



Apollo Education
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Curriculum Policy

Policy Title: Curriculum Policy

Date: February 2026

Review Date: February 2027

Owner: Headteacher

Approval: Governing Board

1. Introduction

Apollo Education provides specialist education for students aged 11–16 with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND), especially Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, including Emotionally Related School Avoidance (ERSA). Individual students may also have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) conditions/ traits as well as difficulties such as Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), and Speech Language and Communication Difficulties (SLCD)

We operate as both an Alternative Provision and a SEND school: serving students, families, schools and local authorities across Buckinghamshire, Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead, and West Berkshire.

2. Statutory Links

This policy is guided and informed by:

- Children and Families Act 2014,
- SEND Code of Practice (0-25) 2015
- Equality Act 2010,
- Education Inspection Framework 2025,
- Independent School Standards (ISS) Regulations 2014 (and subsequent amendments)
- DfE Guidance for Alternative Provision (2025)

3. Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum is values-driven and personalised, focusing on students' strengths and interests while developing essential skills for adulthood alongside recognised qualifications. It follows an intent-implementation-impact approach, informed by Ambitious About Autism, ensuring teaching is purposeful, inclusive, and effective in supporting each student to achieve their potential.

Curriculum Purpose and Objectives

Our curriculum prepares young people for adulthood by recognising their individual strengths and needs. For some, this includes reintegration into mainstream education; for others, it supports transitions to further training, college, or employment. It also promotes students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, reinforcing British Values.

The curriculum aims to:

- Support personalised progress without fixed start or end points.
- Provide access to qualifications and other forms of recognition.
- Build confidence and self-esteem through meaningful learning experiences.
- Equip students with the skills and resilience needed for successful transition to adulthood.

The Branches Curriculum delivers these aims through tailored pathways for every student, ensuring they are supported to reach their full potential.

4. Rationale

The Apollo curriculum is student-led, building on interests to develop skills, knowledge, and independence. Pathways are personalised to support academic progress, mentoring, and future transitions, using mainstream provision and local community resources to prepare students for adulthood.

5. AE Values

All members of our community are expected to demonstrate:

- **Collaboration:** Communicating clearly and working cooperatively with others
- **Creativity:** Thinking flexibly and adapting to new situations
- **Nurture** – We support every child to grow in a safe and protected space.
- **Inclusivity:** Respecting differences and fostering a sense of belonging
- **Readiness** – Equipping every child with skills for everyday living and transitioning to the next step in life.
- **Resilience:** Persisting through challenges with determination
- **Kindness:** Acting with empathy, respect, and compassion

6. Personal Development & Enrichment

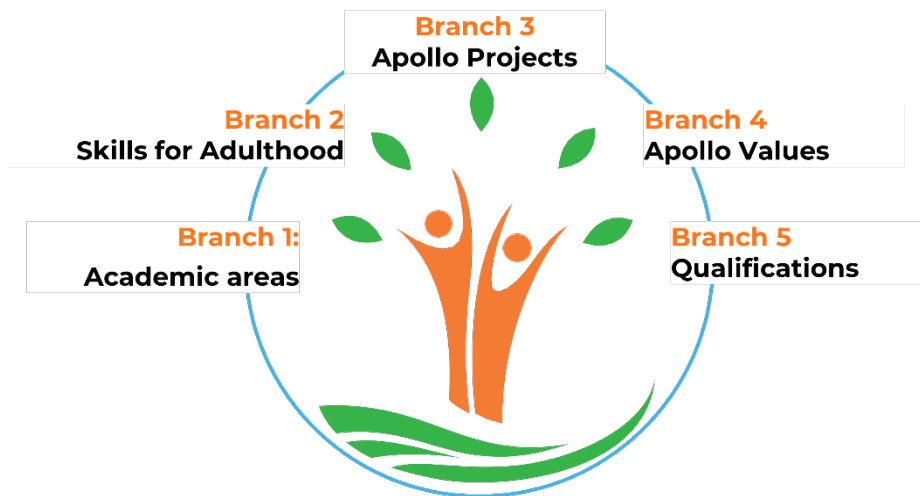
Personal development is integral to the Branches Curriculum through enrichment, PSHE/RSHE, and community activities tailored for ASC and SEMH learners. British values, SMSC, safeguarding, and online safety are fully integrated and reflected in curriculum maps.

