

Castle School Curriculum



If a child can't learn the way we teach, we
should teach the way they learn

Castle School Curriculum Intent

Castle School is an all age school for children and young people with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. We are dedicated to providing a broad, rich, deep and aspirational curriculum at levels appropriate to the developmental understanding of our pupils. In considering the curriculum, it is underpinned by asking ourselves 'what do our young people need to learn?' We do this by looking at the pupil's needs and developing planned learning outcomes to meet those needs. The curriculum provides a 'vehicle' through which those learning outcomes are delivered.

The curriculum provides a natural progression from Early Years to Key Stage 5 with programmes designed for and implemented at an appropriate level.

Our curriculum is designed to help our pupils to become:

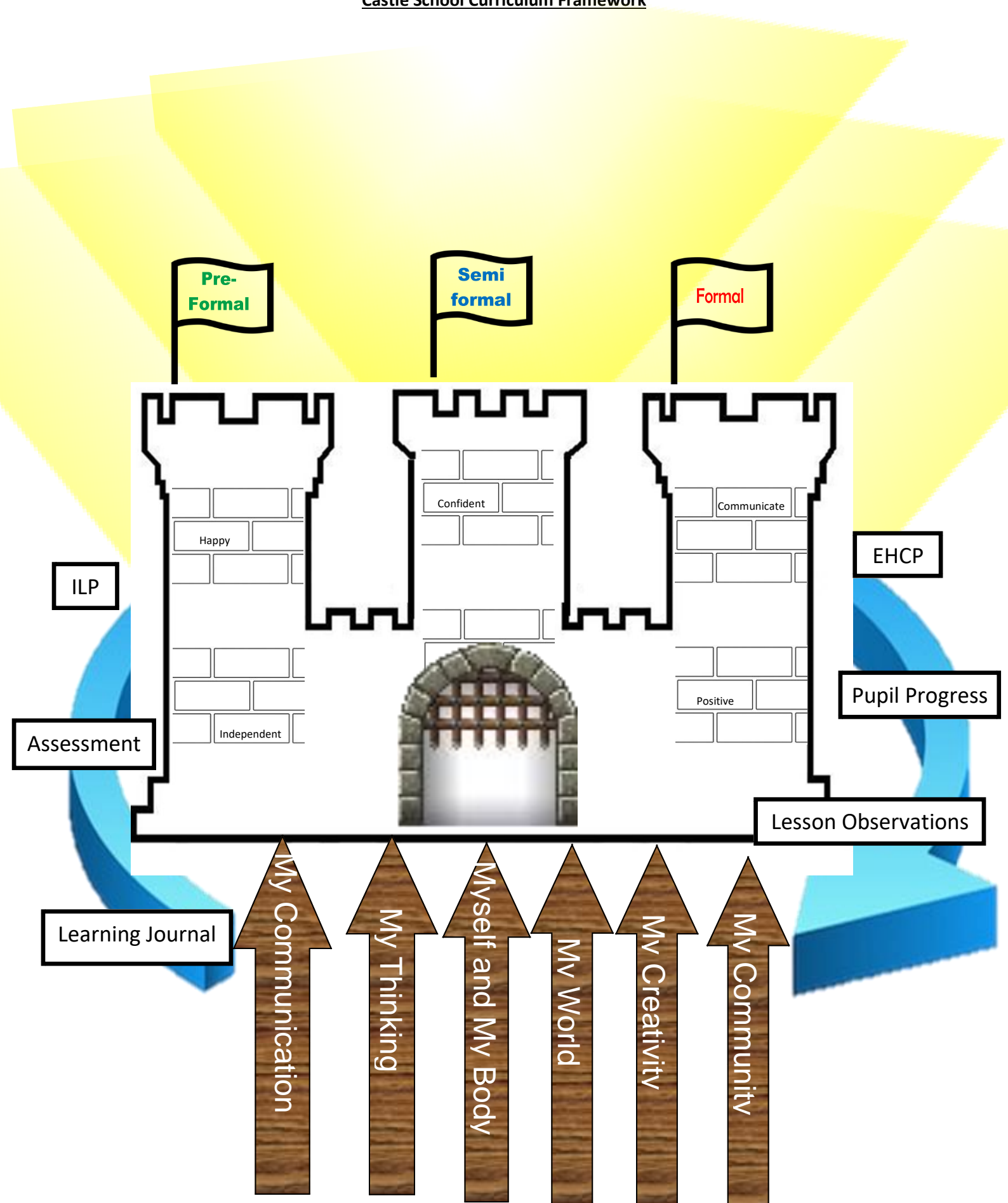
- **Successful learners** who are engaged in and enjoy their learning – making excellent progress and experiencing achievement
- **Effective communicators** who can express themselves, make choices and build positive relationships with other people and have increasing control and influence over their lives
- **Confident individuals** who having had a variety of successful experiences are able to take a full part in activities within school and the community. Also to provide the appropriate level of challenge and risk taking in order to develop resilience and be able to cope with when things go wrong.
- **Active Participants** in developing a healthy, safe lifestyle, developing good relationships and respecting differences between people, developing positive mental and physical health, happiness and a sense of well-being
- **Well-prepared for their adult life** where they have increasing control and influence over their own lives and develop into young people who are as independent as possible

Whilst the overall aims of the curriculum will be the same for all children and young people attending Castle School, the styles of teaching and learning may be different according to the specific learning needs of the pupils. Throughout the curriculum, the central focus will be on what the pupils are learning, which will be different for different pupils, rather than simply what are the pupils doing.

"Education's starting point should not be about us, it should be about them (our students), their needs, their aspirations and goals"

(Dr Maggie Atkinson, Children's Commissioner For England, September 2013)

Castle School Curriculum Framework



Curriculum Rationale

Our Castle is held together by bricks and mortar. These are our goals and aspirations for our learners, the outcomes we want them to achieve by the time they leave our school.

The curriculum is what goes into the Castle. The subject areas for each pathway, the skills and knowledge we are teaching within the pathways. The tools we are using to maximise learning.

Our mantra is:-

**If a child can't learn the way we teach, we
should teach the way they learn.**

As a school we believe that we shouldn't expect our children and young people to fit into the curriculum, the curriculum should fit round the needs of our children. This will mean that it will be evolving all the time their change which is right that it should.

