

# What our pupils encounter: A guide to curriculum experiences and exposures

Introduction and framework for the subject-by-subject collection

This collection sets out the experiences and exposures that pupils at Mountfield Heath School encounter across each subject area of our **Integrated Therapeutic Curriculum**. It sits alongside our subject deep dives, capability achievement statements, and EHCP and ITEP planning documentation as part of a coherent curriculum framework. Each subject document should be read as part of the whole — not as a standalone scheme of work.

## OUR CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

### The Capabilities Approach

Our curriculum is organised around ten human capabilities drawn from the work of philosopher Martha Nussbaum: Life, Bodily Health, Bodily Integrity, Senses and Thought, Emotions, Practical Reason, Affiliation, Other Species and Nature, Play, and Control. These are not add-ons to the curriculum — they are its organising purpose. Every subject area is mapped to the capabilities it most meaningfully develops.

### Stage, not age

Our curriculum is not organised by year group or chronological age. Pupils are placed on one of three pathways — Curiosity, Discover, or Explore — according to their stage of development, communication profile, and individual need as identified through their EHCP, ITEP, and holistic assessment. Pathway placement is reviewed regularly and is not fixed.

### Experiences, not objectives

The items in this collection are experiences and exposures, not learning objectives or assessment criteria. They describe what pupils encounter and engage with — the human situations, real-world contexts, and meaningful activities through which capability develops. Evidence of engagement and progress is captured through Evidence for Learning (EFL) and mapped to EHCP and ITEP outcomes.

## UNDERSTANDING THE THREE PATHWAYS

### Curiosity

*Immersion and sensory encounter*

Pupils engage with the curriculum through sensory experience, co-regulation with trusted adults, and early cause-and-effect. Learning is lived, not taught in the conventional sense. Demand is low; presence and attunement are high.

*Adulthood orientation: laying the sensory, relational, and experiential foundations for lifelong participation in a world structured by the same human experiences every person navigates.*

### Discover

*Participation with support*

Pupils engage through purposeful, real-world activity supported by adults and peers. Learning is functional and contextualised — embedded in daily routines, practical tasks, and meaningful social situations. Increasing independence is supported, not assumed.

*Adulthood orientation: building the functional participation needed for supported independence in community, daily living, and — where appropriate — further education and employment.*

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency*

Pupils engage through increasingly independent encounter with real or realistic contexts. Learning is oriented toward self-determination — pupils develop the knowledge, strategies, and confidence to navigate adult life on their own terms.

*Adulthood orientation: developing the agency, skills, and self-knowledge needed to participate in adult and community life as independently and meaningfully as possible.*

## SUBJECTS IN THIS COLLECTION

### Maths

Number, time, exchange, space

### English

Communication, literacy, voice

### PSHE

Identity, relationships, safety

### Science

Natural world, inquiry, cause

### Forest School

Nature, risk, independence

### The Arts

Expression, creativity, identity

### The Humanities

Place, time, community, culture

### Digital Literacy

Technology, safety, agency

### PE

Movement, health, participation

## HOW TO READ THIS COLLECTION

- Each subject page presents experiences in three parallel columns — one per pathway. The columns are not a hierarchy. All three represent equally valid modes of engaging with the same human territory.
- The same themes recur across all pathways intentionally. Revisiting is not failure to progress — what changes is the nature and depth of engagement, not the content itself.
- Progress is demonstrated by quality, independence, and richness of engagement within a pathway — evidenced through EFL and mapped to EHCP outcomes.
- Capability domains in each footer indicate which Nussbaum capabilities that subject most meaningfully develops. See the Capabilities to Curriculum Areas document for the full framework.

## COMMON QUESTIONS ANSWERED

**What is your curriculum scheme?** Organised around ten capability domains mapped across all subject areas. Within each subject, pupils encounter meaningful experiences drawn from real life, occupation, and human experience.

**How do you avoid replicating content year on year?** Pupils deliberately revisit the same human experiences over time. What changes is the nature of engagement — evidenced through EFL and EHCP outcome reviews.

**How do you show stretch and development?** Stretch is visible in the quality of engagement, not in the introduction of new content. Our achievement statements and EFL evidence capture this.

**How is this linked to individual pupils?** Every pupil's curriculum engagement is shaped by their EHCP outcomes, ITEP targets, and holistic assessment. Individual planning determines depth and support.

## WHAT CONNECTS EVERY SUBJECT, EVERY PATHWAY

At Mountfield Heath School, every subject area is understood as a contribution to a life well lived. We do not teach subjects in order to prepare pupils for the next test, the next year group, or the next school. We teach them because each one offers a distinct way of being human — of making sense of the world, connecting with others, exercising agency, and finding meaning. Whatever pathway a pupil is on, and wherever they are in their journey, they are always encountered as a whole person whose flourishing matters now, and whose future deserves to be expansive.

# English

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** Communication is a fundamental human drive — the means by which we share who we are, build relationships, make choices, and participate in the world. Our curriculum does not treat English as a set of literacy skills to be sequenced and assessed. Instead, pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human experiences of voice, story, meaning, and expression. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter — from pre-verbal and sensory engagement with language, through supported functional communication, to independent, purposeful use of reading, writing, and spoken word. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which they can express themselves, be heard, and navigate a world built on communication.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory and pre-verbal encounter — language as something heard, felt, and responded to in safe, co-regulated contexts.*

**Laying the foundations of communication, voice, and shared meaning that underpin all human participation and connection throughout life.**

- Be immersed in the human voice — songs, rhymes, familiar words, and expressive tone — as a sensory and relational experience, without demand or expectation of response.
- Encounter books, stories, and texts through sensory engagement — textures, sounds, images, and physical handling — as objects of shared attention and pleasure.
- Indicate preference, comfort, and discomfort through vocalisation, gesture, or movement — with all communication recognised, honoured, and responded to consistently.
- Experience the rhythm and pattern of language through repeated songs, rhymes, and familiar routines — as the foundation of phonological awareness, not as a literacy task.
- Encounter simple cause-and-effect in communication — that making a sound, gesture, or movement produces a response — as the earliest experience of having a voice.
- Be present during shared reading and storytelling as a co-regulated, pleasurable experience — with adult attunement to engagement, comfort, and emotional response.
- Encounter left-to-right directionality, page-turning, and the physical handling of books as natural features of shared reading, not as skills to be drilled.