7. Curriculum Approach: The Branches Curriculum

The Branches Curriculum includes the key elements that will support our students to progress, with flexibility and choice to ensure everyone has a pathway that recognises their strengths and development needs.

Our curriculum combines key national curriculum content, skills for adulthood, project-based learning, and qualification opportunities, while reinforcing Apollo values, making it comprehensive and tailored for ASC students

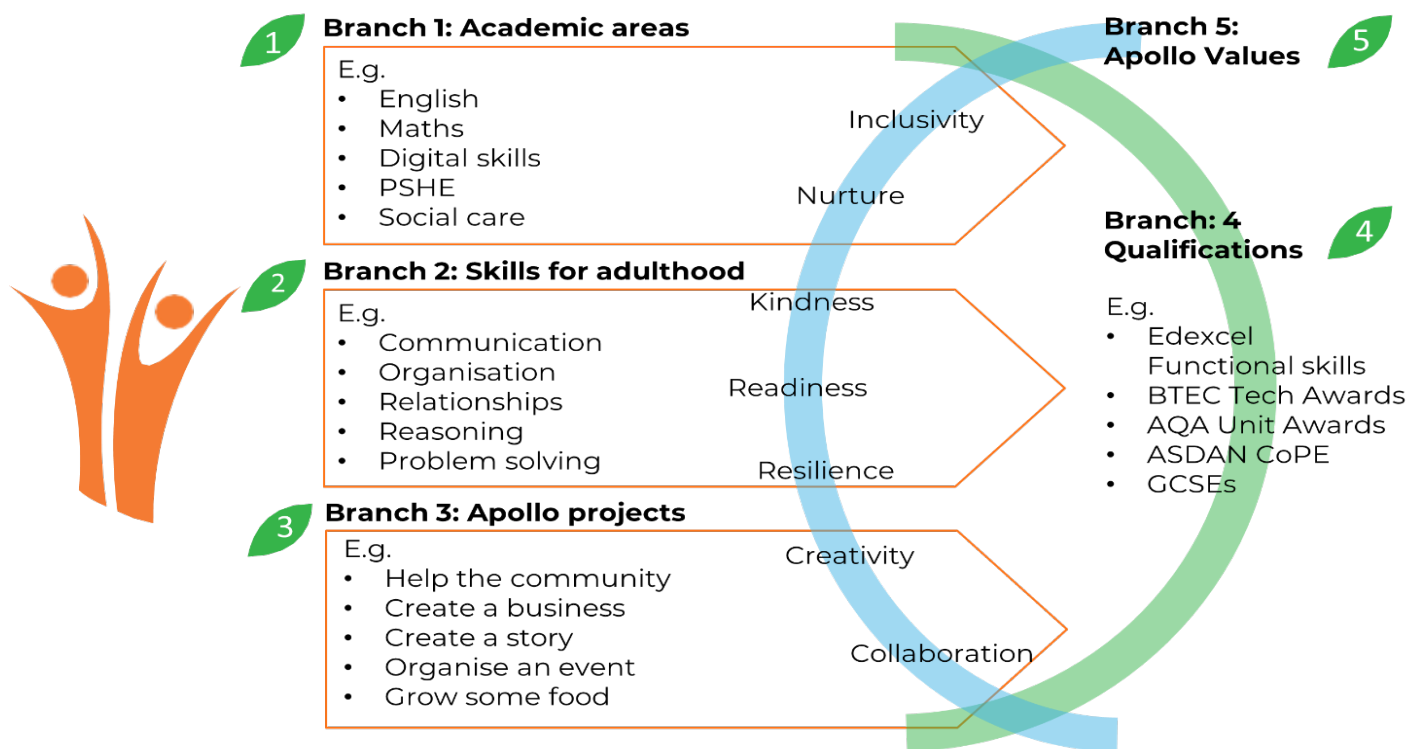
Within each branch of the curriculum, we create options to allow a personalised learning pathway across each branch for each student, based on their needs



8. Curriculum Structure

Apollo’s Branches Curriculum offers three tailored pathways based on students’ strengths and needs, covering functional skills, project-based learning, academic subjects, PSHE/RSHE, and PE. All students access a broad and balanced curriculum including English, Maths, Science, ICT, Arts, Humanities, Languages, and Life Skills—meeting statutory requirements.