We organise the curriculum roughly by age and key stage so the children and young people experience the feeling of moving towards adulthood. We also organise our class groups into learning pathways as much as is possible recognising that all children learn in different ways. We recognise that children will move between pathways as they develop and get older and we will monitor this through regular pupil progress meetings and assessments. The priorities for children's learning will change as they move through school according to their development and in preparation for leaving school and this will be recognised in our curriculum.

Our monitoring and evaluation is the moat, the protective factors around our children and young people to make sure that what we are doing is meeting their needs, including individual targets in line with their EHCP objectives, regular assessment using the best form of assessment for the individual pathways, regular pupil progress meetings, lesson observations, learning walks and scrutiny of work.

We seek to remove any barriers to learning through our behaviour for learning support plans, adapting and changing the environment to meet the needs of individual children and young people, equipping our teachers with the skills to recognise possible barriers and the means to overcome them such as the implementation of sensory diets and our emphasis on readiness to learn within our teaching including, health, well-being and sensory needs. It is crucial to recognise that being ready to learn for some of our young people can be as big a challenge as their curriculum learning and will therefore take up as much time, if not more, than the prescribed curriculum. By the time we have all these things in place and have delivered them to our young people we are ready to open the drawbridge and send them as equipped as they can be for life beyond school.

Castle Goals
Our Bricks and Mortar

By the time our pupils leave Castle School they will:-

Feel confident to express themselves knowing they will be listened to

Be able to communicate confidently and in a variety of ways

Have developed a level of independence which is appropriate to the individual child

Be an active participant in their own happiness

Be able to make healthy lifestyle choices

Be able to access their community and all its benefits

Be able to communicate 'no'

Be able to make positive relationships with others

Be able to know what they like/dislike and be able to express this

Be confident in a range of different environments / situations / people

Have experienced a variety of vocational, independence and life skills

Be able to make informed choices about their future as a result of their learning

Be able to express their feelings confidently

Have reached the highest level of function in literacy, numeracy and ICT

Be as confident and self-assured as possible and be able to try new things

Have an understanding of the world around them and of current affairs

Be happy

Have developed independent learning and thinking skills

Be able to manage change

Have developed respect for others and pride in themselves

Be able to transfer their learning into a variety of environments

Curriculum Overview

Green Turret Pre Formal

- These learners may have profound and complex needs, a severe learning difficulty or medical condition, sensory impairment or physical disability. They will be learning at an early developmental stage and will require a high level of adult support to meet their educational and personal care needs
- Castle Pre-formal Curriculum
- Young people become secure in their environment in a way that is meaningful and purposeful to them. The focus is upon enabling them to establish positive interactive relationships with others, to proactively explore the world around them and to gain environmental control skills. All pupils will be given maximum opportunities to achieve the highest level of independence possible.

Blue Turret Semi formal

- These learners will have significant intellectual or cognitive impairment and may have difficulties with sensory processing, communication and self-help skills. These learners are likely to need support to access all aspects of the curriculum
- Life Skills based programme which is flexible and has a holistic approach
- Young people will learn most effectively when what they are learning about is tangible and real to them. They will learn best when learning is related to their own experience. Structured play, topic based work and a high level of functionality are all relevant approaches regardless of age although content and approach should be age related

Red Turret Formal

- These learners access a range of National Curriculum subjects modified for their developmental level. The teaching sessions are more 'formal' and are taught in a structured way drawing upon their speaking, listening and communication skills.
- An Adapted National Curriculum , emphasising Life Skills and Independence
- While still needing a high degree of practical and functional based work these young people are able to learn about more abstract concepts seen through the National Curriculum subjects. Life skills and independence skills will also form a large part of the curriculum. A high level of structure is still required and we will avoid making the formal curriculum too abstract. Teachers ensure that learning is linked to practical activities and consolidated and applied in practical sessions. Older pupils working at the formal level may pursue accreditation pathways (e.g. Entry Level and Level1 courses and exams) and they follow the appropriate syllabus in each exam subject.

Curriculum Content

Green Turret Pre formal	Blue Turret Semi-formal	Red Turret Formal
My Communication	My Communication Developing purposeful and intentional communication	My Communication English / speaking/listening/reading/writing / SALT
My thinking	My thinking- Developing attention and concentration, generalisation, working memory and problem solving	My thinking Maths Using and applying/number/space shape and measure Science Computing
Myself and my body	Myself and my body Independent living, personal care, Physical development Leisure, PHSE / well being	Myself and my body PHSE, SRE, PE
My world	My world The world about me My environment	My world History, Geography, MFL
My creativity	My creativity Music, art,	My creativity Art, music, DT, cookery
My community	My community	My community Community based learning

Throughout everything we do, our curriculum aims to support our children and young people to become as independent as possible in all aspects of their lives. We will never do for a child something that he/she has the potential to do for his/herself.

EYFS Curriculum

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are usually in mixed key stage classes due to small numbers of children of this age in school. They follow the statutory EYFS framework (which also forms the basis of the semi-formal curriculum).

The areas of learning and development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape the EYFS programme. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- **Communication and language**

Communication is at the core of learning. We deliver a curriculum that focuses on three main areas of communication including – a motivation (reason) for communication, a means (method) of communication and someone (peer or person) to communicate to.

We base teaching and learning on every individual child and offer communication through intensive interaction, providing a suitable means of communication tool for each individual e.g. spoken word, signs and symbols including Makaton, symbolic communication including Objects of Reference, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and written communication.

Communication and Language development involves giving each individual the opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop confidence and skills that lead them to express themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

- **Physical development**

Physical development covers two main areas.

Health and self-care involves children knowing the importance of good health, which includes physical exercise and a healthy diet. Children are able to learn and manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently at the right level of progression for them.

Moving and handling focuses on building skills to enable children to show good control and coordination in large and small movements, spatial awareness and to be able to handle equipment and tools safely and effectively.

We build on these skills through role-play, structured and unstructured play times, 1:1, small group and whole class sessions. Children need to grow a sense of body confidence that encourages them

to want to move physically. As children develop control and coordination, they eventually learn how to handle and use equipment effectively.

- **Personal, social and emotional development.**

Early personal, social and emotional development supports the impact on children's later well-being, learning achievement and economic success.

Pupils are provided with positive feedback and models of appropriate behaviours, it is important to us to make our pupils feel safe and secure in their school environment. Providing routine helps reassure pupils as they begin to understand the structure of the day and predict what is coming next through the support of objects of reference, visual timetables and verbal support.

