



# Copper Fields School

## Curriculum Policy

To be read in conjunction with:

- Intent of the Provision Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy
- SMSC and British Values Policies
- Assessment and Feedback Policies

Outcomes  
First  
Group.

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### Document History

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## **1. The Curriculum**

At Copper Fields School, the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of pupils with a wide range of autistic, communication, sensory and learning profiles. It provides a coherent, ambitious and developmentally appropriate learning journey, supporting pupils to thrive academically, socially, emotionally and physically. The Copper Curriculum is adaptive and inclusive by design. It is shaped by each pupil's individual profile, strengths, needs and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes. All pupils are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes communication, independence, emotional wellbeing and preparation for adulthood.

Learning is accessed through three flexible access approaches — Explore, Discover and Adventure — which describe how pupils engage with learning at different points in their development. These approaches ensure that teaching methods are responsive and meaningful, while maintaining consistency of curriculum entitlement. The curriculum draws on a range of recognised frameworks and guidance, including the Rochford Review, EQUALS curriculum resources, Development Matters, Pre-Key Stage Standards and adapted National Curriculum expectations. This ensures the curriculum remains robust, purposeful and aligned with statutory requirements, including the Independent School Standards (2019). At its core, the Copper Curriculum is designed to enable every pupil to make meaningful progress, develop confidence and independence, and be well prepared for the next stage of their education and life beyond school.

## **2. Curriculum Intent Overview**

The intent of the Copper Curriculum is to provide a personalised, purposeful and ambitious education that enables all pupils to achieve their potential and prepare for adulthood. As a specialist SEN school, Copper Fields recognises that pupils learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. The curriculum is therefore flexible and responsive, ensuring every pupil can access meaningful learning aligned to their needs.

The curriculum prioritises:

- communication and interaction
- emotional regulation and wellbeing
- independence and life skills
- engagement, curiosity and enjoyment of learning

The Copper Fields curriculum supports pupils to thrive in a complex and changing world, recognising each learner as an individual with unique strengths, needs and aspirations. It is designed to remove barriers to learning, support non-linear progression, and develop the skills required for real-world readiness and positive transitions into adulthood.

The Six Pillars outlined in the *Intent of Provision Policy* underpin curriculum intent and ensure consistency and ambition across all pathways.

### **3. Curriculum Implementation Overview**

Curriculum implementation at Copper Fields reflects the understanding that every pupil's learning journey is individual. Expectations of progress are informed by each pupil's starting point, needs and profile, and are shaped through ongoing assessment and professional judgement.

On entry to the school, pupils are supported through a structured transition and settling-in period. Assessment information is gathered from previous settings where available, and pupils are baselined using Evidence for Learning (EfL) to inform planning and next steps. A multidisciplinary approach, including Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Educational Psychology, supports understanding of how each pupil learns.

All pupils have Personalised Learning Goals (PLGs) linked directly to EHCP outcomes. These inform planning and are reviewed regularly.

Assessment and progress tracking use a combination of:

- Evidence for Learning (EfL)
- the Engagement Model
- Branch-based developmental progression (Copper Concepts trackers)

These are used together for all pupils, with emphasis varying according to developmental profile. Progress includes both skill acquisition and lateral development such as increased independence, communication, confidence and generalisation of learning.

The Six Pillars of the Provision Intent underpin curriculum implementation across the school, ensuring a cohesive, responsive and ambitious approach that supports every pupil to make meaningful progress.

