



# Pebbles ACADEMY

Learning. Life. Skills.

## Curriculum Policy

September 2020

For admission to

Muirkirk

### The design of our curriculum

Our curriculum design originates in the vision and values underpinning our education services and is designed specifically to reflect these and the unique ethos of our school.

Our vision is to offer a sector-leading service to vulnerable young people as a SEMH (Social Emotional and Mental Health) school. This requires a flexible, adaptable curriculum structure and the ability to personalise experiences and outcomes for individual learners.

### Aims and values

Specifically, our aims are:

We aim to be the **best we can be** at all times. We are **resilient** and constantly look to improve, **supporting** each other and playing to our **strengths and interests**. We **learn** from our practice and **share** it with each other, supported by relevant and focused **professional learning**.

**Everybody** – our learners and professionals together – **contributes to our success** regardless of their circumstances, responsibilities and prior experience. **We all have a voice** and contribute to decisions.

We promote **rights and responsibilities** and support our young people to be **effective contributors** to society and **responsible citizens**. Our schools encourage active participation in local communities and wider society.

Our young people are supported to **build partnerships** within their school, their **local community, external agencies** and **local businesses/charities** to promote **citizenship** and develop them as an active part of the **future workforce**.

All our young people **achieve** the most they can supported by a **relevant, stimulating curriculum personalised** for them and offering the **choice** to allow them to improve their **life chances**. We create **effective** and **supportive learning environments** to ensure every pupil achieves their best. We place each **child at the centre**, with their **health and wellbeing** our priority.

We are consistently **compassionate** and **patient**, and skilfully apply our expertise to create a **caring** and **tolerant** ethos. We are increasingly **proud of our achievements** and **celebrate** them regularly as part of a vibrant and dynamic learning community.

## Structure

We design our curriculum around the challenges, needs, context, rights and wellbeing of our individual learners. Our curriculum is themed around three key areas:

- Literacy, Humanities and citizenship
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)
- Health & Wellbeing, Skills for life and work, and creativity

This structure allows the meeting of individual needs in a supportive and nurturing learning environment, ensuring that the capacities of Curriculum for Excellence are at the core of our everyday practice. Our learning experiences (focused on expert teaching using AifL, active learning and incorporating personalisation and choice to engage learners) ensure our young people develop learning skills through application, breadth and challenge. Celebrating achievements, regular feedback, a range of active and outdoor learning experiences, and attention to individual needs and wellbeing mean our young people develop self-esteem and confidence and re-engage with learning quickly. We encourage discussion and cater for the interests of individual learners through flexibility to ensure they develop the ability to contribute effectively in their future lives as responsible citizens.

To ensure the integrity of our aims, we continuously evaluate against the principles of the curriculum, specifically:

- Challenge and enjoyment: for engagement
- Breadth: for flexibility and building capacity for the future
- Progression: through clear planning for an individualised curriculum
- Depth: specialisation depending on interests
- Coherence and clarity: based on our vision and values
- Relevance: to young peoples' lives, interests and future
- Personalisation and choice to engage all our learners in learning

## Equity and flexibility

Equity, flexibility and compassion underpin our decisions about our young peoples' learning experiences. While the structure of our curriculum is clear, there is adaptability incorporated to meet the needs of our young people and change their experiences as required. As they have significant challenges in their lives and have suffered significant trauma in the past, Health & Wellbeing is a priority. The uniqueness of our setting requires more of a focus on this than in mainstream schools and our staffing, accommodation and curriculum structure reflects this. Our curriculum is designed to ensure young people's awareness of the diversity within society is developed and tolerance and compassion is built.

## Review and development

Our curriculum is regularly reviewed and evaluated by all members of teaching staff, based on feedback obtained from our young people and a range of other evidence obtained from our self-evaluation framework. We take a collaborative approach to curriculum planning and the development of the curriculum offers a unique opportunity to build a responsive and relevant curriculum through a shared understanding based on our visions, the capacities of the curriculum and bound together by clear principles of curriculum planning. Daily meetings of the whole staff will bring together the experiences of the day and celebrate successes and address challenges. Regular peer observations will provide feedback on learning experiences for discussions and monthly meetings will focus on an area of self-evaluation with a strong focus on the curriculum. This will ensure the needs of our learners continue to be met going forward.

## Health and wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem

Through our curriculum we aim to ensure personalisation for our young people in their experiences to truly engage them in their learning. This will undoubtedly lead to successes and achievements in a wide range of achievements; academically, in skills development, creatively and in independent living. These will be celebrated regularly. Compassion and understanding of peers will ensure our young people are prepared for life in a diverse society.

