The School seeks to identify strengths, areas for development and appropriate professional development opportunities.

26. Curriculum Impact

The School evaluates the impact of its curriculum by considering whether pupils:

- acquire the intended knowledge and skills;
- remember and apply previous learning;
- make appropriate progress from their starting points;
- develop increasing independence;
- demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning;
- achieve appropriate academic outcomes;
- participate in enrichment;
- develop confidence and resilience;
- understand and respect others;
- are prepared effectively for the next stage of education.

The School considers evidence from assessment, work scrutiny, pupil voice, teacher evaluation, curriculum reviews and transition information when evaluating impact. Where evidence identifies a weakness or gap, the school takes appropriate action through curriculum development, teaching adjustments, intervention or staff development.

27. Pupil Voice

Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to contribute to the evaluation of their learning and the curriculum. Pupil voice may be gathered through:

- discussions;
- questionnaires;
- school council or pupil leadership opportunities;
- curriculum reviews;
- discussions with teachers;
- feedback following educational visits and enrichment activities.

Pupils are encouraged to identify what helps them learn effectively and what could improve their learning experience.

28. Staff Development

The School recognises that effective teaching depends upon appropriately trained, knowledgeable and reflective staff. Professional development is informed by:

- school priorities;
- curriculum developments;
- individual staff needs;
- pupil needs;
- monitoring and evaluation;
- changes in statutory requirements;
- safeguarding and other mandatory training.

Staff are encouraged to share effective practice and work collaboratively where appropriate.

29. Equality and Inclusion

The School is committed to equality of opportunity. No pupil will be denied access to the curriculum on the grounds of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The curriculum is designed and adapted where appropriate to promote inclusion and ensure that pupils are able to participate fully. The School challenges discriminatory attitudes and language and promotes respect for all members of the school community.

30. Concerns and Complaints

Parents/carers who have concerns about the curriculum should initially raise the matter with the appropriate class teacher or subject teacher. Where the matter cannot be resolved, it should be referred to the Headteacher/Proprietor. The School's Complaints Policy provides the formal procedure for making and managing complaints.

31. Communication with Parents and Carers

The School recognises parents and carers as important partners in supporting children's education. The School communicates curriculum information through:

- parents' evenings;
- reports;
- curriculum information;
- termly information;
- school newsletters;
- the school website;
- direct communication with teachers;
- meetings and discussions where appropriate.

Parents/carers are encouraged to support attendance, punctuality, reading, homework and positive attitudes towards learning.

32. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Assessment Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality and Accessibility Policy;
- EYFS Policy;
- PSHE Policy;
- RSE Policy;
- Relationships and Sex Education curriculum;
- Religious Education Policy;
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Acceptable Use Policy;

- Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy;
- Homework Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Preventing Extremism and Tackling Radicalisation Policy;
- subject policies;
- curriculum maps;
- schemes of work;
- individual learning plans (ILPs).

33. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher/Proprietor, or earlier where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, curriculum requirements, school organisation or best practice. The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated through the school's monitoring and self-evaluation arrangements.

Signed: Mr Mark Raisborough
Headteacher and Proprietor

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027