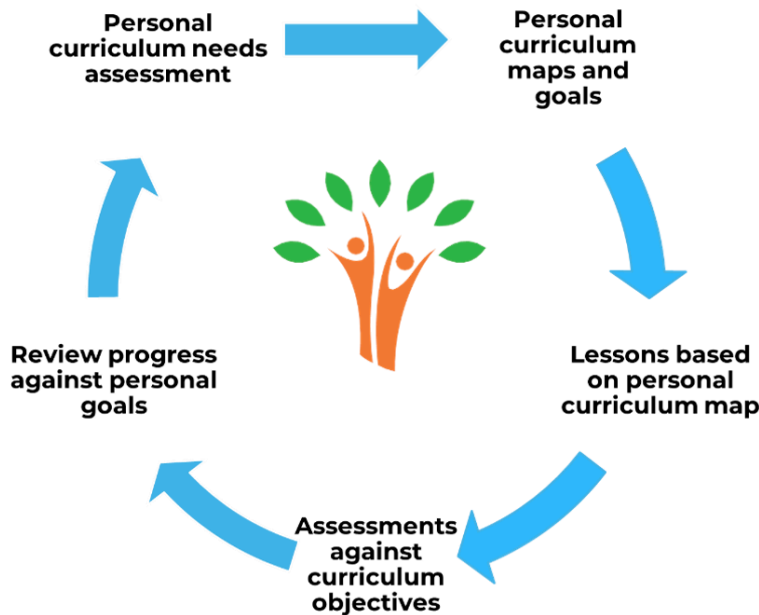
Curriculum choices and qualifications are personalised to support learning, skills for adulthood, and transitions, with flexible pathway options to suit individual needs (see Curriculum Maps and Schemes of Work).



9. Personalised Curriculum Plans

Each student will have a personal curriculum plan, charting a map through the different branches relevant to their initial needs. Our personal curriculum pathway process ensures regular half termly review of progress with updates to each student plan on a regular basis.

Classroom teachers will follow the curriculum needs assessment to formalise individualised curriculum plans, with specific objectives and appropriate curriculum options. Associated therapeutic needs will be included in the plan, with professionals identified to support the curriculum plan, and consultation with parents/carers always used to agree the final plan. Regular assessment (see our Assessment Policy) will ensure regular feedback on the progression of students.



10. Careers, PSHE (RSE), PE and Languages

We provide support for specific curriculum areas.

Careers Education

In line with Gatsby Benchmarks and DfE guidance (2025), students:

- Receive independent careers advice (Entry Level – Level 2)
- Meet further education, training, and apprenticeship providers
- Take part in work-related learning and supported placements
- Develop careers action plans linked to their EHCP
- Explore a wide range of roles free from discrimination
- Experience key public institutions (e.g., doctor, post office, library)
- Receive necessary adjustments to meet individual needs
- Are supported to fulfil their potential

Delivery

- Careers guidance is part of each student’s personalised curriculum plan
- Mentoring and termly parent meetings support transition planning
- Work experience via local business partnerships and colleges (e.g., Slough & Langley)
- Virtual work experience via Spring Pod where in-person placements aren’t possible

PSHE

PSHE is a key part of our curriculum, helping students develop essential life skills and prepare for adulthood. It is delivered both as a timetabled subject and integrated into project-based units.

- Uses a combination of UAS PSHE and Oak Academy units, alongside RSE-specific modules
- Covers personal wellbeing, emotional health, drugs education, personal safety, and relationships
- Promotes spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development (SMSC)

- Explores diversity, discrimination, prejudice, and LGBTQ+ awareness
- Supports understanding of different cultures and religions through Humanities, project units, and termly immersion days
- Reinforces protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, aligned with our inclusive, values-led ethos

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

RSE is delivered in line with statutory guidance and tailored for students with SEND and ASC needs. Our separate RSE policy outlines curriculum content, delivery approach, and the parental opt-out process.

Physical Education

Physical Education (PE) is an important part of our commitment to ensure students at Apollo receive a full, broad and balanced curriculum offer which supports their health and wellbeing. PE forms part of core and extended curriculum for all levels: Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 within our curriculum pathways.