Depending on the young person's situation, the celebration of this achievement and success is appropriate for their prior learning and experiences. This will be celebrated in a range of ways appropriate to individuals and will ensure equity and the meeting of individual needs. It is vital that learning experiences facilitated by our curriculum build confidence and self-esteem to ensure engagement and inclusion.

## Skills for life and work

Our curriculum is designed to develop skills for learning, life and work. These will be highlighted through day-to-day learning experiences. Independent living skills will be incorporated in our curriculum to ensure value is added to our

young people so they can function as responsible and independent citizens and break the cycle of trauma and negative lifestyles which are detrimental to quality of life for our young people. There will be an overt focus on skills for work through a skills framework which focuses on specific skills throughout the school session. Our young people will be able to talk about the skills they have developed and how they are applicable to the world of work. They will develop an understanding of their strengths and interests and apply this to the world of work and formulate an action plan for their future, appropriate to their situation and abilities. Young people will be encouraged to develop their creativity and enterprise skills: through enterprising learning activities and partnerships with local schools, community groups, potential employers, Drama, Art, Music, hairdressing/beauty, mechanics/technology and other activities relevant to their interests. These activities will be evaluated by learners and teachers against the skills framework to ensure activities are progressively challenging and build on prior learning.

## Inter-disciplinary and themed learning

Our curriculum is based on inter-disciplinary learning and connections between curricular areas. Our focus on three areas of the curriculum and linked themes within them ensures this and is appropriate for our young people to support the principles of curriculum design. For example, Literacy will be learned and assessed through themes related to Geography, History and Modern Studies themes as well as an individual subject (reading and writing) and Mathematics through themes in Science (volume, weight) as well as through life skills Maths (through experiential learning) and Mathematics in its own right (algebra, addition, subtraction, etc.).

The 'Timetabling and the school day' section below shows how this works on a practical level.

## Development of our curriculum

The ongoing evaluation of our curriculum is central to ensuring excellent experiences for all our young people. This is supported by our self-evaluation framework which focuses on young people's experiences and ensures professionals are reflecting continuously on the curriculum and their practice. Fortnightly Head Teachers' meetings and monthly whole staff self-evaluation meetings ensure that this takes place.

Successful partnerships with other schools, community groups, colleges, potential employers and other partners will encourage us to look outside our own practice and share good practice with others to continuously improve our practice.

Our collegiate ethos ensures sharing of good practice and a mechanism for developing ideas and strategies for improvement in our curriculum. Daily meetings allow this, and our supportive and inclusive culture encourages shared/distributed leadership of the curriculum.

## Learning pathways

Our curriculum is flexible and adaptable to individual needs, and our procedures in place for tracking and monitoring individual achievements and progress will ensure there are numerous pathways available for young people to progress in their learning depending on their ability, prior learning and skills, interests and aspirations.

Our curriculum with the three overarching curricular areas, alternative accreditation through ASDAN and SQA NPAs and standalone units at all levels, and outdoor/experiential learning will ensure many possible pathways for young people.

High quality learning experiences facilitated through excellent teaching (achieved through validated self-evaluation and training where appropriate) will ensure that this flexibility is available to young people.

## Skills for learning, life and work

Young people will gain a range of skills for learning, life and work as mentioned in 'The Design of our Curriculum' above. This will be complemented by independent living skills to support them as responsible citizens and effective contributors in later life. The skills framework to be implemented will supplement this and allow young people to reflect on their progress in this area.

Enterprise and creativity will further enhance progress in this area.

## Timetabling and the school day

Young people will start their school day in a restful and reflective manner during 'transition time', taking place in the library/media centre. This will allow transition to the school day and a chance to integrate into the environment and socialise at the start of the day. As young people travel with their care workers/social workers, this allows a chance to acclimatise to the situation. During this time, there will be mindfulness, relaxation and quiet reading opportunities in a relaxing and supportive environment.

The day will be split into six sessions to support the formal curriculum. Each session will be devoted to a curriculum area or personal development focus, with flexibility to vary the subject/content/activities to reflect learners' needs within the session. There will be one 15-minute break and 40 minutes for lunch.

Young people will be grouped according to their general ability level: Early/First Level, Second and Third Level, and Senior Phase. This will allow learning to cater for differing needs. There will be further differentiation within groups if required.