### Discover

*Participation with support — communication as something functional, purposeful, and present in real shared life.*

**Building the functional communication and early literacy needed for supported independence, self-expression, and participation in community and daily life.**

- Engage with texts that reflect lived experience — stories about feelings, relationships, and familiar situations — and begin to make connections to their own lives.
- Use words, symbols, signs, or supported writing to express preferences, feelings, and simple ideas — with all communication modes equally valued.
- Follow health- and safety-related communication in real contexts — signs, instructions, and labels — as functional literacy embedded in daily life.
- Develop vocabulary through purposeful, contextualised encounters with language — in science, PSHE, Forest School, and daily routines — not through decontextualised word lists.
- Begin to sequence and retell familiar events using supported writing, visuals, or spoken language — as an early experience of narrative and meaning-making.
- Use language to express boundaries, assert preferences, and communicate needs — through sentence frames, AAC, or supported spoken language — in safe, low-stakes contexts.
- Encounter early reading through meaningful, real-world texts — familiar signs, menus, names, captions — as well as books that reflect their own identity and experience.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — communication as a tool for self-determination, relationship, and participation in the wider world.*

**Developing the communication, literacy, and self-expression needed to navigate adult life, advocate for oneself, build relationships, and participate in community and, where appropriate, employment.**

- Use reading and writing in real, meaningful contexts — following instructions, completing forms, writing messages, reading for pleasure and information — with increasing independence.
- Encounter persuasive and expressive language as tools for agency — making an argument, writing to influence, speaking to advocate — in contexts with real stakes and real audiences.
- Engage with texts that explore identity, diversity, and the human experience — developing empathy, critical thinking, and a broader sense of the world beyond their own immediate context.
- Use spoken language purposefully and with increasing confidence — in discussion, negotiation, presentation, and conversation — across a range of real and realistic contexts.
- Develop writing as a tool for self-expression, reflection, and communication — from personal narrative to functional writing — with form and audience shaping every task.
- Engage with the communicative demands of adult life — reading contracts, filling in forms, writing emails, interpreting information — as rehearsal for real independence.
- Encounter literature, storytelling, and creative language as sources of meaning, pleasure, and identity — developing a relationship with reading and writing that extends beyond school.

# Science

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** Science is a way of observing, questioning, and making sense of the living world. Our curriculum does not treat science as a set of facts to be transmitted or experiments to be performed correctly. Instead, pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human impulses: to notice, to wonder, to test, and to understand. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter — from sensory immersion in the natural world, through supported investigation of cause and effect, to independent scientific reasoning and enquiry. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which they can understand the world they live in, care for it, and navigate it with curiosity and confidence.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory immersion in the natural world — science as something encountered, felt, and wondered at.*

**Laying the foundations for a lifelong relationship with the natural world and a sense of curiosity about how things work.**

- Be immersed in the living world through sensory encounter — touching bark and soil, watching minibeasts, feeling warmth and cold, noticing light and dark — without demand or expectation of response.
- Encounter cause-and-effect as a physical reality — tipping water, dropping objects, pressing and releasing — through adult-narrated, co-regulated sensory play.
- Be present with living things — plants growing, animals moving, weather changing — as real, unhurried experiences of the natural world.
- Encounter the body as a living thing — warmth, movement, hunger, tiredness — through daily sensory awareness supported by trusted adults.
- Experience awe and sensory fascination as valid scientific responses — wide-eyed engagement, withdrawal, stillness, or delight — all recognised and honoured.
- Be exposed to the language of science — warm, cold, wet, dry, alive, growing — through adult narration of shared sensory experiences, not as vocabulary to be learned.
- Encounter pattern and change in the natural world through the reliable rhythm of seasons, weather, and the growth of familiar plants and animals over time.

### Discover

*Participation with support — science as something investigated, named, and shared in real-world contexts.*

**Building the scientific curiosity and observational skills needed for informed participation in a world shaped by the natural environment.**

- Investigate familiar materials and living things through structured, supported exploration — sorting, matching, comparing, and beginning to describe what is noticed.
- Encounter the concept of a fair test in simple, meaningful contexts — which material absorbs most water, which seed grows tallest — with adult support throughout.
- Begin to connect science to personal health and daily life — identifying body parts, linking food and exercise to wellbeing, recognising basic hygiene routines.
- Explore habitats and living things in local and school environments — naming common animals and plants, sorting by feature, noticing where living things are found and why.
- Follow structured investigations, beginning to make predictions based on prior experience and record simple observations through drawing, symbols, or supported writing.
- Handle materials and scientific tools safely and purposefully — developing awareness of hot, cold, sharp, and safe — in contexts of real practical investigation.
- Encounter environmental change as something that matters — noticing seasonal shifts, weather patterns, and the effects of human activity on familiar natural spaces.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — science as a tool for understanding, reasoning, and responsible participation in the world.*

**Developing the scientific literacy and environmental understanding needed to participate in adult life, make informed decisions, and engage with the natural world as an active citizen.**

- Design and carry out simple fair tests with increasing independence — forming hypotheses, choosing methods, recording results, and drawing conclusions from evidence.
- Investigate the human body and health in depth — exploring the digestive system, nutrition, exercise, and their relationship to physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Engage with ecosystems, food chains, and habitats — understanding how living things depend on each other and how human activity shapes the environments they inhabit.
- Use scientific reasoning to explain cause-and-effect in everyday life — why materials behave differently, why living things adapt, why the body responds as it does.
- Encounter scientific enquiry as a way of thinking — hypothesising, testing, revising ideas — and develop the confidence to question, challenge, and investigate independently.
- Engage with environmental responsibility as a real and meaningful concern — understanding the impact of human choices on living systems and beginning to act on that understanding.
- Encounter science as something present in everyday adult life — in food, health, technology, and the natural world — and develop the literacy to engage with it critically and confidently.