Making relationships involves children playing cooperatively, taking turns with others in structured and unstructured sessions. Children take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity through observing and implementing. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Managing feelings and behaviour involves children talking about how they and others show feelings, expressing their own and others behaviour, and its consequences, and begin to learn that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a class or small group, and understand and follow the rules and routines in place through appropriate level of support. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and deal with changes of routine in their own time.

Self-confidence and self-awareness involves children being confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak or be involved in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas through their own means of communication, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities.

Children are also supported in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy**

Literacy in the EYFS supports children with speaking, listening and attention, reading and writing. We provide early literacy through children noticing how we see marks, signs and symbols in the environment. We use topic based learning to focus on areas and support children in their own level of learning.

We share many reading opportunities, through daily and weekly stories, role-play and using our imagination. We make it appropriate and meaningful for the child and provide sensory stories, thinking about use of voice, gestures and facial expressions. Early reading skills include matching, rhyming, awareness of letters and sounds and the skills associated with language development.

Early writing develops from providing children with activities whereby they can experiment with writing through sensory and physical exploration as well as having opportunities for role-play. Therefore, supporting and scaffolding individual children's writing as opportunities arise.

• Mathematics

Mathematical learning opportunities are incorporated in our daily routine. A cross curricular approach is adopted involving learning through structured mathematical sessions with specific focus, through stories, songs and rhymes and games to support children with understanding number systems.

Children learn about mathematics through daily routine, experiences and play in a way which is hands on and meaningful to them. We provide learning opportunities where children can explore, sort, compare, count, calculate and describe. We support them to be creative, critical thinkers, problem solvers and to have a go.

Number involves children learning to recognise numbers, count and understand the value of numbers. These skills support them to solve problems, use money and calculate as they develop and progress through school.

Shape, space and measures involves children mouthing, handling and exploring objects. As understanding of mathematical concepts develop they begin to use their body movements and sense to learn further concepts. These skills support children to understand a range of mathematics skills which they can then apply to everyday life as they progress through school.

• Understanding the world

A stimulating environment is provided which offers a range of activities where children can observe, explore, play and show interest and curiosity both indoors and outdoors, involving objects, people, places and technology. It involves encouraging and guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities given.

The concepts of understanding the world helps children learn about similarities and differences in the world around them. They learn to make observations of animals and plants in their environment, to develop a child's familiarity and understanding with technology, being able to talk about themselves and their family through planned activities based on first hand experiences

• Expressive arts and design

We aim to develop a child's imagination, creativity and their ability to use media and materials. This is provided by singing songs and making music, exploring a range of musical instruments, dancing, playing with colours, textures and design. These approaches to expressive arts and design support children to represent and understand their own feelings and ideas.

Children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, they express and think about uses and purposes in their own way. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through best practice and activity ideas.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Throughout the EYFS curriculum, staff reflect on the characteristics of effective learning, which include:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- Active learning - children become an active participant in their own learning. Viewing the child's development holistically, including not only motor, cognitive, and sensory skills, but also social and emotional development.
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

These characteristics of effective learning continue to be central to the Castle School curriculum paths when pupils move on from EYFS.

Pre-Formal Curriculum

The aim of this curriculum is to give our young people the skills, knowledge and confidence to make basic sense of their world and to understand they can affect change.

It is highly likely that the young people in this group will have profound medical, and or mobility issues and or communication needs and or sensory needs, and that their dignity, physical and sensory comfort will be integral to allow them to access to learning.

What is meant by the pre formal curriculum?

It is a curriculum for learners who have complex, and profound and multiple learning difficulties; children and young people whose learning is best met through a personalised learning approach based on the principles of communication, cognition, social and emotional development and movement. At the heart of the curriculum is learning through exploration/play and with a focus on independence and autonomy.

It is a curriculum that is assessed through **Routes for Learning** (cognition and communication) and in some areas **MAPP's** continuum of skills development. It recognises this group of learners are likely to remain within developmentally early intellectual parameters for the whole of their school career.

We believe our pupils within the pre formal pathway need:-

- **To be comfortable and ready to learn.** - To enable this we will have fewer structured 'taught' sessions to enable sensory, physical and care needs to be met and to ensure that this along with the physical structures creates the best learning environment possible for each individual to support them to be as functional as possible. Individual Engagement profiles are developed to make sure each child has the best possible chance at success. We will also work closely with other agencies to ensure this to happen.
- **To be skilfully supported to be as independent as possible.** - Our first goal is to enable our learners to take a lead in all aspects of their engagement with the environment, people and activities. This in turn will encourage independence in their play, actions and discoveries. It is important that their actions need to be their own in order for them to develop and progress
- **To be given time** – our learners need us to wait and to be given the time and space to process and discover.
- **Consolidation** – Repetition is the key to building skills and understanding within the structure of the day, sessions throughout the term and within sessions themselves. Burst-pause and its repetition within most sessions give our learners the opportunity to communicate their preference. Consolidation for our learners is the key to their learning.
- **Chronological** progression – There needs to be breadth of learning throughout their time in school. There needs to be variation in experiences / learning whilst ensuring that learning is developmentally appropriate. Each learner will drive the direction and content of their curriculum. Priorities based on our learners EHCP will help build their curriculum.

Mission Statement/ intent

“Learning is best done when the learner is placed at the centre of the curriculum and where every moment and situation is regarded as a learning opportunity”

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2006)

We seek to maximise each learner’s opportunities to do the best that they can possibly do and to be the best that they can possibly be, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities our young people will always be at the centre of the curriculum.

We aim to ensure that learners within the pre formal pathway are active citizens within their school and home community and actively (rather than passively) become involved in school life in a meaningful way.

We aim to prevent learnt helplessness and create environments where staff are responsive to the learner’s communications and teach them that their voice counts. Strong relationships, trust and consistency are key to developing a successful learning environment for our students. It is vital that all staff understand and embed these approaches into their practice and it becomes a shared vision. All staff will have an understanding of best engagement practice for the students and an understanding of causes of stress or emotional discomfort and this will inform our practice to ensure the best possible learning environment for each individual. Also key here is a recognition that deep and meaningful knowledge of each individual learner, which can only be gained over time, is an essential part of the long term teaching and learning experience.

We must of course, remember that our learners have the right to say that they do **not** want to be involved in situations or activities – having the right to be included does not mean to say that this right has to be exercised. We will listen to this right to say ‘no’ as we would listen to any other communication.