Our school site has a small secure outdoor area. This is largely to help them with self-regulation. Given the limited space onsite, we deliver enriched PE to our students by combining indoor (e.g. sports hall) and outdoor (e.g. sports field) experiences through:

- Creative use of our outdoor area
- Use of Burnham Common, an outdoor area within a 5-minute walk
- Partnership with the local Farnham Common Sports Club, within a 5-minute walk
- Partnership with the Herschel Sports Centre, within a 10-minute drive
- Partnership with local schools to enable use of their facilities

Given the SEND needs of our students, we will work with a specialist sports coaches to support the development of appropriate PE activity for each child to be recorded in the student's personal curriculum plan, including any necessary accommodation required.

All PE activities, including transport to and from sports facilities, will be supervised by Farnham Common school staff following our Health and Safety policy. Basic PE activity will be undertaken by Farnham Common staff, with specialist support provided by partners at the local Sport Club/Sports Centre and local school.

Language and Oracy

Due to the size of our school and small number of staff, we are unable to offer language specialist teachers. However, our curriculum pathways include languages (French and Spanish) at Entry, Level 1 and Level 2.

Our delivery of languages includes:

- Language support to our teachers through specialist tutors at the personalised curriculum planning stage for students, to ensure appropriate offers are provided to students with SEND needs that are appropriate and achievable
- Partnership with local schools to support language curriculum delivery
- Integration where possible of language teaching into project schemes of work
- Immersion language days, using the support of specialist language tutors to design language immersion days, linked to our project curriculum

11. Curriculum Implementation

Our Branches Curriculum combines national curriculum content, skills for adulthood, project-based learning and opportunities for accreditation. Each student has a personalised pathway that is reviewed half-termly. The implementation of our curriculum is shaped by the following features:

Teaching approach

We offer the following:

- Small class sizes (maximum of 8 students) with high levels of staff support.
- Two adults per class (including a Teacher and Teaching Assistant)
- Short lessons (20 to 40-minute lessons)
- Structured lesson routines
- Low-arousal environments
- Teachers with strong subject understanding of both the academic and wider PSHE/RSE/pastoral requirements for SEND students
- Cross-curricular projects that encourage engagement, creativity and the reinforcement of Apollo values
- Trauma-informed approaches and explicit teaching of communication, independence and regulation.

Pedagogical approaches

Teachers will ensure teaching and learning is characterised by:

- Lessons are well-structured and carefully planned, incorporating a range of student-led activities that promote engagement and active learning.
- High expectations ensure students acquire new knowledge and make strong progress, developing understanding and skills across the curriculum.
- Teaching is assessment-informed, using knowledge of students' needs, aptitudes and prior attainment to adapt learning and monitor progress through formative and summative assessment.
- Learning approaches encourage independence and self-motivation through project-based learning, critical thinking and meaningful engagement.
- Staff use effective behaviour management, coaching and mentoring strategies to support personal development, responsibility and metacognitive skills.

Therapies

We will integrate specialist support for aspects such as SALT, OT, counselling, mental health support, based on the needs of students. Time will be allocated within the timetable to ensure students receive the necessary support, as identified and specified in the students' personal curriculum plan.

We place a high priority on improving pupil attendance and punctuality, at whole-school level and for different groups. Leaders and staff pay close attention to the needs of pupils who are absent because of medical needs.

12. Delivery Partnerships

We will collaborate with local organisations to enhance curriculum delivery, including leisure centres for engaging physical education (e.g. padel), schools for specialist support such as language teaching, businesses for work placements, colleges for vocational training opportunities, and museums and nature spaces for humanities and science learning.

13. Assessment Approach

Assessment at Apollo is continuous, purposeful and closely aligned with EHCP outcomes, ensuring robust evidence of progress across academic, personal and social domains. Assessment is designed not only to monitor attainment but also to capture personal growth, communication, independence and emotional regulation.

Our assessment cycle includes:

- Baseline assessment on entry covering academic, social, independence, and wellbeing skills.
- Formative assessment through observation, questioning, feedback, and adaptive lesson planning.
- Summative assessment at the end of topics or accredited courses, benchmarked against national standards.
- Progress tracked against EHCP outcomes, reviewed termly, and reported in annual reviews.
- Student voice and moderation processes ensure reflection, target setting, and reliable, accurate judgements.