# Maths

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** Mathematics is a way in which people make sense of the world, exercising agency, and participating in everyday life with confidence and dignity. Our curriculum does not treat maths as a body of content to be sequenced and tested. Instead, pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human experiences of number, exchange, time, space, and quantity. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter: from immersion and exposure, through supported participation, to independent engagement in real-world contexts. Mathematical understanding emerges from meaningful experience, not from the transmission of abstract knowledge. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which they can navigate the mathematical demands of the world around them — now and in adulthood.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP cognition and learning outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (Efl).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Immersion and sensory encounter — mathematics as something felt, lived, and co-experienced with trusted adults.*

**Laying the foundations for lifelong participation in a world structured by number, time, and exchange.**

- Encounter “more” and “gone” through sensory daily routines — juice poured, food eaten, objects appearing and disappearing — as early experiences of quantity as something real and present.
- Be exposed to cause-and-effect involving quantity — pressing once produces one response, pressing again produces another — as lived mathematical logic.
- Encounter transactional exchange in its simplest form — that getting something involves giving something — through snack, play, and shared routines, not through coins or currency.
- Experience full and empty, big and little, heavy and light as embodied, sensory contrasts through unhurried handling of real objects across daily life.
- Experience one-to-one correspondence as a natural feature of daily routines — one cup per person, one coat per peg — without this being framed as a counting task.
- Encounter positional concepts — in, out, on, under, next to — through physical play and transitions as lived spatial experience, not as vocabulary to be learned.
- Experience the passage of time as something felt and anticipated — the end of an activity, the arrival of lunch — through the consistent, predictable rhythm of the school day.

### Discover

*Participation with support — mathematics as something purposeful, shared, and present in real daily life.*

**Building the functional mathematical participation needed for supported independence in community and adult life.**

- Encounter number as something that functions in real life — counting out snacks, knowing their place in a queue, recognising their number on a peg or tray.
- Be exposed to value and transactional exchange in real or realistic community contexts — a school café, a class shop — as a meaningful social and mathematical experience.
- Encounter measurement as something purposeful — pouring enough, weighing ingredients, cutting to size — in the context of cooking, making, and daily tasks.
- Experience enough, too many, and not enough in meaningful shared situations — fair sharing, planning for a group, running out — as real encounters with quantity and consequence.
- Encounter time as something that organises life — the five-minute timer, the day of the week, the sequence of a morning — with visual and contextual support throughout.
- Encounter simple data as something that reflects real experience — recording preferences, counting observations, representing what actually happened — not as abstract exercise.
- Experience the relationship between action and mathematical outcome — that choices and quantities have consequences — in purposeful, low-stakes, real-world contexts.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — mathematics as a tool for independence, participation, and adult life.*

**Developing the mathematical agency needed to navigate adult life, community, and — where appropriate — employment and further learning.**

- Encounter money, budgeting, and financial exchange in real community settings — planning a purchase, understanding change, using a self-checkout — with decreasing scaffolding.
- Engage with measurement as a tool for real tasks — following a recipe, estimating distances, calculating quantities — with increasing independence and personal purpose.
- Encounter time as something to be managed, not just observed — reading a timetable, planning a journey, organising a personal schedule across a day or week.
- Encounter financial concepts relevant to adult independence — what a bill is, what a wage represents, the idea of saving toward something — through real discussion and, where possible, real experience.
- Encounter data as something that informs real decisions — a weather forecast, a nutritional label, a price comparison — and develop the confidence to interpret and act on it.
- Engage with logic and reasoning as tools for navigating real situations — working out the most efficient route, planning within a budget, deciding between options.
- Encounter mathematical thinking as something that supports agency and self-determination — recognising that understanding number, time, money, and data gives them more control over their own lives.

# Forest School

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** Forest School is a distinct and irreplaceable part of our curriculum — a sustained process of encounter with the natural world. It does not follow a linear progression and it is not assessment-driven.

Pupils are never told what they will achieve or what success looks like. Instead, they are offered real time in real outdoor spaces, with real risk, real freedom, and real relationship with the land. What changes across pathways is the level of independence, the nature of adult support, and the complexity of what pupils choose to engage with — not the fundamental value or quality of the experience. For every pupil, Forest School is oriented toward a life in which the natural world is a source of confidence, wonder, regulation, and belonging.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory immersion and presence — the natural world as something encountered through the body, with trusted adults close at hand.*

**Laying the sensory, relational, and regulatory foundations that make sustained encounter with the natural world possible throughout life.**

- Be present in outdoor and natural spaces — woodland, field, garden — as a safe, co-regulated experience with a trusted adult, without demand or expectation of activity.
- Encounter the sensory richness of the natural world — mud, bark, water, wind, leaf, creature — through unhurried, adult-supported sensory exploration at their own pace.
- Experience the rhythm of the seasons as something real and embodied — cold, warmth, wet, dry, light, dark — through regular, repeated time outdoors across the school year.
- Be present at a campfire as a shared sensory and social experience — warmth, smell, sound, and the company of trusted adults and peers — without requirement to participate.
- Encounter simple tools and natural materials — sticks, stones, rope, soil — through adult-supported, sensory-led exploration, with all engagement honoured and all responses noticed.
- Experience natural spaces as places that can be safe, calm, and regulating — developing an early, embodied sense of connection to the world beyond the classroom.
- Encounter living things — insects, birds, plants, fungi — through proximity and shared adult attention, as an early experience of wonder and care for the natural world.