A learner within the Pre formal pathway may need hundreds and perhaps even thousands of opportunities to learn what for others might be a simple skill. We will make sure they have the opportunity to do this. A learner within the pre formal pathway will spend a large proportion of the day maintaining and consolidating what s/he has already learnt so as not to lose skills and understanding. The objectives, targets, sessions and evaluations will reflect this repetition. New concepts and understandings will be taught, when appropriate, in the framework of a familiar and structured session or activity.

We aim to deliver uninterrupted sessions- It is SO EASY to destroy the interactive flow of a pre formal session because learners’ concentration levels are mostly fragile at best.

We aim to develop our learner’s voice, their sense of agency and their sense of control. This is at the centre of the curriculum model. It is not enough to just teach our learners a skill, without control or agency what would be the point? For example we can teach a child the skill of holding a spoon, but if this doesn’t immediately lead to eating, because the learner is not in control, does not have agency, what would be the point?

Our aim is to put the learners in control by giving them an environment that they can understand and that they are allowed to keep changing in order to encourage development. Once the learners know how a simple routine works, they can introduce variants, and once they are doing that, they are in control. We are essentially trying to create the conditions in which our learners can explore and create through the activity of play.

All learners should be treated as intentional communicators. All attempts at communication (vocalising, eye contact, gestures, shiver, cough, laugh....) should be responded to immediately in order to strengthen their understanding of cause and effects.

Language

We must use language carefully; we must use language that is appropriate to the situation and the learner; we must use language repetitively so that learners have many opportunities to understand meanings in real and concrete ways. We might do this in a number of ways:

- Reminding each other not to talk unless it's in relation to the lesson – social chit chat between staff and learners is great but it needs to be kept to social times.
- Using words in the same way that we would use signs and symbols with the more linguistically able – that is, selectively.
- On more mundane levels, but just as important, we should not talk about the learners as though they are not there. We should instead aim to create discussions that actively involve the learners.
- Where appropriate keys words maybe supported by on body signing/ Makaton signing/ or child specific gestures.

Assessing the pre formal curriculum

Ongoing continuous and rigorous assessment is at the heart of the pre-formal curriculum as it:

- Enables us to be certain about the appropriateness of the personalised curriculum we aim to provide for each learner.
- Informs teaching.
- Drives progress.

The key tool in assessing learners' progress is Routes for Learning (R4L) developed by Welsh (PMLD) teachers and academics under the guidance of Jean Ware and published by the Welsh Qualifications & Curriculum Group in 2006. And supported by a 'toolbox' of other formative assessments. These may include

- MAPPs' continuum of skills development,
- Switch route maps,
- Active learning assessments
- Engagement profiles
- Matthew Laurie's Intensive Interaction Essentials recording sheet

Pre formal curriculum areas

<u>Communication</u>	<u>Cognition</u>	<u>Sensory</u>	<u>Physical</u>	<u>Independence</u> <u>self-help</u> <u>Social</u>	<u>Creative</u>
<p>Responding</p> <p>Interacting</p> <p>Communicating</p>	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Exploration</p> <p>Control and early problem solving</p> <p>Sequence and pattern</p> <p>Attention Switch progression</p> <p>Play skills</p>	<p>Visual skills</p> <p>Listening skills</p>	<p>Body awareness</p> <p>Fine motor</p> <p>Reaching</p> <p>Grasping</p> <p>Releasing</p> <p>Manipulating</p> <p>Gross Motor</p> <p>Body movement/ core Stability</p> <p>Mobility and Orientation</p> <p>Emotional well-being and mental health</p> <p>happiness</p> <p>audit</p>	<p>Sensitive dependence</p> <p>Self-help routines</p> <p>Active learning</p> <p>Shared activity- looking for consent</p>	<p>Music</p> <p>Drama</p> <p>Art</p> <p>Cookery</p>

Semi-Formal Curriculum

What do we mean by Semi-Formal Curriculum?

The term 'Semi-Formal Curriculum' is based on the ideas of Penny Lacey (2011).

The semi-formal curriculum at Castle School is for children and young people with severe learning difficulties.

Our semi-formal curriculum is broken down into curriculum areas each designed to support the overall development of a young person with SLD. There are overlaps between our semi-formal curriculum areas and subjects on the UK National Curriculum. However, our semi-formal curriculum areas are designed to offer something totally distinct, to directly address SLD learning need, rather than an adaptation of the national curriculum in any form.

Semi-Formal curriculum areas

My Communication	My thinking	Myself and my body	My world	My creativity	My Community
Developing purposeful and intentional communication	Developing attention and concentration, generalisation, working memory and problem solving	Independent living, personal care, Physical development PHSE / well being	The world about me My environment	Music Art drama	Citizenship Play and leisure

Our semi-formal curriculum is broad and balanced which helps pupils link their skills and knowledge to the *real world*. It is unique to each individual pupil. Our semi-formal learners are still at the very early stages of their learning and development and they learn best when the curriculum is related to their own experiences and when they are given opportunities to experience the same activities and overlearn. It is functional in its nature, but also assumes that our children and young people will make linear progression gaining knowledge and skills that show clear progression which will be used to further their learning. Hand in hand with this must come the application of this knowledge to a variety of learning situations ensuring these skills and knowledge are purposeful and functional.

Our semi-formal learners will benefit from a holistic and flexible approach to learning to ensure that all needs are met and barriers to learning are removed.

It is also necessary to understand that integral to this process of enabling functionality is supporting young people with their communication, sensory, physical and medical needs as these will prevent them from reaching their potential. Our young people should learn how to learn which will again increase their independence and confidence. Application of learnt skills will be evidence of deep learning.

Part of the functionality of the curriculum is preparing young people for life beyond school, so skills such as dressing, social use of language, personal hygiene, understanding their bodies, shopping etc. also play a prominent roll.

In light of an emphasis on functionality, the part of the curriculum that involves knowledge and understanding of the world will also be an integral part of the curriculum and will drive pupil's curiosity about learning in the wider world.

At Castle School, learners follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum (or a preformal curriculum if this is more appropriate) until the end of EYFS. Because of variable numbers of EYFS children in school, pupils in EYFS are integrated into Primary classes. As there is a great overlap between EYFS curriculum and the semi-formal curriculum in school, the transition to the semi-formal curriculum at Key Stage 1 is seamless.

The semi-formal curriculum at Castle School is also cross-curricular. Through a rolling plan of termly topic in Primary and half termly themes in Secondary, children and young people experience varied contexts for learning, and encounter each of the foundation subjects within the National Curriculum. However, the definitive feature of our semi-formal curriculum is its own alternative curriculum areas, addressing the priority needs of our SLD population.