## 4. Curriculum Structure

<p><b>Curriculum Policy</b> <i>Describes the curriculum vision and intent. Outlines the framework, structure and delivery which defines entitlement for all pupils.</i></p>
<p><b>Curriculum Framework Map</b> <i>Summarises curriculum journey, sequence and progression from early years to post 16 linked to preparation for adulthood.</i></p>
<p><b>Curriculum Subject Policies and Developmental Progressions</b> <i>Each policy includes aims and details of the specific curriculum area. They are structured through "Fiveways Phases" which are structured as developmental progressions working towards National Curriculum Year 1. These run alongside pupil Personal Learning Goal milestones.</i></p>
<p><b>Curriculum Progression of Opportunities</b> <i>Illustrates broad, balanced curriculum coverage and thematic experiences for Lower School, Upper School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form.</i></p>
<p><b>Medium Term Planning</b> <i>This shows lesson sequences, opportunity for repetition, overlearning and progression. They are working documents that provide structure and guidance for curriculum delivery. Developmental Phases are identified for individual pupils for teaching sessions.</i></p>
<p><b>Weekly &amp; Daily Timetables</b> <i>Overarching department and class timetables provide structure for pupils and staff. Individual timetabling is flexible in response to pupils' needs e.g. engagement, alertness, medical, physical, sensory and emotional.</i></p>
<p><b>Personal Learning Goals (PLGs)</b> <i>PLGs &amp; milestones are set for each pupil annually based on strengths and needs analysis. These are the learning priorities for the year and are reviewed regularly. Curriculum is the vehicle for delivery of experiences to work on PLG milestones.</i></p>
<p><b>Assessment, Recording &amp; Reporting</b> <i>Medium term planning reviews, Developmental Phases tracker and PLG assessment / recording systems provide evidence of learning including as part of EHCP cycle. This enables adaptation in the moment, planning next steps, robust review in pupil progress meetings and reporting at Annual Review.</i></p>

## **4.1 The Copper Curriculum**

Copper Fields School delivers a single, unified curriculum, known as the Copper Curriculum. This curriculum provides a coherent learning journey from early developmental stages through to accreditation pathways and is designed to meet the needs of pupils with a wide range of autistic, communication, sensory and learning profiles.

The Copper Curriculum ensures:

- entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum
- clear developmental progression
- consistency of approach across the school
- flexibility to respond to individual need
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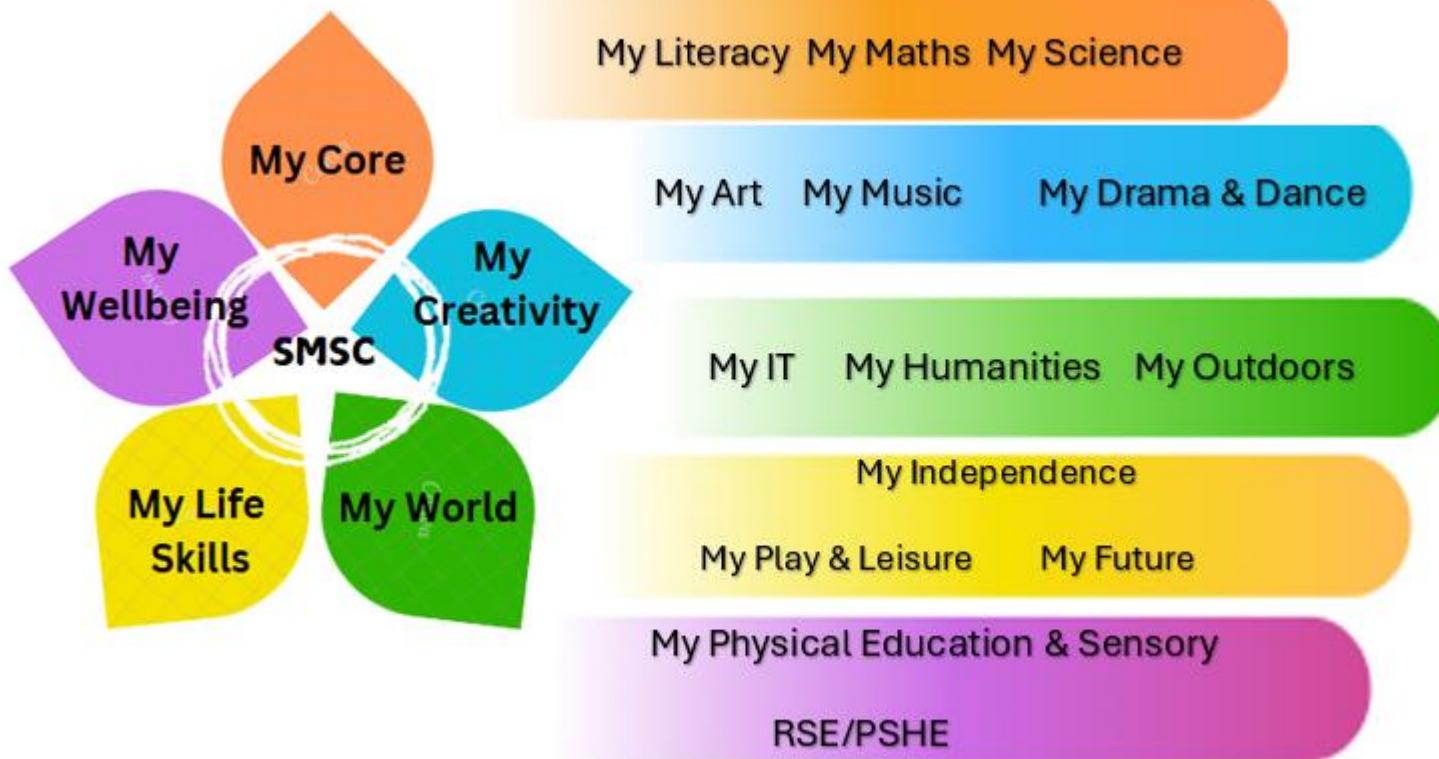
All pupils access the same curriculum framework, with learning adapted to support engagement, communication, independence and preparation for adulthood.