### Discover

*Participation with growing independence — the natural world as somewhere to explore, learn, and begin to take responsibility.*

**Building the confidence, physical competence, and relationship with nature needed for independent participation in outdoor and community life.**

- Explore woodland and outdoor environments with increasing independence — choosing where to go, what to investigate, and how long to stay — within boundaries agreed with adults.
- Engage with fire — lighting, tending, cooking over — with adult support, developing respect for risk and the satisfaction of real, practical achievement in a natural context.
- Use tools — peelers, mallets, saws, knives — in purposeful, adult-supervised tasks, developing physical confidence, fine motor skill, and an understanding of safe use.
- Build, make, and create using natural materials — dens, carvings, rope swings, fires — developing practical problem-solving skills and a sense of ownership over the outdoor environment.
- Begin to identify and name common woodland species — animals, plants, fungi, birds — and make observations about where they are found and why, developing early ecological literacy.
- Engage in seasonal activities — foraging, planting, tracking, fire-lighting, den-building — that connect them to the natural cycle and to real, practical skills with lasting relevance.
- Take supported risks — climbing, balancing, navigating uneven terrain — with adults calibrating challenge to the pupil, building physical confidence and a healthy relationship with manageable risk.

### Explore

*Engagement with independence and responsibility — the natural world as somewhere to lead, create, and take genuine ownership.*

**Developing the self-reliance, ecological understanding, and relationship with the natural world needed for independent participation in outdoor, community, and adult life.**

- Plan and lead their own Forest School activity — choosing what to make, where to go, what resources to gather — with adults present but not directing, trusting the pupil's own judgement.
- Use tools and fire independently and responsibly — lighting the Kelly Kettle, building and controlling a fire, using saws and knives — demonstrating genuine competence and self-regulation.
- Navigate outdoor environments with confidence — reading maps, choosing routes, managing terrain, making decisions about distance and direction — with decreasing adult support.
- Build complex structures and undertake sustained practical projects — advanced shelters, carved objects, rope swings — developing persistence, physical skill, and pride in real-world making.
- Demonstrate confident ecological literacy — identifying species, understanding habitats and food chains, tracking seasonal change — and begin to act on that understanding through care and stewardship.
- Engage with risk assessment as a real and meaningful practice — thinking through what could go wrong, what safeguards are needed, and making informed decisions about their own physical safety.
- Encounter Forest School as a source of regulation, identity, and wellbeing — knowing that the natural world is available to them as a resource for calm, connection, and joy throughout their lives.

**Curriculum intent:** Physical education is the means by which pupils come to know their bodies, experience the pleasure of movement, develop physical confidence, and understand how activity supports wellbeing throughout life. Our curriculum does not treat PE as a programme of sports skills to be acquired or fitness standards to be met. Instead, pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human experiences of movement, play, challenge, and physical self-awareness. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter — from sensory motor experience and co-regulated movement, through supported participation in physical activity and games, to independent physical engagement and an understanding of lifelong health. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which their body is a source of confidence, pleasure, and wellbeing.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory motor encounter — movement as something felt, explored, and experienced with trusted adults in safe, predictable contexts.*

**Laying the sensory, physical, and regulatory foundations that make confident, independent physical participation possible throughout life.**

- Experience a wide range of movement — rolling, bouncing, swinging, spinning, stretching, jumping — as sensory and co-regulated physical play, with adult attunement to comfort and response at all times.
- Encounter physical equipment — balls, hoops, beams, mats, tunnels — through adult-supported, sensory-led exploration without expectation of correct use or performance.
- Be present in a range of physical environments — the hall, the playground, the field, the woodland — as an embodied encounter with different spaces and surfaces.
- Experience the body as something that has physical needs — rest, water, warmth, movement — with adult attention and routine ensuring those needs are consistently met.
- Encounter cause-and-effect through physical action — pushing makes something move, dropping produces a sound, throwing produces a result — as an early experience of physical agency.
- Experience movement as a source of regulation and pleasure — discovering through repeated, unhurried play which kinds of movement feel good, calming, or energising.
- Be present in shared movement experiences alongside adults and peers — tolerating proximity, beginning to notice others, and experiencing physical activity as something that can be shared.

### Discover

*Participation with support — movement and physical activity as something engaged with purposefully, joyfully, and with growing confidence and skill.*

**Building the physical competence, body awareness, and enjoyment of movement needed for supported participation in sport, activity, and healthy daily life.**

- Develop fundamental movement skills — running, jumping, throwing, catching, balancing, climbing — through purposeful, playful, and varied physical activity across different environments.
- Participate in games with simple rules — taking turns, following instructions, beginning to understand objectives — developing the social and cognitive skills that underpin team and competitive activity.
- Begin to connect physical activity to wellbeing — noticing how they feel before and after movement, identifying activities they enjoy, and developing early awareness of the relationship between exercise and mood.
- Develop body awareness and proprioception through structured movement activities — circuits, yoga, dance, obstacle courses — building coordination, balance, and physical self-knowledge.
- Encounter competitive and collaborative physical activity — races, team games, partner work — developing resilience, fair play, and the ability to manage both winning and losing with equanimity.
- Begin to manage their own physical needs during activity — recognising when to rest, asking for water, knowing when they are tired — with adult support and modelling throughout.
- Engage with a range of physical disciplines — gymnastics, dance, athletics, games, swimming where available — developing broad physical literacy and discovering areas of personal interest and strength.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — physical activity as something chosen, managed, and understood as a foundation for lifelong health and wellbeing.*

**Developing the physical literacy, health awareness, and autonomous engagement with movement needed for an active, healthy, and physically confident adult life.**

- Engage with physical activity with genuine independence and personal motivation — choosing activities, setting personal challenges, and taking responsibility for their own physical development.
- Understand the relationship between physical activity and health in depth — the effects of exercise on the body, the importance of rest and recovery, the role of nutrition in physical performance.
- Participate in team and competitive sport with developed physical and social skill — understanding rules, communicating with teammates, managing emotion in competitive contexts.
- Use physical activity deliberately as a tool for regulation and mental health — recognising when movement helps, choosing to exercise as a conscious strategy for managing mood and anxiety.
- Engage with the physical demands of real and realistic adult contexts — active travel, physical work, sport and leisure — as preparation for a life in which physical capability supports independence.
- Develop a personal relationship with physical activity — knowing what they enjoy, what they are good at, and what kinds of movement support their wellbeing — as a foundation for lifelong participation.
- Encounter sport and physical culture as a social domain — understanding how physical activity connects people, builds community, and offers a lifelong source of connection and identity beyond school.

