



## **RADLETT LODGE SCHOOL LOCAL PROCEDURE FOR:**

### **CURRICULUM**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

It may be an obvious statement but it is imperative to recognise that **our autistic pupils are all unique**; thus, we needed a curriculum which puts the individual child at the centre and meets their specific learning styles.

The underlying characteristic is to provide our pupils with the opportunity to reach their potential as skilful learners. We recognise they will be with us for a relatively brief period in the context of their whole lives and as such **outcomes** and **future aspirations** should be highlighted, strived towards and become part of each pupil's curriculum pathway (See also the NAS 'Quality of Life Framework' Policy).

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>Intent</b> | <b>Our Aim...</b><br>is to provide our pupils with the opportunity to reach their potential as skilful learners.  |
|               | <b>Our Values are...</b><br>to be confident, embrace challenge and develop resilience;<br>to be happy, healthy and safe;<br>to be increasingly independent; and<br>to be accepting and respectful   |
|               | <b>Our Purpose is...</b><br>to inspire, intrigue and motivate learners to engage with the curriculum in order to reach their potential;<br>to meet each pupils' current stage of development and communication by working within the most appropriate RLS pathway;<br>to use our knowledge of the pupils' strengths and interests to create opportunities for engagement;<br>to identify, highlight and strive towards achieving each pupils' outcomes and future aspirations |

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| <b>Intent</b> | <p><b>We develop the whole person...</b><br/>         by focussing on the skills and concepts learners require to progress;<br/>         by celebrating success in a positive environment, thereby increasing confidence and self-efficacy; and<br/>         by being able to quickly identify and address any lack of progress and being flexible enough to adapt our approach to meet each pupil's needs and aspirations</p> |   |
|               | <p><b>Our Curriculum is broad...</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• as lessons are taught across six areas of learning to cover a wide range of subjects</li> <li>• by using half termly topics to allow cross curricular learning and exciting medium-term planning</li> <li>• as we utilise first-hand involvement inside and outside of lessons to create memorable practical learning experiences</li> </ul>   |
|               | <p><b>Our Curriculum is balanced...</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is balanced by using personalised learning outcomes (PLOs) across a range of key developmental aspects;</li> <li>• is balanced as pupils work at their own level to achieve success in the skills and concepts they are ready to develop; and</li> <li>• is balanced with flexibility to allow the most relevant areas to be worked on at a particular moment in time.</li> </ul>  |
|               | <p><b>Our Curriculum has clear progression...</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has clear progression as pupils graduate through our four different phases each with unique age appropriate styles of learning;</li> <li>• has clear progression so year on year pupils build on prior knowledge allowing for repetition and mastery whilst adding new understanding;</li> <li>• has clear progression where older pupils are motivated to generalise their skills and concepts towards their specific, purposeful and relevant future ambitions.</li> </ul> |

## AIMS

We have developed **two discrete pathways** to meet our pupils' needs based upon their current stage of development (**Pathway 1** and **Pathway 2**). We firmly believe that any correlation between a child's learning and their chronological age, or key stage, is insignificant and certainly shouldn't be a determining factor as to their curriculum offer. Thus, our focus at RLS is to educate each child based on their social, communicative and emotional developmental stage (see '*RLS Pathways Explained*' diagram overleaf).

Where appropriate pupils will be taught in small classes of age and ability but the curriculum they follow will allow for greater flexibility and personalisation. All of our pupils or students fit into one of our three learning groups, namely **Explorers**, **Discoverers** and **Challengers** and our specialist and highly trained staff deliver successful interventions as and when required for each child at every stage of their development.

In simple terms, the Explorers are provided with an informal learning environment which best meets their developmental needs. The Discoverers, who generally follow the same curriculum pathway as the explorers, have moved through this informal stage and are beginning to require what we call a semi-formal learning environment and finally, the Challengers, who experience a far more formal setting in which to learn and develop (see 'Pathways and Key Stages' for further discussion around the different pathways).