## **4.2 Curriculum Strands – The Copper Petal Model**

The Copper Curriculum is organised into five interconnected curriculum strands, referred to as Petals:

- My Core – Literacy, Maths and Science
- My World – ICT, Humanities and Outdoor Learning
- My Creativity – Art, Music, Drama and Movement
- My Life Skills – Independence, Play and Leisure, Vocational Learning and Futures
- My Wellbeing – Physical Development, Sensory Regulation and Relationships, Sexual Health Education

These strands provide breadth, balance and clarity across the curriculum, while allowing learning to be integrated and applied across meaningful contexts.



#### a. Developmental Progression – Branches 1 to 16

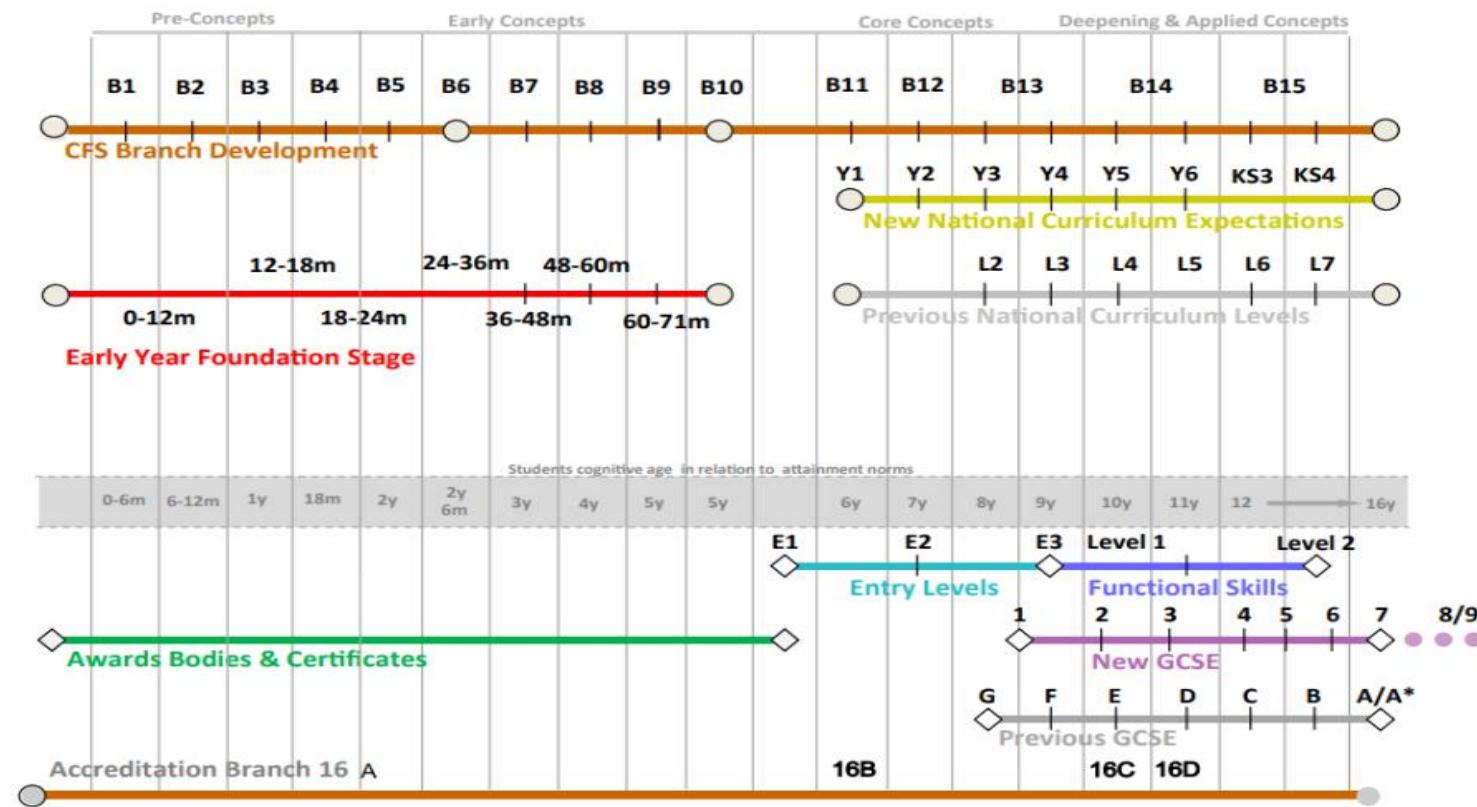
Progression within the Copper Curriculum is mapped through a developmental Branch framework from Branch 1 to Branch 16.