# PSHE

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** Personal, social, health, and economic education is central to how pupils come to know themselves, understand others, and navigate a world that asks them to make choices, form relationships, and take care of their own wellbeing.

Our curriculum weaves PSHE into all aspects of school life. Pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human experiences of identity, emotion, relationship, safety, and agency. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter — from sensory co-regulation and emotional attunement, through supported self-awareness and social participation, to independent reflection and informed decision-making. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which they know who they are, feel safe, and can participate in relationships and community on their own terms.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory and relational encounter — identity, safety, and emotion as something felt, co-regulated, and responded to with trusted adults.*

**Laying the foundations of emotional safety, self-awareness, and trusted relationship that underpin all future personal and social participation.**

- Be immersed in consistent, predictable care routines — washing, dressing, eating, resting — experienced as safe, co-regulated, and adult-led, with all responses noticed and honoured.
- Encounter emotion as something present and valid — distress, pleasure, calm, excitement — with adult attunement ensuring every feeling is met, named, and responded to.
- Experience the body as something that has preferences — comfort, discomfort, warmth, cold — with those preferences consistently respected by the adults around them.
- Be exposed to the presence of other people — adults and peers — as something that can be safe, through shared sensory experience, parallel proximity, and gentle co-occupation.
- Encounter simple cause-and-effect in social interaction — that a sound, gesture, or expression produces a response — as the earliest experience of having influence in relationships.
- Be present during adult-narrated social stories, rhymes, and routines that model emotion, care, and relationship — without demand or expectation of comprehension.
- Experience choice as a real and respected thing — however small — with all indications of preference acknowledged and acted upon by adults.

### Discover

*Participation with support — identity, relationships, and wellbeing as something explored, named, and practised in real social contexts.*

**Building the self-awareness, emotional vocabulary, and social understanding needed for supported participation in relationships and community life.**

- Encounter the language of emotion and begin to use it — naming basic feelings, recognising them in others, and connecting them to situations through supported discussion and visual tools.
- Engage with the concept of personal safety — safe and unsafe touch, trusted adults, what to do when something feels wrong — through age-appropriate stories, role-play, and direct teaching.
- Begin to develop and use simple regulation strategies — identifying what helps, using a regulation tool independently in a familiar context — with adult support and modelling.
- Explore friendship, turn-taking, and social participation through structured games, role-play, and supported group activity — developing empathy and beginning to notice others' feelings.
- Encounter the concept of consent and bodily autonomy in real, everyday contexts — learning that they have the right to say no, and that others have the same right.
- Engage with health and hygiene routines as things that have a purpose — connecting self-care to wellbeing, and beginning to take increasing responsibility for familiar daily tasks.
- Encounter difference — in family structure, appearance, culture, and need — as something normal, valuable, and to be respected, through stories, discussion, and the diversity of the school community.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — identity, relationships, and wellbeing as things to reflect on, choose, and take ownership of.*

**Developing the self-knowledge, relationship skills, and personal agency needed to live safely, form meaningful connections, and participate in adult and community life.**

- Reflect on personal identity — values, strengths, needs, and neurodivergent experience — developing a secure, positive sense of self that does not depend on conformity to neurotypical norms.
- Engage with relationships in depth — what makes them healthy or unhealthy, how to maintain them, how to repair them, and how to leave them when necessary.
- Encounter RSE content in age-appropriate, accessible ways — understanding puberty, relationships, consent, and online safety as real and relevant aspects of life, not abstract topics.
- Develop and use a personalised regulation toolkit — knowing what works for them, being able to articulate it to others, and deploying it independently in a range of settings.
- Engage with the concept of rights and responsibilities — their own rights and those of others — through real discussion, scenario-based learning, and connection to their own lived experience.
- Encounter the demands of adult health and wellbeing — managing their own physical and mental health, seeking help when needed, and making informed choices about lifestyle — as real and near-future concerns.
- Reflect on their own journey — what they have experienced, what they have overcome, and what they aspire to — developing the narrative self-awareness that supports transition, resilience, and hope.

# The Arts

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** The arts are a fundamental human capability — the means by which we express who we are, process what we feel, connect with others, and make meaning from experience. Our curriculum does not treat the arts as a collection of skills to be taught or performances to be assessed. Instead, pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human acts of making, expressing, and responding. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter — from sensory and emotional response to creative stimulus, through supported making and shared artistic experience, to independent creation and critical reflection. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which art, music, drama, and creativity are available as sources of pleasure, regulation, expression, and identity.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory and emotional encounter — the arts as something felt, responded to, and co-experienced with trusted adults.*

**Laying the sensory, expressive, and emotional foundations that make creative participation possible throughout life.**

- Be immersed in music, sound, and rhythm as sensory and emotional experiences — live instruments, recorded music, singing, percussion — with all responses noticed, honoured, and reflected back.
- Encounter colour, texture, and visual art through open-ended sensory exploration — paint, clay, fabric, natural materials — without demand for product or performance.
- Experience movement and dance as embodied expression — swinging, rocking, spinning, stretching — through adult-supported, co-regulated physical play in creative contexts.
- Be present during drama, storytelling, and role-play as a shared imaginative experience — with all levels of participation, from watching to joining, equally valued.
- Encounter creative stimulus — an image, a sound, a texture, a smell — as something worth attending to, with adult attunement supporting sustained, unhurried engagement.
- Experience making as something joyful and low-stakes — mark-making, printing, tearing, assembling — where the process is the point and no outcome is wrong.
- Be exposed to art, music, and performance from a range of cultures and traditions as a natural feature of the school environment, without expectation of comprehension or response.