The table below shows the structure of each day:

Session	Early/First and Second Levels (BGE)	Third Level and Forth Level (BGE)	Senior Phase (BGE)
<b>Welcome/settle in (9.15-9.30)</b>	Breakfast Club (Linked to HWB)		
<b>Tutorial (9.30-9.45)</b>	Library time – Mindfulness, meditation, quiet reading, home-to-school book, joint targets with key teacher		
<b>Session 1 (9.45-10.30)</b>	Creative (Art & Design/ Music/ Drama)	Literacy and Humanities	STEM
<b>Session 2 (10.30-11.15)</b>	Literacy and Humanities	STEM	HWB/RME/MFL
<b>BREAK (11.15-11.30)</b>			
<b>Session 3 (11.30-12.15)</b>	STEM	HWB/RME/MFL	Creative (Art & Design/ Music/ Drama)
<b>Session 4 (12.15-13.00)</b>	HWB/RME/MFL	Creative (Art & Design/ Music/ Drama)	Literacy and Humanities
<b>LUNCH (13.00-13.30)</b>			
<b>Literacy (13.30-13.45)</b>	Library – Games, computers, reading for enjoyment, weekly achievements (Friday)		
<b>Sessions 5 &amp; 6 (13.45-15.15)</b>	Employability, creativity and enterprise/ PE/ Wider achievements/ community engagement/ project/ personal interests		

## Curricular content

In the Broad General Education, young people will experience a range of subjects under the Literacy and Humanities, STEM and HWB/Creative banners. Teachers and learners can plan their day's/week's activities within these areas to ensure their entitlement is fulfilled.

For example, curricular areas will contain the following:

Curricular area/level	Content
<p><b>Literacy and Humanities</b> – Early level, Second Level, Third Level, Fourth Level</p> <p>Of the six sessions available throughout the week for each group:            3 sessions for discrete Literacy            2 sessions for Social Studies (block rotate 'organisers')            Literacy will be developed throughout all experiences</p>	<p>Literacy: English language: reading, writing, listening, talking            Literacy: English literature, film and media studies            Social Studies: People, past events and societies            Social Studies: People, place and environment            Social Studies: People in society, economy and business            Planned using benchmarks and Es and Os at the appropriate levels</p>
<p><b>Literacy and Humanities</b> - Senior Phase</p>	<p>SQA qualifications – National 2, 3, 4, 5. Options from:            English            Geography            History            Modern Studies            Social Subjects            People and Society            RMPS</p>
<p><b>STEM</b> (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) - Early and First levels, Second Level, Third Level, Fourth Level</p> <p>Of the five sessions available throughout the week for each group:            2 sessions for discrete Numeracy            2 sessions for Science (block rotate 'organisers', some of 'Planet Earth' with Social Studies)            1 session for CDT and Computing</p> <p>Food Technology will be delivered in HWB/Creative</p> <p>Numeracy will be developed throughout all experiences</p>	<p>Maths and Numeracy: Number, money and measure            Maths and Numeracy: Shape, position and movement            Maths and Numeracy: Information handling            Sciences: Planet Earth            Sciences: Forces, electricity and waves            Sciences: Biological systems            Sciences: Materials            Sciences: Topical Science            Technologies: Digital Literacy            Technologies: Food and textile            Technologies: Technological developments in society and business            Technologies: Craft, design, engineering and graphics            Technologies: Computing science</p> <p>Planned using benchmarks and Es and Os at the appropriate levels</p>

<p><b>STEM</b> (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) – Senior Phase</p>	<p>SQA qualifications – National 2, 3, 4, 5. Options from:          Maths          Lifeskills Maths          Science          Biology          Chemistry          Physics          Computing          Game design          Hospitality          Food technology          Home Economics</p>
<p><b>HWB/Creative</b> - Early and First levels, Second Level, Third Level, Fourth Level</p> <p>Of the five sessions available throughout the week for each group:          2 sessions for Art and Design          2 sessions for Drama/Music/Dance (flexible)          1 session for Food and Health (also in Wider Achievement)</p> <p>Creativity will be developed throughout all experiences</p>	<p>Expressive Arts: Art and Design          Expressive Arts: Dance          Expressive Arts: Drama          Expressive Arts: Music          Food and Health: The Food Experience          Food and Health: Developing Healthy Choices          Food and Health: Nutritional Needs          Food and Health: Keeping safe and hygienic          Food and Health: The Journey of Food          Food and Health: Food and Textile Technologies</p> <p>Planned using benchmarks and Es and Os at the appropriate levels</p>
<p><b>HWB/Creative</b> – Senior Phase</p>	<p>SQA qualifications – National 2, 3, 4, 5. Options from:          Art and Design          Drama          Health and Food Technology          Hospitality</p>
<p><b>Employability, creativity and enterprise/PSE/PE/RME (session 4)</b></p> <p>‘Organic’ groups depending on roll and interests/abilities.          2 sessions PE, 1 session employability, 1 session PSE, 1 session citizenship          (see Appendix 1 below)</p>	<p>‘Employability’ guided by Developing the Young Workforce and skills development.          Benchmarks related to Health and Wellbeing (Personal and Social Education): Planning for choices and changes, Physical activity and health, Substance Misuse (if appropriate), Relationships, sexual health and parenthood and Health &amp; Wellbeing (Physical Education): Physical Competencies, Cognitive Skills, Personal Qualities, Physical Fitness.          Opportunities for SQA certification in senior phase: Personal Achievement Awards, etc. Also, ASDAN.</p>