- Branches represent developmental stages rather than age-related expectations
- Progress through branches is individual, non-linear and responsive to pupil need
- Progress includes both vertical and lateral development, such as increased independence, fluency and generalisation of skills

Branch 16 represents progression into accreditation pathways, including AQA Unit Awards, Entry Level qualifications, Functional Skills and vocational routes.

## Copper Fields Concept Branches

Abbreviations  
B= branch  
m= months  
y= years



### b. Access Approaches: Explore, Discover and Adventure

Pupils access the Copper Curriculum through three pathway approaches:

- **Explore** – multi-sensory, relational and highly scaffolded learning
- **Discover** – hands on, creative and investigative learning
- **Adventure** – applied learning, real-world relevance that is project, process and skills based

These approaches describe how learning is experienced, enabling staff to match teaching methods to pupils' developmental profiles, communication needs and readiness for learning. Pupils may access different approaches at different times and across different curriculum areas.

#### **4.5 Use of EQUALS Schemes**

EQUALS schemes are used at Copper Fields School as structured teaching resources to support curriculum delivery, particularly within Explore and Discover approaches.

EQUALS materials are used alongside:

- Branch progression frameworks
- Personal Learning Goals (PLGs)
- Professional assessment and planning

This ensures consistency, repetition and skill development while remaining embedded within the Copper Curriculum framework.

#### **4.6 Curriculum Delivery Model**

Teaching and learning at Copper Fields is delivered through a semi-formal curriculum model. Learning experiences are designed to be purposeful, practical and developmentally appropriate, with strong emphasis on communication, regulation and meaningful application.

This model supports pupils to engage with learning in ways that are accessible, ambitious and aligned with their individual profiles.

#### **4.7 Curriculum Topics / Themes at Copper Fields**

Themed learning forms an integral part of the Copper Curriculum and provides a coherent structure that supports progression, engagement and generalisation of skills across the school. Themes are selected to enable meaningful connections across curriculum strands and to provide opportunities for pupils to revisit and deepen learning over time. Themed lessons occur weekly and may be integrated into other areas of learning, supporting a joined-up and purposeful curriculum experience.

### **Aims of Themed Lessons:**

- Enhance holistic learning by making cross-curricular links.
- Enable collaborative planning and shared experiences across the school.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to apply Personal Learning Goals (PLGs) in a range of contexts.
- Support progression through revisiting and building on key concepts.
- Enrich learning through themed events and enrichment opportunities.

### **Theme Structure:**

- **Global Focus:** Exploring cultures, diversity and the wider world.
- **Ecology Focus:** Investigating the environment, sustainability and nature.
- **Community Focus:** Building understanding of local communities and social connections.