### Discover

*Participation with support — the arts as something made, shared, and used to express identity and experience.*

**Building the creative confidence, expressive range, and artistic participation needed for supported engagement with culture, community, and personal wellbeing.**

- Explore a range of artistic media — drawing, painting, printing, collage, clay, digital art — developing technique, personal preference, and the confidence to make creative choices.
- Engage with music through playing, singing, and listening — developing rhythm, pitch awareness, and the pleasure of musical participation in individual and group contexts.
- Participate in drama and role-play — taking on characters, exploring scenarios, using props and costume — as a supported way of understanding emotions, relationships, and social situations.
- Use the arts to express and process emotion — choosing colour to represent feeling, using movement to discharge energy, creating images in response to experience — in safe, low-stakes contexts.
- Encounter collaborative art-making — shared paintings, group performances, ensemble music — as an experience of joint creative endeavour and shared pride in a common outcome.
- Begin to talk about their own creative work — describing what they made, why they made it, and how they feel about it — developing early critical reflection and artistic vocabulary.
- Engage with art, music, and performance from diverse cultures and traditions — developing aesthetic curiosity, cultural awareness, and a broadening sense of the range of human creative expression.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — the arts as a tool for self-expression, reflection, identity, and independent creative practice.*

**Developing the creative agency, expressive confidence, and cultural participation needed for a life in which art, music, and creativity are genuine sources of meaning, pleasure, and connection.**

- Plan, create, and refine artistic work with increasing independence — making decisions about medium, form, and content, and evaluating and improving their own creative output.
- Use the arts as a deliberate tool for emotional expression and regulation — choosing to draw, play, sing, or move as a conscious strategy for processing experience and managing state.
- Engage with music performance and composition — playing instruments, creating rhythms, writing lyrics, recording — as a form of personal and shared creative expression.
- Use drama and storytelling to explore complex human experience — perspective-taking, moral dilemma, identity, and relationship — in ways that build empathy and self-understanding.
- Encounter art, music, and performance as cultural and historical artefacts — developing the critical vocabulary to respond to, analyse, and form opinions about creative works.
- Engage with the creative industries and cultural life as real and accessible domains — visiting galleries, attending performances, creating for real audiences — as rehearsal for adult participation in culture.
- Encounter creativity as a lifelong resource — knowing that making things, performing, and expressing are available to them at any age and in any context as sources of joy, identity, and connection.

# The Humanities

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** The humanities — history, geography, and religious and cultural education — are the means by which we understand where we come from, where we are, who shares the world with us, and why things are the way they are. Our curriculum does not treat the humanities as a body of knowledge to be memorised. Instead, pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human questions of place, time, community, belief, and change. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter — from sensory presence in real environments and stories, through supported investigation of the world beyond the classroom, to independent enquiry, critical thinking, and an active sense of global citizenship. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which they understand the world they inhabit and feel that they belong in it.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory presence and early encounter — place, time, and difference as something experienced, noticed, and wondered at.*

**Laying the foundations of curiosity, environmental awareness, and sense of place that orient a person in the world throughout their life.**

- Be present in and aware of different environments — indoors, outdoors, familiar, unfamiliar — noticing contrasts of temperature, sound, light, and texture as a sensory encounter with place.
- Encounter change as a real and felt experience — seasonal shift, daily routine, familiar objects appearing and disappearing — as an early, embodied understanding of time and sequence.
- Be exposed to images, sounds, and artefacts from other cultures, times, and places as natural features of the classroom environment — without expectation of comprehension or response.
- Experience the school community as a place of difference and diversity — different people, different foods, different celebrations, different languages — as something present, normal, and worth noticing.
- Encounter stories — from history, from other cultures, from religious traditions — as sensory, narrative experiences that model human life in all its variety.
- Be present in the local community and natural environment through supported visits and walks — encountering real places, real buildings, and real people as a foundation for geographical awareness.
- Experience maps, photographs, and timelines as objects of shared attention — handled, explored, and narrated by adults — as an early encounter with the tools of geographical and historical thinking.

### Discover

*Participation with support — place, time, and community as something explored, compared, and beginning to be understood.*

**Building the geographical, historical, and cultural understanding needed for supported participation in community life and a broadening sense of the wider world.**

- Explore the local area through purposeful visits — streets, shops, parks, places of worship — developing a real, physical sense of the community they are part of and how it is organised.
- Begin to place themselves in time — understanding that there was a before and there will be an after, and that things change — through personal timelines, family history, and stories from the past.
- Encounter other cultures and belief systems through direct experience — festivals, food, music, stories, visitors — developing curiosity, respect, and an expanding sense of human diversity.
- Use maps, photographs, and simple geographical tools to investigate environments — comparing local and distant places, noticing similarities and differences, asking why things are where they are.
- Engage with historical artefacts and stories — handling real objects, viewing images, hearing accounts — beginning to ask questions about the past and to understand that history is made of real human lives.
- Explore the concept of fairness, justice, and human rights through simple, concrete examples — including real events from history — as a foundation for ethical thinking and civic awareness.
- Begin to connect their own experience to wider patterns — noticing that their life has a geography and a history — developing an early sense of identity that is both local and connected to the broader world.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — place, time, and community as something to investigate, question, and take a position on.*

**Developing the geographical, historical, and civic understanding needed to participate in adult life as an informed, curious, and active citizen of a complex and diverse world.**

- Investigate historical events and periods with increasing independence — using primary and secondary sources, evaluating evidence, and forming reasoned conclusions about causes and consequences.
- Engage with geography as a tool for understanding the real world — climate, land use, migration, inequality, sustainability — and developing an informed view of how human choices shape places and lives.
- Explore religious and cultural diversity in depth — understanding beliefs, practices, and values from a range of traditions — developing genuine respect, critical curiosity, and the ability to compare without hierarchy.
- Encounter the concept of global citizenship as something real and relevant — understanding interconnection, environmental responsibility, and the ways in which events elsewhere affect life here.
- Engage with ethical and political questions through the lens of history and geography — power, justice, rights, and representation — developing the moral reasoning needed for informed civic participation.
- Use fieldwork, local investigation, and community engagement as methods of genuine geographical enquiry — collecting data, asking questions, and drawing conclusions about the place they live in.
- Encounter the humanities as a way of understanding who they are — developing a sense of personal, cultural, and historical identity that is confident, curious, and open to the complexity of the world.