	<p>Citizenship experiences: John Muir Award, Eco Schools, outdoor learning.</p> <p>RME: Beliefs</p> <p>RME: Values and Issues</p> <p>RME: Practices and traditions</p> <p>MFL: Spanish</p>
<p><b>Wider Achievement (session 5)</b></p> <p>(see Appendix 1)</p>	<p>Wider Achievement electives will be devised to cater for a range of interests and abilities to promote engagement. Young people will be able to design these themselves. Examples could include: Transport, Space, Historical periods, Dinosaurs, Nature, Business Start Up, etc. Discussion around this area will take place during time with key teachers at either end of the day. This time also gives an opportunity to explore pastimes our young people may not have a chance to experience: model making, cycling, craft, etc. Also, a chance to expand on art or music project work.</p>

# APPENDIX I

## Planning afternoon activities

### Background and rationale

To support engagement and inclusion, learners will experience their learning in 'academic' curricular areas in the mornings and experience activities developing literacy and numeracy, wider interests, outdoor learning, interdisciplinary learning, employability, creativity, enterprise and skills development.

There is a need to ensure structure for this and to provide framework for ensuring worthwhile activities contributing to learner progress.

The outlines for each of the afternoons below is flexible and the afternoons are 'interchangeable' to cater for individual needs and interests.

Afternoons can be repeated within a week to cater for needs and interests as appropriate.

The following principles should be adhered to:

- Flexibility to meet needs
- Personalisation and choice
- Challenge and enjoyment
- Relevance
- Developing literacy and numeracy
- Contributing to wellbeing and self-esteem
- Supporting interdisciplinary learning
- Raising attainment and achievement

### Content

Throughout the week, the following areas of the curriculum must be offered:

- Physical Education
- Wider achievement/personal interests
- Community engagement/outdoor learning
- Project work/interdisciplinary learning
- Employability, creativity, enterprise and skills development

Broadly speaking, one afternoon should be devoted to each of these areas throughout the school year.

## Outline/composition

### Session/afternoon 1:

Physical Education		
Content (high level)	Aspect of curriculum	Opportunities for recognition of achievement/ accreditation
BGE: PE curriculum as per benchmarks and Es and Os.	Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy.	Banking evidence for SP.
Senior Phase: PE curriculum as per National 2, 3, 4, 5 PE qualifications.	Physical Education. Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy.	SQA National 2, 3, 4 and 5 PE. Personal Achievement Awards. ASDAN.

### Session/afternoon 2:

Wider achievement/personal interests		
Content (high level)	Aspect of curriculum	Opportunities for recognition of achievement/ accreditation
BGE: Activities linked to personal interests. Supported by teaching and care staff to decide on interests to be explored. A bank of Wider Achievement areas to be developed to support choices.	Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy.	Banking evidence for SP.
Senior Phase: Activities linked to personal interests. Supported by teaching and care staff to decide on interests to be explored. A bank of Wider Achievement areas to be developed to support choices. Leading to relevant/appropriate qualifications depending on outcomes	Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy.  Linked to relevant areas of the curriculum depending on choices made.	SQA National 2, 3, 4 and 5. Personal Achievement Awards. ASDAN.  Relevant qualifications as per Appendix 2 below.