### RLS Pathways Explained

|  | <u>Pathway 1</u>   |   | <u>Pathway 2</u>   |
|--|--|---|--|
|  | <br><b><u>Explorers</u></b>   | <br><b><u>Discoverers</u></b>  | <br><b><u>Challengers</u></b>   |
| EHCP Link                                | As an Explorer, I can:   | As a Discoverer, I can:   | As a Challenger, I can:  |
| <b>Communication and Interaction</b>     | Communicate through my actions, gestures, facial expressions, vocalisations, and / or single words (spoken or using AAC).                                | Communicate using word combinations (spoken or using AAC).  | Communicate using sentences and link ideas using basic conjunctions, for example: <i>and / or / because</i> (spoken or using AAC).   |
| <b>Communication and Interaction</b>     | Engage and respond when familiar adults join in with my activity, actions or sounds.   | Participate in two-way interactions with a familiar adult.  | Participate in structured rule-based games and group discussions with peers (either verbally or using AAC).  |
| <b>Cognition and Learning</b>            | Attend to activities of my own choosing and, with support, engage in short (up to 2 minutes) highly motivating adult-led activities.                     | Focus my attention on what an adult is doing, in a small group situation, when engaging resources and activities are used.  | Engage in learning activities with minimal support, for an extended period in a small group setting.   |
| <b>Social, Emotional and Behavioural</b> | Express my emotions through actions, gestures, facial expressions, and vocalisations, and may engage when adults provide regulating activities or input. | Use early emotion words (e.g. happy, tired, sad, and angry) to express my emotions, and actively participate when adults give me choices or regulating input or activities. | Use a range of emotional vocabulary to describe my own and other people's feelings, and I can reflect on situations with minimal support.  |
| <b>Physical and Sensory</b>              | Engage in exploratory mark-making activities.  | Beginning to copy lines and draw simple shapes.   | Write words and 2 – 3 word phrases or simple sentences (using handwriting or ICT).   |
| <b>Community and Independence</b>        | Cooperate with adults during activities of daily living (e.g. dressing, toileting, washing hands), with visual / gesture / touch support.                | Carry out some basic activities of daily living independently e.g. following a visual jig, imitating a model or responding to a gesture cue.                                | Complete most key activities of daily living independently (e.g. dressing, eating and drinking, basic food preparation, toileting, washing), and can organise my own belongings for routine activities with minimal prompts. |