# Digital Literacy

Experiences and exposures across the three pathways

**Curriculum intent:** Digital literacy is central to how pupils access information, communicate with others, express themselves, and navigate an increasingly digital world with confidence and safety. Our curriculum does not treat digital literacy as a set of technical skills to be drilled. Instead, pupils at every pathway encounter the same fundamental human experiences of communication, creativity, information, and agency — through and with digital tools. What changes across pathways is the nature of that encounter — from sensory and cause-and-effect engagement with technology, through supported functional use of devices and platforms, to independent, critical, and purposeful digital participation. For every pupil, this curriculum is oriented toward a life in which technology is a tool for independence, connection, and self-determination — not a source of risk or exclusion.

*Experiences across all pathways are mapped to pupils' EHCP outcomes and Individual Therapeutic Education Plans (ITEPs), and are evidenced through Evidence for Learning (EfL).*

## EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURES BY PATHWAY

### Curiosity

*Sensory and cause-and-effect encounter — technology as something that responds, connects, and can be acted upon.*

**Laying the foundations of technological confidence and cause-and-effect understanding that make independent digital participation possible throughout life.**

- Encounter digital devices as objects that respond to touch, voice, and movement — experiencing cause-and-effect through screens, buttons, and interactive media in adult-supported, sensory-led contexts.
- Be exposed to technology as a presence in daily life — timers, music players, cameras, screens — as familiar, predictable, and purposeful objects in the environment.
- Encounter sound, image, and movement through screens and speakers as sensory experiences — attending to faces, voices, nature sounds, and music — with all responses noticed and valued.
- Experience the camera as a tool for capturing the world — taking photographs of objects, people, and places with adult support — as an early encounter with digital representation.
- Be present when adults use technology for real purposes — looking something up, sending a message, following a recipe — as a natural encounter with technology as a functional tool.
- Engage with simple cause-and-effect digital play — touching a screen to produce a sound, pressing a button to start a video — as an early experience of digital agency.
- Encounter AAC and communication technology as natural, valued, and powerful — where applicable — as tools for voice and connection that are as legitimate as any other form of communication.

### Discover

*Participation with support — technology as something used purposefully, safely, and with increasing independence in daily life.*

**Building the functional digital skills, online safety awareness, and technological confidence needed for supported independence in an increasingly digital world.**

- Use familiar devices and software purposefully and with increasing independence — timers, cameras, word processors, apps — in the context of real tasks across the curriculum and daily routines.
- Engage with online safety as a real and practical concern — understanding what to share and what to keep private, who to trust online, and what to do if something feels wrong.
- Use technology to support learning and communication — recording observations, creating presentations, sending messages, accessing information — as a functional extension of capability.
- Explore creative digital tools — drawing apps, music software, video recording, simple coding — as a medium for self-expression and imagination alongside traditional creative media.
- Begin to evaluate digital content — questioning whether information is reliable, whether an image is real — developing early critical literacy in a world saturated with digital information.
- Use emotion check-ins, wellbeing apps, and communication tools — where appropriate — as real supports for self-regulation and connection within the school day.
- Encounter the concept of screen time and digital balance — beginning to notice how technology affects mood and attention — in age-appropriate, non-judgmental discussion.

### Explore

*Engagement with increasing agency — technology as a tool for independence, creative expression, critical thinking, and safe participation in the digital world.*

**Developing the digital fluency, online safety awareness, and technological self-determination needed to participate confidently and safely in adult, civic, and community life.**

- Use technology independently and purposefully across a range of real-life contexts — managing schedules, accessing services, communicating, creating — as a genuine tool for adult independence.
- Engage critically with online information — evaluating sources, recognising bias, identifying misinformation — developing the digital media literacy needed to navigate a complex information environment.
- Understand and manage their own digital safety and privacy — making informed decisions about what to share, with whom, and on which platforms — with confidence and without anxiety.
- Use creative digital tools with genuine skill and intention — producing digital art, music, video, or written content for real audiences — as a form of personal expression and communication.
- Encounter coding and computational thinking as a way of understanding how digital systems work — creating logical sequences, solving problems, and beginning to see technology as something they can build, not just consume.
- Engage with digital communication platforms — email, messaging, collaborative tools — as real methods of connection, contribution, and participation in community and, where appropriate, employment contexts.
- Develop a healthy, informed, and autonomous relationship with technology — understanding its benefits and risks, making conscious choices about use, and knowing how to seek support when needed.