### **Three-Year Rolling Curriculum Cycle**

Term	Focus	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Autumn	Global	Journeys & Inventions	Wonders of the World	Festivals & Celebrations	Back in Time
Spring	Ecology	A Changing World	Habitats: Rivers, Lakes & Ponds	Ourselves	Our Environment
Summer	Community	Discovering the Southwest	People Who Help Us v Superheroes	Travel & Transport	Olympics & Games

### **4.8 Curriculum Delivery**

The delivery of our curriculum is guided by the Curriculum Framework Map and the Curriculum Subject Progressions of Opportunities. These rolling programmes ensure breadth, balance, and progression while meeting the individual needs of all pupils.

Our curriculum is delivered through a balanced structure of:

- **Individualised Planning:** Tailored to **Personal Learning Goals (PLGs)**, EHCP targets, and developmental stages to ensure every learner's unique needs are met.
- **Flexible Timetabling:** Responsive to sensory, physical, emotional, and alertness needs, ensuring that pupils are supported when they are most ready to learn.
- **Cross-Curricular Integration:** Thematic topics woven across all areas create coherence and engagement, promoting meaningful connections between subjects.
- **Ongoing Assessment and Review:** Progress is closely tracked, barriers to learning are identified and addressed, and teaching methods are adapted to maximize outcomes.

To meet the complex and varied needs of pupils with severe, profound, and multiple learning disabilities, our curriculum delivery prioritizes the following approaches:

Approach	Description
Structure and Routine	Familiar and repeated activities provide stability and help embed learning.
Sequence and Progression	Lessons are carefully sequenced to build on prior knowledge and skills.
Repetition and Overlearning	Frequent revisiting of concepts supports retention and mastery.
Multi-Sensory Experiences	A wide range of sensory inputs ensures breadth and balance in the curriculum.
Flexibility and Responsiveness	Lessons are adapted in the moment to meet pupils' changing needs and circumstances.
Pacing	Adequate time is provided for pupils to process and respond, ensuring deeper engagement.
Specialist Resources	Tools and strategies reduce barriers to learning and enhance access.
Intrinsic Motivation	Activities are linked to what pupils find fun and engaging to encourage motivation and enjoyment.
Practical Learning Experiences	Meaningful, first-hand experiences bring learning to life and foster deeper understanding.
Independence and Choice	Opportunities to make decisions and practice independence skills are embedded throughout the curriculum.
Generalisation	Skills are practiced in multiple contexts to support real-world application and broader understanding.

## **Focus on Collaboration and Reflection**

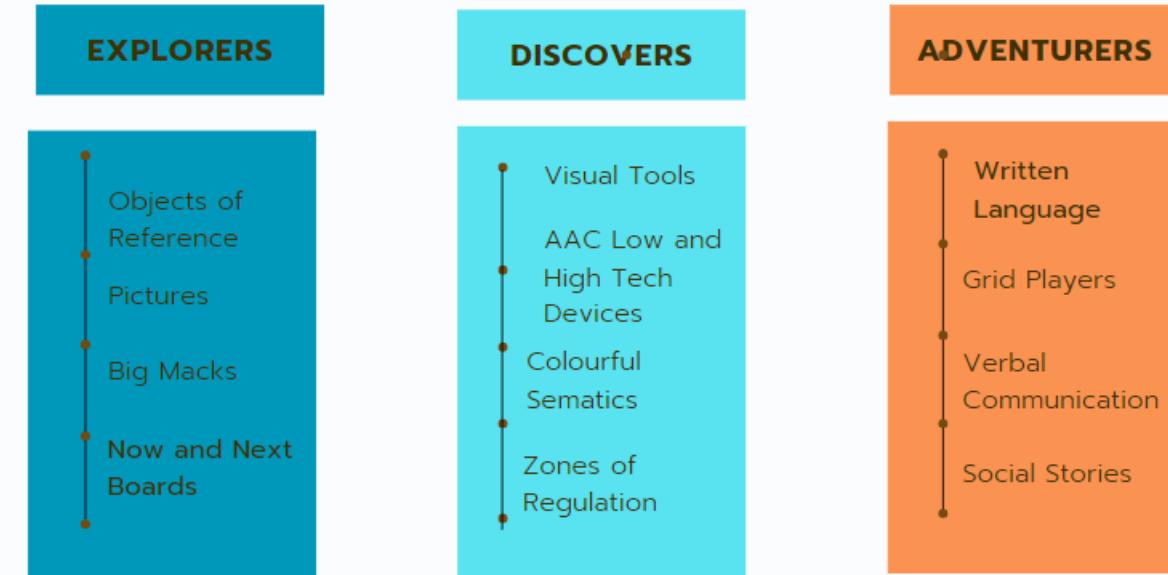
Through shared vision and understanding of curriculum principles, all staff collectively and individually deliver a high-quality curriculum that meets pupils' needs. This is supported by:

- **High-Quality CPD:** A frequent and cyclical programme ensures secure subject knowledge and reflective practices.
- **Self-Evaluation Processes:** Learning walks, staff meetings, and observations enable continuous improvement and alignment with pupil progress goals.

## **5. Communication**

At Copper Fields, we adopt a Total Communication Approach to meet the diverse needs of our learners. This approach ensures that communication methods are individualised and tailored, regardless of curriculum pathway. While some learners may use verbal communication, others may rely on tools like AAC devices, Grid Players, or PODD Books to express themselves effectively. The focus is always on enabling confidence, understanding, and independence. We collaborate with our Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) to integrate bespoke communication programmes into daily routines. These programmes are responsive to the learner's needs and allow for progression within the Explorers, Discovers and Adventures Pathways. The communication methods we use are flexible and not restricted by academic ability. Instead, they are chosen based on individual strengths and needs.

## TOTAL COMMUNICATION APPROACH



### Key Features of Our Communication Approach

#### 1. Individualised Strategies:

Communication tools are tailored to each learner's profile, ensuring that even those following the Formal Curriculum can use AAC or sensory cues if needed.

#### 2. Flexible Across Pathways:

Learners use the methods that work best for them, irrespective of their academic pathway.

#### 3. Collaboration with SALT:

SALT programmes ensure a bespoke approach to supporting communication goals.

#### 4. Emphasis on Accessibility:

All tools and strategies prioritise inclusivity, from Big Macks for pre-verbal communication to advanced AAC devices for formal learners.

## 6. Therapies and Interventions

At Copper Fields School, therapies and interventions are integral to supporting our learners' diverse needs. A multidisciplinary team collaborates with class teams, parents, and external professionals to address needs identified in EHCPs.

Key therapies and interventions include:

- **Sensory Interventions:** Includes Sensory Circuits to optimize readiness for learning and tailored Sensory Diets to support attention and regulation.
- **Zones of Regulation:** A curriculum, teaching learner to identify emotions, develop strategies for self-regulation, and recognise the impact of their actions.
- **Specialist Support:** Includes Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy alongside visual impairment support where needed.

This holistic approach ensures that therapies are integrated into learners' daily experiences, helping them achieve their fullest potential.

## 7. Learning Beyond the Classroom

Experiential learning is central to our curriculum. Through Education Outside the Classroom and Extra-Curricular Activities, learners develop practical skills, independence, and cultural awareness.

- **Educational Visits:** Linked to curriculum themes or as standalone opportunities. Examples include museum trips, theatre visits, community services, and local facilities like libraries and shops.
- **Work Experience and Life Skills:** Opportunities such as farm placements or café visits provide real-world learning experiences.
- **Extra-Curricular Activities:** Learners can engage in after-school or lunchtime clubs to explore talents and build confidence. Examples include:
  - Dance, Gardening Club, and Animal Care.
  - Signing Choir, Forest School, and Chess Club.

By combining educational visits with extra-curricular activities, learners benefit from a well-rounded program that fosters independence, creativity, and life-long skills.

## 8. SMSC and British Values

Social, Moral, Spiritual, and Cultural Education (SMSC), including British values, is interwoven across our curriculum. Through activities like cultural days, ecological projects, and community engagement, learners explore themes of diversity, respect, and responsibility. Aligning with aspects of our Copper Values.