We will communicate assessment information to:

- Parents, formally on a half-termly basis showing progress across each curriculum area against the personal curriculum plan, and annually showing summative progress.
- The Local Authority, on a termly basis, including any relevant information related to a students' EHCP, and to inform the ECHP Annual Review (including any related funding information).

Our assessment policy provides further information and guidance on our approach to assessment.

14. Staff Development & Quality Assurance

Staff receive induction and continuing professional development to ensure we can deliver our curriculum effectively. That training includes:

- Induction and ongoing professional development covering: curriculum approach and options, personalised planning, curriculum mapping, assessment (formative and summative), differentiation, student coaching and mentoring.
- Training in autism, SEMH, EBSA, therapeutic approaches, and statutory areas (safeguarding, H&S, equality, anti-bullying).
- Support for subject-specific areas, including partnerships with specialist teachers, and collaboration with teaching assistants and therapists.

Quality Assurance:

- Curriculum monitored through lesson visits, planning, and work scrutiny by Senior Leadership/Executive Headteacher.
- Half-termly deep dives in specific subjects, reviewing student work and assessment data.
- Student voice via surveys and informal feedback; parent feedback via questionnaires and discussions.
- Governors receive termly reports on curriculum impact from Senior Leadership.

15. Monitoring, Review and Publication

The Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body review this policy annually. Curriculum details, including subjects and qualifications, are published on the school website. This policy should be read alongside the Assessment, Behaviour, Safeguarding, and Equality & Diversity policies.

16. Links

Curriculum aligns with the following standards/best-practice

- Autism Education Trust (AET) standards
 - <https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/framework-documents>
- National Autistic Society
 - <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/education-professionals>
- Ambitious About Autism – guidance for education settings
 - <https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/sites/default/files/education/AaA%20ambitious%20approach%202020%20v5.pdf>

17. Approval & Sign off

Signed

Signed by:

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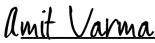
Headteacher (name)

Kam Badwal

17/03/2026

Date

Signed

DocuSigned by:

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Chair of Governing Board (name)

Amit Varma

Date

4/14/2026

Appendix 1: Careers Education Statement

Apollo Education delivers a careers programme that is fully embedded within its personalised curriculum pathways for SEND and ASC learners. The Curriculum Maps for Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 all contain relevant curriculum content to provide a rich and supportive Careers Education offer to all students. The exact offer will be guided by the individual student's personal curriculum map.

We show below how the options provided in our Curriculum Maps align with the Gatsby Benchmarks:

1. A Stable Careers Programme

Apollo Education provides a structured and embedded careers programme across Entry Level, Level 1, and Level 2 pathways. Careers education is delivered through:

- PSHE units such as *Making Informed Career Choices* and *Applying for Jobs and Courses*.
- Project-based units like *The Next Step* and *Speak Up!* which focus on career readiness and communication.
- Vocational qualifications including BTEC Tech Awards in Enterprise, Health & Social Care, and Digital IT.

2. Learning from Career and Labour Market Information

Students engage with real-world contexts through:

- Enterprise Tech Award units that explore market research, customer profiling, and financial forecasting.
- Digital Functional Skills modules on transacting online and using digital communication tools.
- CREST Awards projects such as *Monitoring Water Pollution*, which link science learning to environmental careers.

3. Addressing the Needs of Each Student

Apollo's personalised curriculum process ensures each student receives a tailored learning pathway based on a curriculum needs analysis. This includes:

- Differentiated access to qualifications (Entry Level to Level 2).
- Flexible pacing and modular options.
- SEND-specific adaptations in assessment and delivery.

4. Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers

Careers education is embedded across subjects:

- Maths Functional Skills include budgeting and problem-solving relevant to workplace scenarios.
- English Functional Skills develop communication skills for interviews and workplace interactions.
- Science and Geography UAS units explore topics like sustainability and climate change, linking to environmental careers.