# From primary school to adulthood

Pathway trajectories and the backwards chain — what we build at primary, and why it matters across a lifetime

	PRIMARY SCHOOL (NOW)	SECONDARY (AGE 11–16)	POST-16 (AGE 16–25)	ADULTHOOD (AGE 25–35)
<p><b>Curiosity</b></p> <p>Complex sensory &amp; communication needs; complex (severe) learning difficulties</p> <p><i>Adulthood orientation: laying the sensory, relational &amp; experiential foundations for lifelong participation</i></p>	<p>AT MOUNTFIELD HEATH</p> <p>Building safety, trust &amp; early communication</p> <p>Sensory regulation — learning what helps and what overwhelms. Early communication: attending, responding, expressing. Personal care routines: tolerating support, signalling needs. Object-based and parallel play. Co-regulation with trusted adults as the foundation for all engagement.</p> <p><i>Capabilities: bodily health · bodily integrity · emotions · control over environment</i></p>	<p>SECONDARY PROVISION</p> <p>Specialist SLD / PMLD school</p> <p>Consolidating AAC and communication system. Personal care with structured support. Sensory integration programmes. Community access in familiar settings. Simple cause-effect tasks and choice-making. Stable relationships with consistent staff.</p> <p><i>Key risk: communication system breakdown at transition · Y9 EHCP triggers social care assessment</i></p>	<p>POST-16 PROVISION</p> <p>Specialist college or day service</p> <p>Supported daily routines with varying assistance levels. Developing care worker relationships — consent, trust, bodily autonomy. Meaningful occupation: horticulture, arts, sensory activity. Community presence with 1:1 support.</p> <p><i>Capabilities: bodily integrity · play &amp; leisure · other species &amp; nature · life</i></p>	<p>AGE 25–35</p> <p><b>Supported living (1:1 or 2:1 care)</b></p> <p>Communicates needs reliably via established system. Participates in community with support. Stable care relationships. Personal care managed collaboratively with trusted carers. Dignity and safety sustained throughout daily life.</p> <p><b>WHY PRIMARY MATTERS</b></p> <p>Every co-regulation strategy, communication system, and sensory awareness skill built now reduces dependency and increases dignity in adult care. We are laying the conditions for a person to be a participant in their own life, not a passive recipient of it.</p>
<p><b>Discover</b></p> <p>Moderate learning difficulties; developmental delay of 2+ years</p> <p><i>Adulthood orientation: building the functional participation needed for supported independence in community &amp; daily life</i></p>	<p>AT MOUNTFIELD HEATH</p> <p>Functional skills in real-world contexts</p> <p>Functional literacy and numeracy in daily life (money, time, labels, forms). Emotional regulation: naming feelings, using strategies. ADLs with reducing support. Social understanding: turn-taking, friendships, conflict resolution. Community visits — shops, parks, transport.</p> <p><i>Capabilities: practical reason · affiliation · emotions · control over environment</i></p>	<p>SECONDARY PROVISION</p> <p>Specialist MLD / ASD secondary school</p> <p>Extended functional skills — literacy, numeracy, digital. Supported work experience. Travel training. Wider community participation. Self-advocacy and rights. Age-appropriate RSE. Exploring aspirations linked to employment or further education.</p> <p><i>Key risk: SEMH difficulties in new social environment · Y9 EHCP: supported employment pathway planning</i></p>	<p>POST-16 PROVISION</p> <p>Specialist FE college or supported internship</p> <p>Supported employment preparation: work skills, workplace relationships. Independent living: budgeting, cooking, home management with support. Accessing community with light-touch assistance. Wider social networks. Possible Entry Level / Level 1 qualifications.</p> <p><i>Capabilities: life · affiliation · play &amp; leisure · practical reason</i></p>	<p>AGE 25–35</p> <p><b>Supported or semi-independent living</b></p> <p>Manages daily routines largely independently. Part-time supported work or meaningful community activity. Advocates for own needs. Uses local community confidently. Maintains relationships with family and peers.</p> <p><b>WHY PRIMARY MATTERS</b></p> <p>Functional literacy, community access, and emotional regulation at primary are not enrichment — they are the practical infrastructure for semi-independent adult life. The Discover pupil must navigate employers, neighbours, and support workers. We build that capacity now.</p>
<p><b>Explore</b></p> <p>Moderate learning needs; interrupted educational history; SEMH needs prominent</p> <p><i>Adulthood orientation: developing the agency, skills &amp; self-knowledge to participate in adult life as independently as possible</i></p>	<p>AT MOUNTFIELD HEATH</p> <p>Rebuilding confidence, identity &amp; academic trust</p> <p>Repairing academic confidence — literacy and numeracy — without shame or deficit framing. Developing self-awareness: understanding own profile and what helps. Articulating feelings and needs. Social understanding and friendship skills. Building a coherent sense of identity, interests, and strengths.</p> <p><i>Capabilities: senses &amp; thought · practical reason · emotions · affiliation</i></p>	<p>SECONDARY PROVISION</p> <p>SEN secondary, SEMH school, AP, or mainstream with EHCP</p> <p>Academic development with adaptations. Building self-efficacy through achievable challenge. Understanding neurodivergent identity. Executive function strategies. Peer relationships. Exploring interests and futures. Some pupils access qualifications (Entry Level, Functional Skills, GCSE).</p> <p><i>Key risk: SEMH crisis or exclusion · Y9 EHCP: aspiration-led planning; HE/employment pathways possible for some</i></p>	<p>POST-16 PROVISION</p> <p>FE college, sixth form, AP, or specialist provision</p> <p>Further qualifications where appropriate. Developing independence: finances, housing, relationships. Mental health self-management. Employment — supported, apprenticeship, or open. Building a meaningful life. Resilience built at primary is drawn on heavily throughout this period.</p> <p><i>Capabilities: life · practical reason · play &amp; leisure · affiliation</i></p>	<p>AGE 25–35</p> <p><b>Supported or independent living; employment</b></p> <p>Many in employment (part-time, supported, or open). Independent or light-touch supported living. Self-managed wellbeing with strategies developed over time. Quality of life determined by self-knowledge and resilience as much as qualifications.</p> <p><b>WHY PRIMARY MATTERS</b></p> <p>The Explore pupil arrives with confidence already damaged. What we rebuild — the belief that they are capable, that learning is safe, that difference is not deficit — determines whether they can access opportunity at 25 or 35. Self-understanding is not a soft outcome. It is the condition for everything else.</p>

● Curiosity — supported living destination ● Discover — supported / semi-independent living destination ● Explore — independent living & employment destination

Pathways reflect developmental stage, not chronological age · Placement reviewed regularly through EHCP