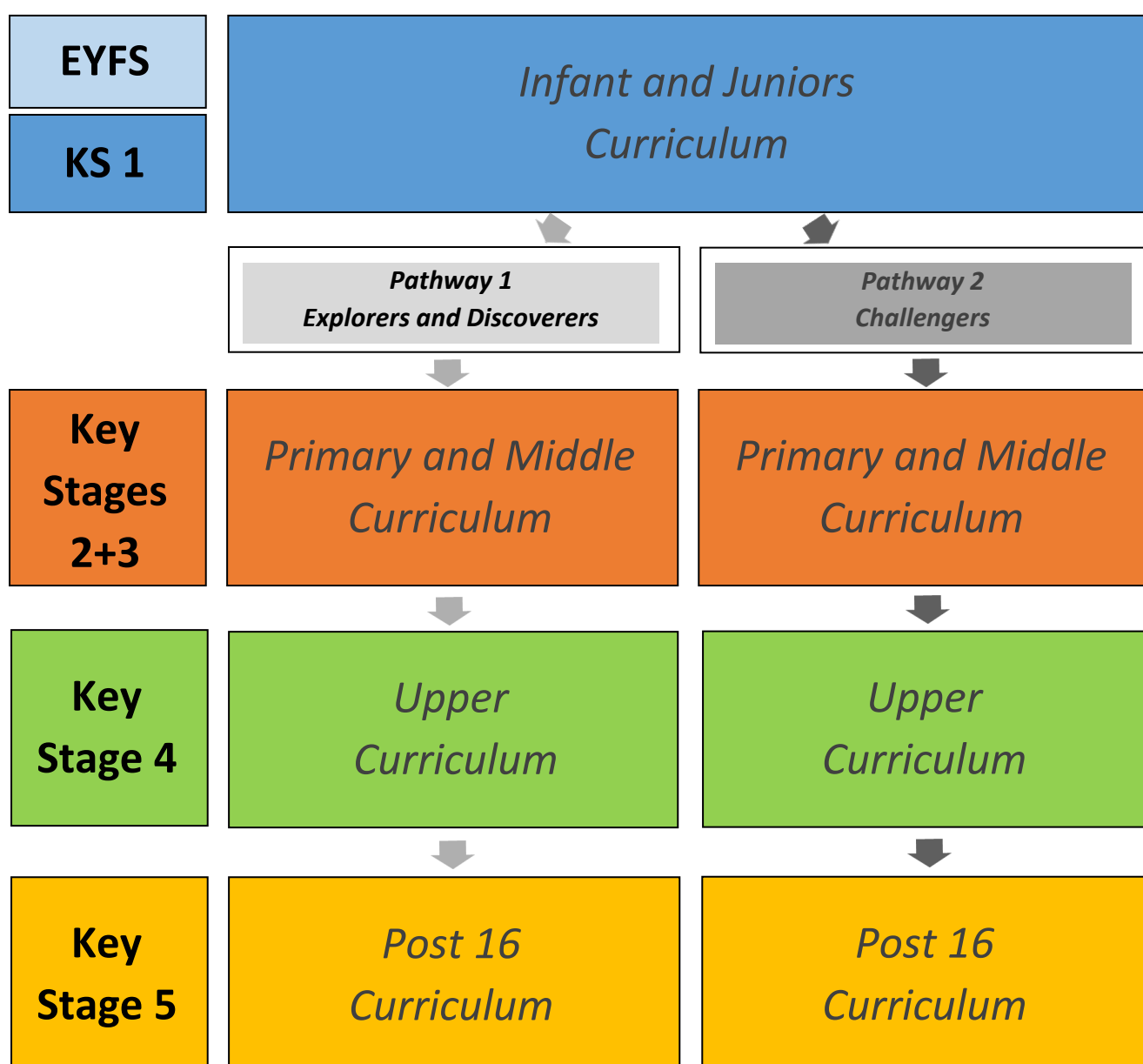
## PATHWAYS AND 4 CURRICULUMS

At Radlett Lodge School, all pupils and older students are vertically grouped according to their specific individual needs, including: communication, cognition, social, emotional and sensory.

As previously discussed, we use two distinct pathways to deliver the most appropriate curriculum for each child:

**Pathway 1** is designed for our pupils who we classify as ***Explorers*** and ***Discoverers***. This includes those learners who experience through sensory sessions and play and their curriculum is delivered through mainly informal or semi-formal learning environments. In terms of the SCERTS® Model, these pupils would typically be at the **Social Partner** and **Language Partner** stages of development.

**Pathway 2** is for our pupils who are ***Challengers***. They require a learning environment which is semi-formal, becoming more formal in design to our Pathway 1 cohort and in terms of the SCERTS® Model, Pathway 2 pupils would typically be at the **Conversational Partner** stage.



## PATHWAYS AND 4 CURRICULUMS (Continued)

Based on the age of each pupil, the curriculum offer and teachers planning allows for a unique focus which is considered to facilitate year on year progression of skills, knowledge and understanding.

In the Infant and Junior years, pupils at RLS follow a play model to ensure they are motivated and engaged in their learning. This then allows us to teach them in an autism-specific manner to implant planned, purposeful play through a mix of *adult-led* and *child-initiated* learning.

Pupils working in Key Stages 2 and 3 (our Primary and Middle curriculum) build upon the foundation from previous cycles and years, consolidating earlier learnt skills, whilst the emphasis switches to establish greater life skills, independence and challenge.

The Upper curriculum is a key transition period for our pupils at around Key Stage 4 and this functional phase is designed to be a link between primary/lower secondary and Post 16. For some of our Discoverers and Challengers, the move is away from themes and the many of the traditional *National Curriculum* subjects are taught through our cross-curricular method.

For Post 16 and older secondary pupils (Key Stages 4 and 5), their curriculum phase is based around 'Preparation for Adulthood'. Here, each young persons' interests and abilities are the focus with a greater emphasis on outcomes and future opportunities. It begins with a 'person-centred planning' (PCP) meeting which informs future planning and offers a chance to accomplish accredited awards (such as 'ASDAN') for each student's level of achievement.

Much of the time is spent accessing the community and allows students the opportunity to generalise skills whilst experiencing different environments and interacting with the wider society (see the RLS Local Procedure for 'Post 16 Education' for further details).