Our semi-formal curriculum places and emphasis on developing the following areas

My Communication

Communication is at the heart of everything we do at Castle school and will underpin all our curriculum areas. Emphasis is placed on developing purposeful and intentional communication whether verbal or non-verbal which enables our students to communicate and interact with their world to the best of their ability. Our semi-formal learners will generally progress through intentional communication to developing words and ideas, joining words and ideas and using abstract words and reasoning.

A fundamental aspect of our provision will be to provide a total communication environment through the use of gesture, speech, vocal sounds, AAC, PEC's, Makaton, symbols, photos, real objects and sensory clues

It is vital that our semi-formal learners have a responsive environment. That they are given consistent responses to their communications and are given the opportunities to respond to other people, where they are able to initiate interaction and an adult/peer responds appropriately and where they have excellent role models who are able to model correct language and sentence structure.

In our semi-formal curriculum we will be mindful of each pupil's individual needs and learning styles and recognises the need for a multi modal-approach (such as signing and symbols), supported by a range of multi-sensory activities to foster understanding and enjoyment of books, stories, plays and poems.

The semi-formal curriculum seeks to develop the early stages of reading and writing and fosters learning that is repetitive in order to gain concrete skills. Learners will have the opportunity to gain early memory and thinking skills in order to sequence and retell texts. They will be supported to enhance early writing skills, including gross and fine motor. Phonics will be developed, and skills taught to support early reading skills

My Thinking

The Semiformal numeracy curriculum has been written with a number of principles in mind

The importance of 'stage not age'. In order to personalise learning and maximise opportunities for progress, it is not the age of the student that is significant but the stage at which they are currently working. Whilst the learning opportunities will change and progress throughout the school, the principle of delivering at a level appropriate to the student's level of development is of paramount importance. To ensure progression of content, it would be expected that the content of the lessons would reflect this difference. For example, sorting teddies in Primary could be replaced by sorting pop stars in Secondary.

Children learn at different speeds; there are often very great differences between children of the same age and some may need considerable amount of repetition and practice to establish learning before moving on. We often end up teaching the same thing over and over. This is expected and completely valid

The teaching of numeracy and thinking skills is primarily practical, progressing to some visual using pictures photos and symbols for those who are able. The emphasis is on understanding and not learning splinter skills and the concepts are embedded in real life using materials that learners are familiar with

Also included in My Thinking are:-

Cognition – the ability to think and learn. Help to develop their attention and concentration so that effective learning can take place.

Generalisation – The ability to transfer a skill from one context or situation to another.

Working Memory – developing the ability to retain information and skills and use these in a variety of situations.

Problem solving - being able to use their acquired skills and knowledge to solve simple everyday problems.

Myself and My Body

In this area, learners enhance their overall health and well-being. They also learn about personal care, healthy eating and safer lifestyle choices. This curriculum area also has a strong emotional and social dimension. Learners are supported to understand their feelings and their behaviours.

Included in this area are:-

Self- Regulation – Many of our semi-formal learners will experience problems with sensory processing and will require a sensory diet to enable them to self-regulate and fully engage with their learning.

Physical skills – both gross and fine motor to enable our children and young people to become as independent as possible in daily activities. In this area of learning we seek to develop within our learners an awareness and control of their bodies through a variety of experiences, these may include Rebound Therapy, Soft Play, Sensory Play, PE, Swimming, Outdoor Play. There is close working between Physiotherapists and Class staff to devise individualised programmes where appropriate. As much as possible these will be functional and integrated into the class routine.

Independence – we aim to support our children and young people to become as independent as possible in every aspect of their lives

My World

This curriculum area focuses on practical skills and developing an understanding of the world. Delivered through a topic based approach, this area of learning will encompass Science, Sense of Place (Geography) Sense of Time (History) and the use of technology for access and communication

My Creativity

In this area of learning our learners will explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing pupils with opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, and design and technology.

My Community

In this curriculum area learners develop their understanding of the people around them. They explore diversity within class and school through areas such as religion and heritage. They also explore the local area and how to access services. This curriculum area has strong links with work related learning. The emphasis is on participating in the community. Where appropriate pupils are taught the skills in order to access the local community as independently as possible.

Assessment

Ongoing continuous and rigorous assessment is at the heart of the semi-formal curriculum. We seek to ensure that teachers are constantly reflecting on individual learner's progress and making sure that the curriculum remains appropriate.

We have recently introduced iASEND as our main assessment tool for our semi-formal learners and we will use this to set targets, report to parents and other relevant professionals.

Planning

The planning cycle begins with the outcomes identified in the EHCP. These are reviewed and updated annually during the Annual Review and each outcome broken down into small steps within their Annual ILP. Each learner has a termly Individual Learning Plan which identifies 4 to 5 identified targets. These will include advice received from other professionals. These targets will be incorporated throughout the curriculum and all sessions. Teachers will ensure that learning takes place across all curriculum areas and that planning is highly individualised for each learner.

Topics and Themes

We have introduced a three year topic / theme cycle within Castle school within both the Primary and Secondary departments. Termly topics are in place within our Primary department and half termly themes within our Secondary department. The topics are personalised to the needs of individual learners. We strive to give teachers flexibility to personalise their curriculum delivery in a way that engages and motivates their learners. We aim to provide a varied context for learning within our topics and themes

Primary Topic Cycle

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 1	All about me/ Special time	Space and colour	Showtime
Year 2	Our world and beyond	Once upon a time	Animal encounter
Year 3	A few of my favourite things	A gardener's world	Under the sea

Topics that should run throughout the year- **Weather, Seasons, Festivals**

Secondary Themes

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Yr1	Myself and my world	The Elements / Contrasts	Eco Warriors/ Movement	Help and advice/ Choices	Healthy living	Land and Sea
Yr2	New Beginnings	Media and movies	Relationships and Role Models	Global awareness/ The space around me	How things work	Inventors and explorers/ Exploring
Yr3	Myself and my community	Adventure	Aspirations	Growing and Changing	Hobbies and Interests	Recycling/ Textures in the Environment

Formal Curriculum

Our formal children and young people are working at a level that means they can access subject specific learning. The National Curriculum forms the basis of this curriculum and our children and young people will access foundation and non-foundation subjects in an adaptive form and within a creative curriculum. Alongside the formal curriculum our children and young people may also require additional interventions throughout their day to enable them to fully engage with all aspects of their learning. We work closely with multi agencies so that we are able to achieve the best possible outcomes for all.