5. Encounters with Employers and Employees

Apollo's curriculum encourages:

- Role-play and scenario-based learning in BTEC Health & Social Care and Enterprise units.
- Project showcases and presentations, which simulate real-world professional environments.
- In addition, Apollo organises both real-life workplace exposure, and online/virtual workplace exposure, relevant to the age and need of the student (as identified in the personal curriculum plan)

6. Experiences of Workplaces

The curriculum includes:

- Practical enterprise projects and digital portfolio creation.

- PSHE units on *Relationships and Behaviour in the Workplace* and *Personal Safety*, preparing students for workplace norms and expectations.
- Further, the real-life and virtual workplace experiences expose students to the workplace.

7. Encounters with Further and Higher Education

Students are supported to explore progression routes through:

- Career planning modules in Digital Functional Skills.
- GCSEs and Level 2 qualifications, which prepare learners for post-16 education.
- ASDAN CoPE units on *Research & Communication* and *Showcase & Portfolio Completion*, which build skills for further study.

8. Personal Guidance

Apollo's relational approach includes:

- Personal action planning in PSHE.
- Pastoral and catch-up time allocated weekly for individual support.
- Reflection units such as *My Journey* and *Final Showcase*, which encourage students to set goals and review progress.

Appendix 2: SMSC & British Values

At Apollo Education, we recognise that academic success is inextricably linked to a student's sense of belonging and their understanding of the world around them. Our curriculum is designed to go beyond the classroom, fostering the personal traits and social fluency necessary for students to become well-rounded, responsible citizens.

By weaving Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) development into the fabric of our daily interactions, we provide a foundation where every young person feels seen, heard, and empowered to grow.

SMSC Development: The Core of Our Approach

Social: Building Connections: at Apollo Education, we believe social development is about moving from isolation or conflict toward collaboration. We create a "small-school" family atmosphere where students learn to:

- **Navigate Conflict:** Using restorative justice techniques, we coach students rather than relying purely on punitive measures. This helps students understand the impact of their actions and take personal responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop empathy and an understanding of differing viewpoints.
- **Effective Communication:** Daily check-ins and the effective use of social time guide group sessions, allowing students to practice active listening and express their needs appropriately. Language development is key to ensuring students build the effective vocabulary required to communicate reasonably and calmly.

Moral: Understanding Choice Our students often face complex life choices. We focus on:

- **Personal Responsibility:** Helping students move beyond "it's not my fault" to understanding their own agency.
- **The Difference Between Right and Wrong:** Exploring the consequences of behaviour in a safe, non-judgmental space.

Spiritual & Cultural: Perspective and Identity * Resilience through Reflection: We encourage students to reflect on their own experiences and find meaning in their progress, building a sense of self-worth (Spiritual).

- **Broadening Horizons:** Many students have limited "cultural capital." We introduce them to different career paths, the arts, and diverse perspectives to help them see a world beyond their immediate neighbourhood (Cultural).

British Values: The "Rules of the Game"

At Apollo, we believe British Values provide the framework for how we want our students to function in a community. We guide our students to understand these values as the "rules of the game" for a successful life in society.

Value	How We Develop Resilience & Social Skills
Democracy	We promote pupil agency to engage active participation. We want our students to make decisions, not just be heard.
Rule of Law	We move from "following rules because I'm told" to understanding that boundaries keep everyone safe. This builds emotional security and reduces anxiety.
Individual Liberty	We empower students to make informed choices. Resilience is built when a student chooses to walk away from a provocation, exercising their personal freedom.

Mutual Respect & Tolerance	By working with peers from diverse backgrounds, students learn to challenge stereotypes. We foster an environment where "different" does not mean "threatening."
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Building Emotional Resilience

We teach our students to learn from their mistakes. Resilience isn't about never failing; it's about how we bounce back. In our provision, we build this through:

- Emotional Regulation: We teach students to acknowledge their emotions, providing a toolkit tailored to individual needs. This enables students to calm down, switch focus, and adapt their behaviour during times of heightened stress.
- Safe Failure: We provide a low-stakes environment where making a mistake—academically or socially—is seen as an opportunity for learning, not a permanent failure.
- Mentorship: Consistent 1:1 adult support provides the "secure base" necessary for students to take risks and build the confidence they need to reintegrate or move into post-16 education.

Our goal is to transition students to a state of "thriving." By embedding these values into our daily practice, we ensure our students possess the social fluency and emotional strength to navigate the complexities of modern Britain with confidence and integrity.