



VTC Curriculum Policy

Approved by: The Proprietor &
The Advisory Board

Date: September 2026

Last reviewed on: September 2026

Next review due by: September 2027

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1 Purpose and status

This policy explains VTC Independent School's curriculum intent, entitlement, implementation, assessment and oversight. Its purpose is to ensure that the curriculum is ambitious, suitable for pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, including Education, Health and Care Plan outcomes, and implemented through current plans, schemes of work, timetables, teaching and assessment. It should be read with the whole-school curriculum map, current timetable, subject and programme schemes, assessment procedures, RSE policy, careers arrangements, SEND information, accessibility plan and relevant safeguarding policies.

The policy is designed to meet Part 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and to support the school's duties for SMSC, equality, safeguarding and preparation for adult life. VTC uses National Curriculum expectations and recognised qualification frameworks where they provide an appropriate reference point; independent-school compliance is secured through the Independent School Standards and effective implementation, not by claiming to follow every National Curriculum programme of study.

2 VTC context and curriculum vision

VTC provides specialist education for pupils with significant social, emotional and mental health needs and Education, Health and Care Plans. Pupils may arrive with disrupted education, gaps in attainment, anxiety, low attendance or previous difficulty accessing learning. The curriculum therefore combines high expectations with relational, adaptive and practical teaching. Vocational learning is a distinctive strength, but it does not replace pupils' entitlement to English, mathematics, personal development and the breadth required by the Independent School Standards.

VTC's curriculum enables pupils to become:

- successful learners who acquire new knowledge and skills and make good progress from their individual starting points;
- confident individuals who understand their strengths, regulate their behaviour and advocate for the support they need;
- responsible citizens who understand rights, responsibilities, the law, diversity and life in British society; and
- effective contributors who communicate, collaborate, solve problems and move successfully into further education, training, employment or adult life.

3 Curriculum principles

- Ambition and progress: all pupils are taught a curriculum that is demanding enough for their abilities and enables meaningful progress.
- Breadth and relevance: compulsory-school-age pupils experience all seven ISS curriculum domains; post-16 pupils receive a programme appropriate to their age, aptitude, needs and intended destination.
- Personalisation without lowered entitlement: EHCP outcomes, prior attainment, communication needs, sensory needs, SEMH presentation and attendance barriers shape teaching, reasonable adjustments and pacing, not assumptions about potential.
- Sequence and coherence: long-term maps, schemes and lesson planning identify intended end points, component knowledge and skills, vocabulary, assessment opportunities and progression.
- Practical application: learning is connected to vocational contexts, independence, community participation, safety and adult life where this strengthens understanding.
- Equality and respect: curriculum content and teaching actively promote respect for other people and do not undermine fundamental British values or discriminate unlawfully.
- Evidence-informed improvement: leaders use assessment, pupil work, attendance and engagement, observations, pupil voice and qualification outcomes to improve the curriculum.

4 Curriculum entitlement and current offer

4.1 Compulsory school age

Each pupil of compulsory school age receives full-time supervised education, subject only to a lawful, exceptional and time-limited reduced timetable, and has experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific,

technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. The school identifies the coverage of each domain in the whole-school map and the relevant year-group or subject scheme.

4.2 Pupils above compulsory school age

Post-16 pupils receive an individual programme appropriate to their needs and intended destination. This normally combines English and mathematics where required, vocational study, V.E.C.T.O.R., Preparation for Adulthood, mentoring/reading, careers guidance and suitable enrichment. The programme is not required to mirror the full compulsory-age subject range, but it remains ambitious and includes opportunities for wider personal, cultural, physical, social and community development.