Our formal curriculum places an emphasis on developing purposeful and intentional communication enabling our children and young people to communicate to a range of audiences and also within familiar and unfamiliar settings. We also place a strong emphasis on developing thinking skills, attention and concentration so effective learning can take place. Some of our children and young people within this pathway may experience sensory processing difficulties and will require access to self-regulation strategies so that they are able to fully engage. Our formal children and young people will also be given the opportunity to over learn new skills and transfer them to functional real life situations supporting them to become as independent as possible. Within our curriculum we will also give our children and young people the opportunity to problem solve drawing on existing skills and knowledge to use in new situations. Throughout everything we do we aim to support our children and young people to become as independent as possible in every aspect of their life.

What does it look like?

In our primary department our children follow the pre-formal or semi-formal curriculum which will be differentiated for emerging formal learners including more subject specific learning where appropriate.

In our Secondary department our formal curriculum becomes more subject specific and is adapted from the national curriculum.

Our formal curriculum areas are:-

My Communication	My thinking	Myself and my body	My world	My creativity	My Community
English / literacy speaking/listening Reading writing SALT	Maths Using and applying number space shape and measure Science Computing	PHSE SRE PE	Geography History MFL	Art Design technology Music cookery	Community based learning

Communication and Literacy

Our aim is to enable our students to improve their speaking and listening skills so that they are able to communicate effectively and confidently in front of any type of audience. These skills are being encouraged in every area of our curriculum as good communication skills can enhance every type of learning. The children are encouraged to explore ideas through talk; challenge each other's opinions and develop their own reasoned arguments, as well as talking in full sentences with a clear and confident voice. We strive to develop spoken language skills throughout our whole curriculum and through the whole ethos of the school making use of every learning opportunity throughout the day. We aim to Increase our student's awareness and use of vocabulary through the provision of language-rich learning experiences. We seek to enable our students to:-

- Speak with confidence, clarity and fluency;
- Recognise the value of listening;
- Be confident in the value of their own opinions and to be able to express them to others;
- Adapt their use of language for a range of different purposes and audiences, including using Standard English;
- Sustain a logical argument and respond to others appropriately;
- Concentrate, interpret and respond appropriately to a wide range of listening experiences;
- Be open-minded, to value the contribution of others and to take account of their views;
- Appreciate the diversity of spoken language including signing and AAC within the school and value the experience and contributions of all students.
- Be able to share their learning in an engaging, informative way to a variety of listeners

The formal curriculum will encourage learners to become independent readers and writers and to develop individual opinions based on a wide genre of texts. Learners will be able to read high frequency words fluently. They will have access to a higher-level reading scheme, as well as developing reading for pleasure. Learners will access writing activities that develop their creative skills.

Our children and young people will foster a love of literacy in stories, poems, books and drama and will be enabled to access these as independently as possible. They will develop their skills of communication and the reading and writing processes to the best of their ability. Literacy will be taught not only in discrete lessons but across everything we do encouraging learners competence in both functional and creative situations in their adult life.

My Thinking / Numeracy

In Castle school we will deliver a maths curriculum which is accessible to all. The use of maths in our curriculum will enable our children to have a more active role in their own learning.

We aim:-

- To enable pupils to develop an awareness of events and actions and to recognise changes in pattern, quantity and space in their immediate environment and in the wider world.
- To use pupils' developing awareness to anticipate and predict changes
- To develop an understanding of pattern and space, shape and number.

- To develop problem solving skills that contribute to making choices, taking decisions and gaining control over their immediate environment.
- To extend mathematical skills, experiences and understanding which allows pupil's to visualise, compare and estimate. For some pupils this will be achieved in abstract as well as concrete contexts. To encourage pupil's to begin to think about the strategies they use and explain them to others.
- To enable pupil's to develop a powerful set of thinking tools to help them increase their knowledge and understanding of the world and to learn effectively in different subjects across the curriculum
- To recognise symbols and mathematical representations and understand their significance in both the immediate and wider environment.
- To develop mathematical concepts through a wide range of practical 'hands on' activities.
- To recognise the importance of strategies for checking or monitoring their answers to mathematical problems.
- To use mathematical information to anticipate events, predict outcomes and solve simple problems.

My Creativity

Pupils access opportunities for creative development through Art, Design and Technology, Dance and Music. These may be taught discretely or through a cross-curricular thematic unit.

My World

Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through accessing elements of History, Geography, Science and RE Main objectives in this area centre on developing general knowledge. We believe our pupils need an awareness of world events both past and present as well as awareness of the world around them, both that which they can access and that which is remote. The key outcomes will not just be subject specific, but be rooted in personal and social development and aimed at developing specific thinking skills.

Myself and My Body

Pupils will access a range of physical activities aimed at promoting physical fitness and developing life-long interests and habits. Our main aim is to build self-confidence and build a life-long love for being physically active through an engaging curriculum. The syllabus has been designed with aspects of the Equals PE curriculum and adapted to meet the needs of our students. In Castle school we intend that our PE curriculum will develop our student's fine and gross motor skills. These will be transferrable to other areas of the curriculum and allow them to confidently perform a range of life skills. The teaching of PE will also develop key social skills such as turn taking, working as part of a team, sharing, communicating respectfully and abiding by rules and good sportsmanship. Our students will develop the control and coordination to be able to access a wide range of sports and physical activities as they progress through school and into their adult lives. By participating in the suggested activities, our students will learn to challenge themselves physically and develop determination and resilience. They will learn to work collaboratively with peers and be given various opportunities to celebrate success in small groups or teams to develop friendships.

The use of PHSE across our curriculum will enable our children to develop confidence and know they are responsible for their actions and how to make the most of their abilities. They will develop

skills to learn about themselves. Our children will gain an awareness of being in the local community and in turn preparing to play an active role as citizens within the community. They will explore the ideas of belonging to different groups. Children will learn key skills to enable them to look after our environment, developing a healthy, safer lifestyle in relation to making “healthy choices”. Our children will learn skills to develop good relationships and respect the differences between people. Later on in their education they will learn about sex and relationship education, making personal choices and having personal responsibility for their actions.

Our children and young people will become active in the local community and develop their skills and knowledge over time enhancing their understanding of the world around them. As teachers, there will be an emphasis placed on individuality and children will be given the freedom to experience and learn about how life styles are different for different individuals. Our children and young people will develop their ability to express themselves therefore enhancing their self-esteem, confidence, competence and understanding within their everyday lives.