**Session/afternoon 3:**

Community engagement/outdoor learning		
Content (high level)	Aspect of curriculum	Opportunities for recognition of achievement/ accreditation
BGE: Planned activities to engage learners in the local community and develop responsible citizens.	Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy. Citizenship.	Banking evidence for SP.
Senior Phase: Planned activities to engage learners in the local community and develop responsible citizens. Leading to relevant/appropriate qualifications – evidence of outcomes should contribute to achievements in subject areas.	Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy. Science/PE/Creative. Linked to relevant areas of the curriculum depending on outcomes.	SQA National 2, 3, 4 and 5. Personal Achievement Awards. ASDAN. John Muir Award, EcoSchools, etc. Princes Trust involvement. Relevant qualifications as per Appendix 2 below.

**Session/afternoon 4:**

Project/interdisciplinary learning		
Content (high level)	Aspect of curriculum	Opportunities for recognition of achievement/ accreditation
BGE: Planned interdisciplinary learning activities linking aspects of the curriculum. Es and Os to be 'bundled' to ensure a robust and varied curriculum throughout the year.	Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy.	Banking evidence for SP.
Senior Phase: Planned interdisciplinary learning activities linking aspects of the curriculum. Leading to relevant/appropriate qualifications – evidence of outcomes should contribute to achievements in subject areas.	Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy. Linked to relevant areas of the curriculum depending on outcomes.	SQA National 2, 3, 4 and 5. Personal Achievement Awards. ASDAN. Relevant qualifications as per Appendix 2 below.

## Session/afternoon 5:

Employability, creativity, enterprise, skills development		
Content (high level)	Aspect of curriculum	Opportunities for recognition of achievement/ accreditation
<p>BGE: Learners to develop skills as per Skills Framework to ensure skills for learning, life and work. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Problem-solving</li><li>• Independent living</li><li>• Enterprise and business/ entrepreneurialism</li><li>• Practical abilities</li><li>• Work-based learning</li></ul>	<p>Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy.</p>	<p>Banking evidence for SP.</p>
<p>Senior Phase: As per BGE, with accreditation where possible to recognise achievement.</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing. Literacy and Numeracy.</p>	<p>Relevant qualifications as per Appendix 2 below.</p>

### Implementation and delivery

Note:

- Activities can be delivered by Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Care staff (planning and assessment supervised by teaching staff).
- With the utilisation of care staff for Wider Achievement one-to-one support and individualised learning is possible.
- Afternoon sessions can be duplicated depending on needs and interests (for example, if a learner is engaged in a project and wants to finish it two afternoons can be devoted to it in one week – rather than risk disengagement).
- Accreditation and recognising achievement is paramount, a flexible approach to qualifications is vital to ensure learners achieve all they can.
- Literacy, numeracy and wellbeing are overarching all activities.

**Possible models for delivery, depending on numbers, needs and interests of learners:**

One group:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Wider Achievement.	PE.	Project/IDL.	Employability, creativity, enterprise, skills development.	Community engagement/ outdoor learning.

Two groups (for example):

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Wider Achievement.	PE.	Project/IDL.	Employability, creativity, enterprise, skills development.	Community engagement/ outdoor learning.
2	Employability, creativity, enterprise, skills development.	Wider Achievement.	PE.	Project/IDL.	Community engagement/ outdoor learning.

Three groups (for example):

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Wider Achievement.	PE.	Project/IDL.	Employability, creativity, enterprise, skills development.	Community engagement/ outdoor learning.
2	Employability, creativity, enterprise, skills development.	Wider Achievement.	PE.	Project/IDL.	Community engagement/ outdoor learning.
3	Project/IDL.	Employability, creativity, enterprise, skills development.	Wider Achievement.	PE.	Project/IDL.

Note – flexibility is key to meet needs and engage learners. These are purely examples. Groups can be merged for some experiences as appropriate.

## APPENDIX II

### Possibilities for accreditation within afternoon sessions

Along with accreditation in the senior phase within Literacy & Humanities subjects, STEM subjects and HWB/Expressive Arts, the wider achievements of our young people will be recognised through qualifications from various awarding bodies as appropriate to the individual young person. Examples of accreditation could be:

- CoPE (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness) awards (ASDAN) – levels 1 and 2
- NPA (National Progression Awards), Enterprise and Employability – SCQF levels 4 and 5
- Steps to Work award – SCQF levels 3 and 4
- John Muir Award
- Personal Development Award (community involvement) – SCQF levels 2, 3 and 4
- Volunteering awards at various levels in the Senior Phase
- Eco Schools – recognition for the school community
- Uniformed Emergency Services – SQA level 4 award
- SQA awards linked to interests at various levels – e.g. mountain biking
- Creative Industries Steps to Work awards – SCQF level 5

This will be flexible depending on the needs and interests of individual young people and likely to be evolutionary depending on the develop of individual young people.