4.3 Current curriculum components

ISS area	VTC provision and evidence
Linguistic	Functional English, reading, writing, speaking and listening across English, V.E.C.T.O.R., mentoring, presentations and vocational communication. The timetable includes dedicated English and mentoring/reading sessions.
Mathematical	Functional Mathematics and applied numeracy through personal finance, measurement, scale, data, costing and vocational problem-solving.
Scientific	Applied science within the BTEC/core programme and vocational contexts, including health, materials, heat, combustion, circuits, friction and food science, where scheduled for the pupil's programme.
Technological	Vocational technology and safe use of specialist tools and equipment in catering, motor mechanics, welding and multi-trade, together with digital literacy and online safety through V.E.C.T.O.R.
Human and social	V.E.C.T.O.R., PSHE, RSE, SMSC, citizenship and Preparation for Adulthood, including law, democracy, communities, diversity, rights, responsibilities, culture and public services.
Physical	Taught PE and BTEC Sport/health activity, including theory and practical application for relevant compulsory-age groups, with suitable physical and wellbeing opportunities for post-16 pupils. PE is timetabled teaching, not recreation or extended break.
Aesthetic and creative	Art and Design through the sequenced BTEC Level 1 unit and creative application within vocational projects.
Vocational	Current trade areas include catering, motor mechanics, welding and multi-trade. A pupil's offer depends on age, pathway, qualification aims, aptitude, risk assessment, staffing and available facilities.

5 Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy

All pupils have opportunities to acquire and apply speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills at an appropriate level. Teachers identify subject vocabulary, model communication, require purposeful listening and discussion, and create supported opportunities for pupils to explain, ask for help, present ideas and follow spoken and written instructions. Literacy and numeracy are taught explicitly and reinforced in vocational and personal-development contexts. Reading materials must be age-respectful, accessible and matched to assessed need; any intervention designed for a younger market must be reviewed and adapted before use with VTC pupils.

6 PSHE, RSE, SMSC and fundamental British values

V.E.C.T.O.R. provides VTC's structured personal-development spine across Values, Employment, Community, Transition, Online Safety and Rights. It is differentiated by age and prepares pupils for relationships, safety, work, community participation, financial and digital life, self-advocacy and adulthood. SMSC and the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are taught explicitly and reinforced across school life. Views or behaviour contrary to those values are challenged appropriately.

PSHE reflects VTC's ethos and encourages respect for other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Teaching is age-appropriate and suited to pupils' learning needs. VTC does not rely on general statements about respect; curriculum plans identify where pupils learn about equality, difference, discrimination and the law, and staff respond when related issues arise.

Secondary pupils receive RSE. The separate RSE policy specifies what is taught, when and how; how parents are consulted; publication arrangements; and the statutory position on withdrawal from sex education. Biological content taught through science is not subject to withdrawal. The RSE policy and curriculum materials are reviewed together to ensure consistency, factual accuracy, safeguarding, inclusivity and regard to current statutory guidance.

7 Careers and preparation for adulthood

All pupils receiving secondary education have access to accurate and up-to-date careers guidance that is impartial, covers a broad range of education, training and career options, enables informed choices and encourages each pupil to fulfil their potential. Advice must not restrict aspirations by sex, disability, background, faith or the vocational courses currently available at VTC.

Careers and Preparation for Adulthood are developed through individual transition planning, V.E.C.T.O.R., vocational learning, Functional Skills, mentoring, employer and provider information, and destination planning. Work experience or external encounters are recorded as delivered only when they have occurred; planned opportunities are identified as plans. Pupil voice and EHCP aspirations inform next-step decisions, while staff ensure pupils understand a range of realistic options.

8 Planning and curriculum documentation

The curriculum is supported by a coherent set of live documents:

- the curriculum policy sets the school's overall entitlement and approach;
- the whole-school map shows how each ISS area, V.E.C.T.O.R., SMSC, British values and RSE are covered across phases;
- the timetable shows when the current offer is delivered and by whom;
- subject and programme schemes specify what is taught through the year, sequence, resources, assessment and intended outcomes;
- short-term planning adapts the scheme for the group and individual pupils, identifies learning intentions and next steps, and accounts for prior attainment and EHCP needs; and
- individual provision, risk and de-escalation plans identify reasonable adjustments, specialist provision and strategies needed for safe access to learning.