Life skills

The development of life skills is a primary aim in the formal curriculum as we aim to prepare our pupils for independent or semi-independent living. All pupils will access learning in the following areas: Cooking, Shopping, Home management, Personal safety, Personal hygiene, Road safety, Independent travel, Dressing skills, Work experience / vocational skills, Social skills, Constructive use of leisure time, ICT at home and in the community

If appropriate our young people will follow an accreditation pathway

Accreditation
Pathways KS3,4,5 *

KS3
Year 7, 8

iASEND S+

P4-8



ASDAN
New Horizons

Met through the PSE
Curriculum

KS4
Year 10,11

iASEND A P1 - 3



ASDAN
Transition
Sensory

Evidence collected
across the curriculum

iASEND S & E

P4 - 8



ASDAN Transition
Challenge

Evidence collected
across the curriculum

iASEND N & D / L1+ /
Entry Level 1,2,3



ASDAN Transition Challenge
or Towards Independence
AQA Maths / English

Evidence collected
across the curriculum
Met through specific
subject teaching

KS5
Year 12,13 (14)

Pre Entry Level
P 1 - 3



ASDAN
Towards
Independence
Sensory

Pre Entry
Level
P4 - 8



ASDAN
Towards
Independence

POST I6
PLACEMENT

* Pathways subject to change /modification based on individual
student needs and requirements and local authority funding

CASTLE SCHOOL SIXTH FORM

Who are we?

We are part of the Secondary Department and work with students with a range of learning needs and styles aged 16-19.

Our Vision

Our vision is...

“To equip and prepare all our students for adult life so that they can lead full and productive lives as members of their own community”

In Post 16 we challenge the students to be the best that they can be. Our goal is for each individual to leave us with the skills and tools needed to move on to their next steps. Our curriculum is highly personalised to the long term outcomes of the individual and focuses on supporting students to become more independent in all aspects of their lives.

The long term outcomes are taken directly from the education health and care plan (EHCP) and are reviewed annually. In post 16 our curriculum focuses on 4 key areas: education and employment, community inclusion, independent living and health. You may recognise these from the preparation for adulthood section of the EHCP.

Planning for the future can be difficult but all our students in the 6th Form have the support of a dedicated team who can work in partnership with them and their families to help make this transition as smooth as possible and more importantly, support the young person on achieving their goals. For some young people, this may be going into social provision, college for others or even going into the world of work in some form for other Class Tutor

Employment and training

Students will have a personalised timetable of work experience during their time in post-16. Placements vary widely and may include being involved in a class led business, supported placements internally or externally or unsupported placements.

All students will work towards a blend of QCF approved qualifications while in post 16. We use a number of exam boards and personalise the curriculum on a yearly basis to best meet the needs of the cohort. Students will work towards qualifications in areas such as employability, enterprise and independent living skills.

All students will work towards maths and English qualifications at a level suitable to their need. This may include functional skills ASDAN or AQA. Qualifications are reviewed and changed to meet the needs of students.

All classes take part in enterprise as we feel it provides an excellent opportunity to develop skills required in adult life and the work place. Over the past few years students have run classroom businesses making products to sell, and have run a successful small café, The Light Café. The type of enterprise is reviewed each year to meet the needs of the students.

As part of our schools careers programme, all students have the opportunity to meet with an independent careers adviser, students also undergo many visits to other education and training establishments to give them a full understanding of what opportunities are available to them.

Independent Living

Our curriculum promotes independence in all of our students. This may include teaching students to make their own choices, developing the skills to live independently later in life, travel training,

looking after the home and managing their own emotions. Students are regularly taught out in the local community and in our onsite training flat.

Community Inclusion

We have a strong sense of community at Castle School and we teach our students to have the same. We access many local community facilities and have built relationships with some local companies.

Health

We support students to manage their own physical and mental health. Students learn about healthy living and are encouraged to exercise. Each year students have the opportunity to take part in take part in recreational type activities such as swimming or bowling. All students have Personal Social Health Economic Education (PSHEE) on their timetable, but this will vary depending on the needs of the class.

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

What are Functional Skills?

Functional Skills are practical skills in English, Maths and ICT for all learners aged 14 and above. Functional Skills provide an individual with essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and work.

They are learning tools that enable learners to:

- Apply their knowledge and understanding to everyday life
- Engage competently and confidently with others
- Solve problems in both familiar and unfamiliar situations
- Develop personally and professionally as positive citizens who can actively contribute to society.

Why are Functional Skills important?

Functional Skills are important because they provide young people and adults with the skills, knowledge and understanding that they will need in order to progress and succeed in education, work and life.

Who are they for?

Functional Skills are available to all learners from Key Stage 3 upwards, whatever learning pathway they are taking. The skills taught will help students to participate and progress in education, training and employment. Working on Functional Skills helps to develop and secure the broader range of aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours that will enable students to make a positive contribution to the communities in which they live and work.

At what levels are Functional Skills qualifications available?

Functional Skills qualifications in English, Maths and ICT are available at Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, Level 1 and Level 2. Each subject area has a set of performance standards based on three key areas:

What's different about Functional Skills?

The biggest difference with Functional Skills is you can't revise, you have to be functional. Functional Skills is about learning a skill base, including communication, team working, presentation, and problem-solving, that is then transferable to other areas of learning, life, and work.

They help make sense of daily life, from getting the best deal at the shops, to applying for a job or using a computer.

Careers and the World of Work

At Castle School our careers programme is tailored to meet the needs of learner groups and individuals throughout Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. Our programme consists of learning, advice and experiences across:

- Careers
- The World of Work
- Enterprise
- Life Skills
- Transition into Adulthood

In December 2017, the D. of E. produced a **Careers Strategy: Making the most of everyone's skills and talents**. The document lays out plans to raise the quality of careers provision nationally. Its aims are:

1. We want all young people to understand the full range of opportunities available to them, learn from employers about work and the skills that are valued in the workplace, and have first-hand experiences of the workplace.
2. We want all young people in secondary school and college to get a programme of advice and guidance that is stable, structured, and delivered by individuals with the right skills and experience.
3. We want everyone to get support tailored to their circumstances at any time. All adults will be able to access free face-to-face advice with more support for those it need it most.
4. We want everyone to get the information they need to understand the job and career opportunities available, and how their knowledge and skills can help them in considering suitable careers.

The DFE Careers strategy names the Gatsby Benchmarks as the measure of excellence in careers provision.