- **Wider World Passport:** Tracks and rewards learners' achievements and contributions, encouraging active engagement in school and society.
- **Community Integration:** Regular involvement with community facilities and services enhances cultural capital and personal growth.

This approach ensures our learners develop into well-rounded individuals, equipped to contribute positively to their communities.

## 9. Awards and Accreditations

At Copper Fields School, learners' achievements are celebrated through a range of **internal and external recognitions** that reflect their progress, skills, and readiness for adulthood.

- **Internal Awards:**
  - **Copper Culture Awards:** Recognising achievements in areas such as creativity, perseverance, and respect, aligned with our core values.
  - **Wider World Passport:** Celebrating engagement with community and cultural experiences.
- **External Accreditations: (Year 8 and Above):**
  - **ASDAN Courses:** Focusing on life skills, employability, and personal development.
  - **AQA Unit Awards:** Providing flexible, personalised learning opportunities across a variety of subjects and skills.
  - **Entry Level Certificates:** Supporting foundational skills in English, Maths, and Science.
  - **Functional Skills Qualifications:** Practical application of core skills.
  - **Vocational Courses:** Including catering, animal care, and gardening, tailored to individual interests and abilities.

These awards and accreditations ensure all learners leave with meaningful achievements, reflecting their progress and preparing them for the future.

## 10. Expected Rates of Progress for Pupils at Copper Fields School

At Copper Fields School, we recognise that the diverse needs of our pupils require individualised assessment methods and expectations for progress. Each learner follows a tailored learning programme informed by assessments and target setting, with progress expectations based on their unique skills and previous achievements. Expectations are defined using a range of information, including cognitive assessments, social and emotional factors, language skills, and learning profiles. These expectations are agreed upon through collaboration between teachers, the Educational Psychologist, and the management team, ensuring high aspirations and appropriate academic challenges. Teaching methods are regularly reassessed to address any barriers to progress, ensuring that all pupils are supported to achieve their potential.

## 11. Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the daily implementation of the curriculum, ensuring that teaching staff continuously monitor, assess, celebrate, and respond to learning and achievement, no matter how small. Recording is carried out daily using consistent, school-wide systems, including the interactive tool **Evidence for Learning (EfL)**, which captures a range of evidence such as observations, photographs, videos, and learners' work. This systematic approach helps identify progress, address areas of challenge, and inform next steps for building on learning. The curriculum's subject-specific "Developmental Progressions" are supported by **Copper Concepts**, our development phase trackers, which draw on **Equals Curriculum Assessment, Pre-Key Stage Standards (PKSS)** and the **National Curriculum (NC)** to provide a structured framework for tracking progress. For all learners we also use the **Engagement Model** to evaluate and celebrate progress through interactive experiences. For further details, refer to the Assessment, Recording, and Reporting Policy.

## 12. Curriculum Impact Overview

The impact of every child's PLG is assessed formally at the end of each term through Evidence for Learning against their wider EHCP targets and learning goals. Progress is measured through ongoing formative assessments which are used to inform the next steps and further development points for each child.

A judgement is made on overall progress based on the information provided by the summary of progress for each child's PLG targets, as well as feeding back and providing constructive advice for next steps within the Evidence for Learning. This is to ensure we are making accurate and useful assessment of our pupils, and ensuring we are flagging up gaps or concerns, so we can provide tailored support. A separate Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting is held to identify and put in place appropriate early interventions for any child who is not progressing as expected. Rooted in the **Six Pillars of Provision Intent**, the curriculum ensures that learners develop holistically, achieving greater independence, fluency, and the ability to apply skills over time. This progress is both meaningful and transferable, equipping learners with the confidence and skills needed to transition successfully to the next stage of their education or life.

Pupils make progress laterally by enhancing their skills and abilities to a greater level of independence and fluency. Maintaining a skill over time is a core element of assessment and aims to ensure that learning is deep and meaningful, showing that they are able to transfer the skill. Case studies, Evidence for Learning and SEND Profiles demonstrate that learners achieve their short- and long-term personalised outcomes, and that they access our rich and ambitious curriculum and fulfil their potential. Learners are well prepared to transition at each phase of their education, showing that the curriculum supports them to move on appropriately at each step. Learners successfully achieve a range of accreditations and qualifications which support them in their college and community placements when they leave us.