### THEMES explained

| Cycle    | Autumn Term  |                           | Spring Term      |               | Summer Term              |                              |
|----------|--------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
|          | ME           | ME and OTHERS             | MOTIVATING       | LIVING THINGS | MY SURROUNDINGS          | BEING ACTIVE                 |
| <b>1</b> | All about me | How + when we celebrate   | Local area/ Jobs | Field to fork | Going places             | Keeping healthy, keeping fit |
| <b>2</b> | My story     | Religious stories         | Water and Senses | Habitats      | Environment              | Time to play sport           |
| <b>3</b> | My Home      | Spiritual places + people | Food and drink   | Animals       | Staying safe (at school) | Summer holiday               |

## THEMES (Continued)

To ensure Radlett Lodge School's curriculum offer is broad and balanced, stimulating, challenging and appropriate to our pupil's interests we offer a thematic approach for the younger pupils. At Key Stages 1-3, whichever pathway pupils are in, they all follow a themed approach which repeats in cycle every three years.

### Rationale for the order of our topic cycles

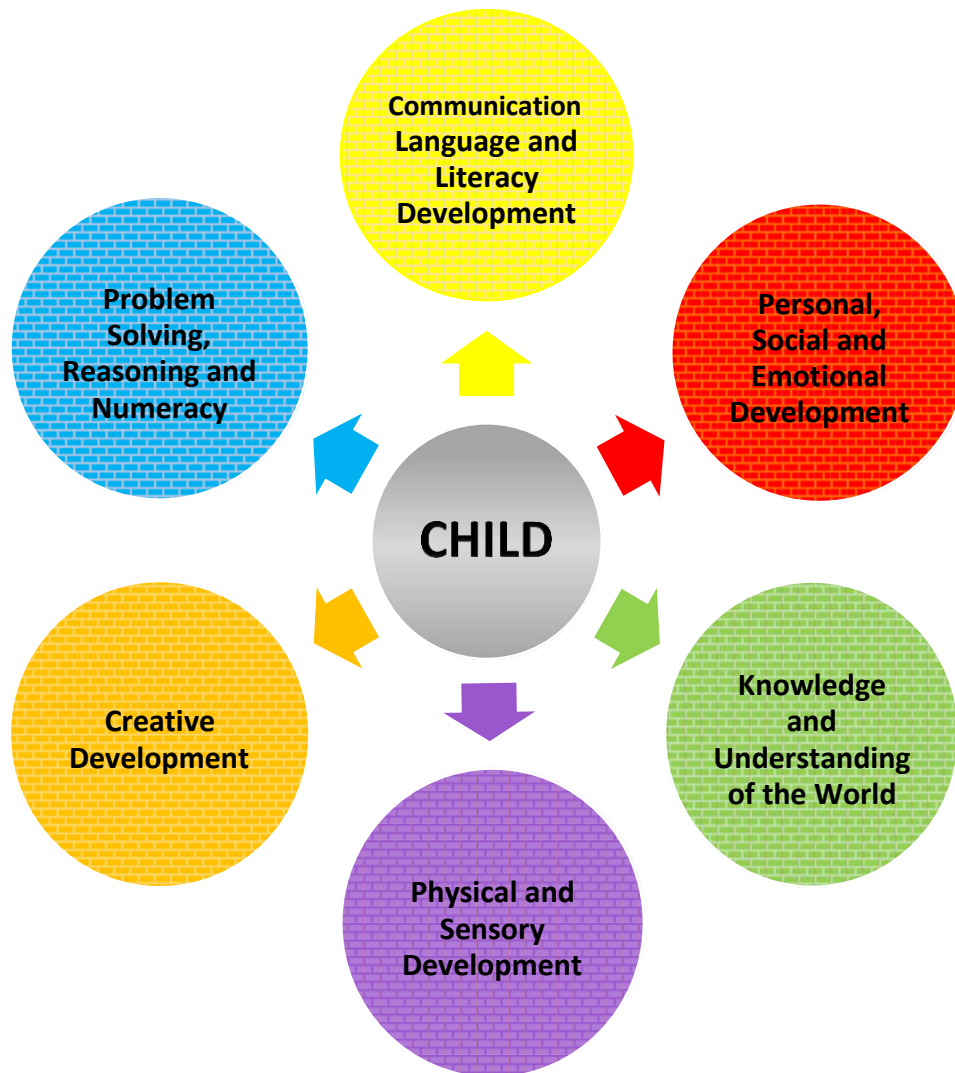
Each year the pupils go through a similar range of topics following a structured pattern, starting with:

***Themselves***; then ***Others*** (other people, other things); then ***Something Motivating***; then ***Living Things and Wider World***; moving towards ***Their Surroundings***; and finally, ***Being Healthy***.