Gatsby Benchmarks:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of work places
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal Guidance

At Castle School we are committed to supporting the transition into adulthood of all our learners through fulfilling the aims of the DFE strategy alongside meeting the diverse needs of our young people.

Follow the link for full details of **The Gatsby Benchmarks**.

- Post 16 students take part in personalised career and transition packages dependent on their needs and aspirations.
- Students take part in work experience on-site.
- Students visit workplaces, colleges and social care providers
- Taster sessions at Tyne Met and other post 16 provision are carried out where appropriate for the student.
- Visits to community facilities and travel training

NCEA Post -16 Curriculum Overview				
Functional Skills / Core Skills	Independent Living Skills	Personal and Social Skills	Personal Health and Wellbeing	Vocational Skills / Work Related Learning
English Communication – Speaking and Listening – including providing personal information, conversational skills, reporting on and discussing a topic, interview skills, informal and formal communication etc. Reading- including social sight vocabulary, shopping lists, interpreting information, reading for pleasure etc. Writing and responding to texts - including personal information, emails, letters, notes,	Household Management/ Household skills General household cleaning Hygiene Waste management /recycling Using domestic appliances / tools Laundry skills Basic DIY Safety in the home. Accident Prevention	Personal Development Self-awareness Engaging with the world around us Citizenship Self –Advocacy Rights and responsibilities Personal Care Self-care routines Personal hygiene Personal presentation Clothing care and maintenance	Physical Health and Wellbeing Healthy Eating Planning a Balanced Diet Active lifestyles Sport /Physical Activities Drugs and Alcohol Awareness. Medical Needs Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing Emotions	Careers education and guidance Exploring Options Preparing for Transition What’s best for me? Accessing Information Planning for the future Making choices Work Related Learning /Employability Skills Job Studies

lists, instructions, forms, timetables etc.	Gardening Pet care Household expenses and budgeting	Choices and consequences	Mental Health and Wellbeing	Application Forms
Maths Number including counting, calculations, estimation, money skills etc.		Personal Safety E-safety	Therapies and Relaxation	Interview Skills
Measure including time skills. Position and direction. Problem solving	Meal Planning and Preparation Kitchen hygiene rules	Safety in the community	Coping Strategies	Health and Safety at Work
Computing Using technology and portable technology to support everyday tasks.	Food safety and storage	Basic First Aid	Getting on with other people	Working practices
Using IT in the community	Hot and cold drinks	Emergency Services	Wellbeing Action Plan	Work Experience
Using sound , photographs and moving images	Basic cooking techniques	Personal Enrichment Creative Pursuits	Advice and Support Support in School	School based
Word processing	Snacks	Hobbies/personal interests	Local Health Services	Community based
Using the internet	Packed lunches	Accessing local cultural facilities	Local Support Services	Workplace visits
E-safety	Convenience foods	Accessing community facilities	Relationship and Sex Education Jack and Josephine	Mini Enterprise Projects
Core Skills Learning to Learn	Making simple meals	Community projects	Healthy Relationships	Voluntary Work
Enquiry – finding things out	Following a recipe	Eating out	Adult Sexual Health Services	
Application of skills	Meal planning Baking	Current affairs		
Setting personal goals	ITT Getting out and about	Groups / clubs		
Self-evaluation	Knowing the local area	Planning social activities		
Organisation	Road Safety	Voluntary work		
Problem Solving	Pedestrian Crossings	Charities		
Making choices	Using Public Transport			

Expressing personal preferences	Planning a journey			
Coping with change	Timetables			
Self-management / occupation	Solving problems and coping with emergencies.			
Working with others				
Resilience	Accessing local facilities			
Leadership skills	Retail outlets – shops, supermarkets, markets , shopping centres. Post Office Recycling Centre Launderette Dry Cleaners Bank/ Financial services Trades Public services Public toilets Making appointments Telephone skills			

Castle School Assessment Rationale

Intent

Continuous and rigorous assessment is at the heart of the Castle School curriculum. It:

- enables us to be certain about the appropriateness of the personalised curriculum we aim to provide for each pupil
- informs teaching
- drives progress

Each child and young person is assessed using a tool appropriate to their learning pathway. The assessment tools used in Castle School are:

- Early Learning Goals
- Routes for Learning
- iASEND
- MAPP
- Engagement Model

These tools allow for both summative and formative assessment opportunities.

When pupils enter Castle School they are placed on a Curriculum Pathway based on the information within their EHCP. Pupils on the Pre-Formal Pathway will be assessed against Routes for Learning. Through teacher assessment and in discussion with Senior Leaders during Pupil Progress meetings, future pathways will be discussed and based on their pace of progress through Routes for Learning it will be decided whether they remain on Routes for Learning or whether they transfer onto iASEND.

Implementation

Early Learning Goals

The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are used to assess children in Nursery and Reception in the following areas Communication and Language Development, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Art and Design. Learning Journals are used to record progress made over time.

Route for Learning

Routes for Learning is used to assess pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), following our Pre-Formal Pathway. The Routemap focus on pupils' communication and social interaction skills, early cognitive development and their interaction with the environment, listing 43 possible milestones which pupils may or may not pass through on their developmental journey.

iASEND

iASEND is used to track progress for pupils with Special Educational Needs, following our Semi-Formal and Formal Pathways in four core areas: English, Maths, Science, Computing and a range of foundation curriculum areas. Assessment data is analysed in order to monitor progress, to inform planning and set targets.

MAPP

Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress (MAPP) is used to monitor the progress and achievement of young people in our Post 16 Provision. Throughout the four key areas: Education and Employment, Community Inclusion, Independent Living and Health, MAPP allows us to assess targets in more depth by giving young people a level of progress against prompting, fluency, maintenance and generalisation. In preparation for adulthood, it ensures each individual leaves us with the skills and tools needed to move onto their next steps.

Each one of our assessment tools are used by teaching staff to inform teaching and learning on a continuous basis. There are three 'data capture' points through an academic year to monitor individual progress. This also informs pupil progress meetings and allows opportunities to analyse progress on an individual and whole school basis.

Impact

Individually tracking and monitoring assessment data:

- Makes target setting specific and measurable
- Helps focus teaching and learning from one week to the next
- Highlights areas of strengths and weaknesses in pupil learning
- Ensures progress across the curriculum is being made
- Ensures the curriculum is fit for purpose
- Highlights areas of strengths and weakness in teaching
- Enables focussed CPD opportunities



Castle School Assessment Model