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Implementation</b> | <p><b>Our Curriculum is filled with rich first-hand purposeful experiences...</b><br/>by using a variety of exciting teaching strategies; through the use of a total communication approach; with a combination of tried and tested and innovative MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team) initiatives; using autism specific strategies (e.g. TEACCH, Intensive Interaction and Attention Autism); with weekly education visits (EV) trips; and the use of sensory circuits and movement as part of creating optimal learning environments.</p>                    |
|                       | <p><b>Our curriculum is flexible and responsive to individual needs and interests...</b><br/>by using a person-centred planning approach in every pupils' unique areas of interest and strengths; PLO's (Personalised Learning Outcomes) incorporated into their curriculum using individual EHCP and annual targets; from our understanding of each pupils' sensory needs and unique strengths and interests; and regularly updated individual behavioural support plans (ISP's).</p>  |
|                       | <p><b>Our curriculum embeds the principle of sustainability...</b><br/>through the continuous self-appraisal of our local offer; by evaluating the success of the curriculum we deliver; and through regular and meticulous analysis of all pupils' progress.</p>   |
|                       | <p><b>Our curriculum has an eye on the future and the needs of future citizens...</b><br/>through PSHE and SMSC; life skills and independence; student council; work experience; careers; transition programmes; community links and enterprise projects.</p>   |
|                       | <p><b>We encourage the use of environments and expertise beyond the classroom...</b><br/>in areas including: lessons; learning outside the classroom; specialist visitors (such as sports coaches, musicians, dancers and drama teachers; our school garden; our off-site allotment and annual pop up market stall; and the use of offsite activity centres (golf, sailing, swimming and skiing).</p>   |
|                       | <p><b>Our curriculum links between areas of knowledge and the major issues of our time...</b><br/>at Key Stages 1, 2 + 3: through our thematic approach giving broad topic areas which incorporate current affairs;<br/>at Key Stage 4: through our functional, next steps curriculum, building on that previously taught with an increased focus on community links and on practical, purposeful lessons; and<br/>at Key Stage 5: as pupils are preparing for adulthood and have curriculum plans designed around a pupil centred planning approach.</p> |
|                       | <p><b>Our curriculum has a local, national and international dimension...</b><br/>with a diverse range of cultural days; whole school and class events; charity events; visitors and guest speakers; community links; inter school sporting competitions; work experience opportunities and CBE visits.</p>   |

## FRAMEWORK

The framework which underpins our curriculum is based on the DfE's *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): 7 areas of learning*, but we have adapted it to meet the needs of our pupils by combining 'literacy' with 'communication and language'. Therefore, the **6 learning areas** at RLS are:

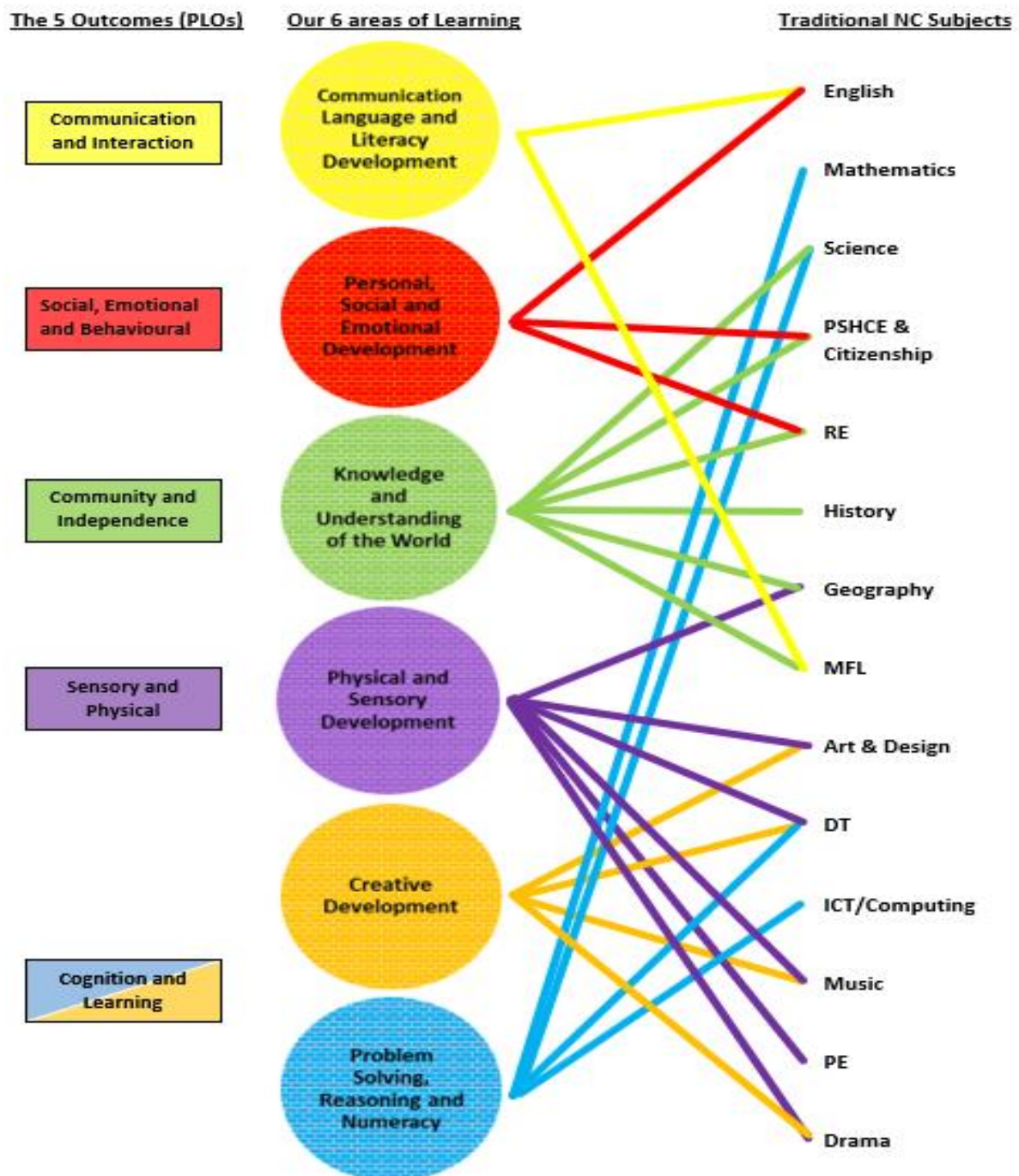


We assess each child's development in these fundamental areas of learning, we collect data where appropriate and have created an assessment policy to reflect progress in these areas (see also the RLS local procedure for Assessment, Recording and Reporting).

Often, autistic children experience differences in the way they 'sense' the world around them as compared to non-autistic children. This affects the way autistic children and young people use, develop and understand social communication and interaction. By underpinning our curriculum with these six areas, our pupils can reach their potential as learners. Our pupils achieve success when this curriculum is supported by sensitive, empathic educators who utilise a whole range of tried and tested interventions whilst under the main umbrella and principles of SPELL (NAS).



## How our RLS terminology relates to that in a 'traditional' school with National Curriculum subjects.



The six areas of learning are brought to the forefront as lessons are delivered through these subject areas. The structure from TEACCH and SPELL (NAS) continue to be prevalent with the following planned benefits:

- Increasing community access
- Generalising previous learned skills
- Challenging pupils' understanding of the wider world
- Experiential, opportunistic approach to trying new activities
- Greater 'practical' application to learning  
(e.g. **maths** in shopping or **geography** in transitioning the local neighbourhood)



|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b><u>Intended Impact</u></b> | <b>Measured by:</b>  |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All progress: PLO's, SCERTS, subject specific targets, assessment, etc</li> </ul> |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental input and Pupil input</li> </ul>   |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour and incident data</li> </ul>  |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson observations and learning walk feedback</li> </ul>                         |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum feedback from teachers</li> </ul>                                      |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff feedback and well-being</li> </ul>  |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual pupil review meetings</li> </ul>   |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes/next steps/pupil destinations</li> </ul>                                 |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic books</li> </ul>  |
|                               |  |

**The review date for this policy will be September 2023.**

The Radlett Lodge School Local Procedure for Curriculum should be read in conjunction with:

**NAS POLICIES:**

Quality of Life (QoL) Framework Policy  
 Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy  
 Supported Home Learning Policy  
 Remote Learning Policy

**RADLETT LODGE SCHOOL LOCAL PROCEDURES:**

Teaching and Learning  
 Assessment, Recording and Reporting  
 Post 16 Education  
 Careers  
 EYFS Curriculum