Leaders check at least termly that policy, map, schemes and timetable agree. A subject or activity is not treated as implemented merely because it appears in a map or scheme; leaders seek evidence in teaching, pupil work, assessment and pupil understanding.

9 Teaching and access

Teaching at VTC will:

- enable pupils to acquire new knowledge, deepen understanding and develop skills so that they make good progress according to ability;
- foster self-motivation, appropriate intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest and increasing independence;
- be well planned, purposeful and managed so that available learning time is used effectively;
- take account of assessed starting points, prior learning, aptitudes, communication, SEMH and SEND needs;
- be delivered by staff with secure subject knowledge who receive support, induction and continuing professional development;
- use good-quality resources that are sufficient, varied, age-respectful, accessible and safe;
- use regular assessment and feedback to decide the next teaching steps;
- use effective, relational behaviour strategies that help pupils feel safe and act responsibly; and
- not undermine fundamental British values or discriminate contrary to the Equality Act 2010.

Adaptive teaching may include visual structure, chunked instructions, modelling, supported communication, practical rehearsal, reduced written demand, assistive technology, planned regulation support and alternative ways to demonstrate learning. Adaptation preserves the intended knowledge or skill wherever possible.

10 Assessment, progress and reporting

VTC maintains a framework for evaluating pupil performance against individual starting points, school aims, relevant qualification criteria and, where useful, national norms. Assessment is used to improve teaching, not only to record outcomes.

- Baseline: available prior attainment, diagnostic assessment, communication and learning profile, EHCP outcomes, vocational interests and readiness are reviewed on entry and when a new programme begins.
- Formative assessment: teachers check understanding during and after learning, give feedback, record significant evidence and adapt subsequent teaching.
- Summative and qualification assessment: staff assess against scheme end points, Functional Skills or awarding-body criteria and moderate judgements where required.
- EHCP and personal development: mentors and leaders review progress towards agreed EHCP, independence, engagement and personal-development outcomes using defined evidence.
- Review and reporting: progress and barriers are reviewed at least termly by teachers/mentors and SLT, shared with pupils and parents through the school's reporting and review arrangements, and used to set next steps.
- Quality assurance: leaders sample assessment records and pupil work, check consistency and report material findings to the Proprietor and Advisory Board.

Where a tracker or process is newly introduced, leaders distinguish between implementation evidence and evidence of impact. Impact is claimed only after sufficient reviewed evidence shows that pupils are making progress and teaching has responded to the findings.

11 Attendance, reduced timetables and curriculum continuity

VTC's expectation is full-time on-site attendance for pupils of compulsory school age. The school does not operate blended learning or commissioned alternative/off-site provision as standing curriculum pathways. Ordinary educational visits and time-limited external activities are not treated as alternative provision and are planned and risk-assessed in the usual way.

A reduced timetable is exceptional, temporary, in the pupil's interests and part of a documented plan to return to full-time education or achieve an agreed transition. The plan identifies the rationale, intended hours, curriculum access, work or contact for sessions not attended where appropriate, risk and safeguarding arrangements, parent and local-authority involvement, review date and responsible leader. Reduced attendance must not quietly become a reduced curriculum. Remote resources may support continuity but do not replace the school's duty to secure appropriate supervised education and active re-engagement.

12 Equality, SEND and reasonable adjustments

VTC provides equal access to the curriculum and makes reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Leaders consider the accessibility plan, EHCP provision, communication, sensory, physical and SEMH barriers when planning the curriculum. Curriculum content represents diverse cultures, backgrounds, family structures, abilities, faiths and beliefs. No pupil is denied an appropriate subject, qualification, careers option or enrichment opportunity because of a protected characteristic. Where a risk assessment changes access to an activity, staff identify a proportionate adjustment or suitable way to achieve the intended learning.

13 Roles and accountability

Role	Core curriculum responsibilities
Proprietor	Ensure the policy, plans and schemes are drawn up and effectively implemented; secure resources and competent leadership; approve the policy; receive evidence of compliance, quality and impact; act on identified risks.
Headteacher	Set strategic direction; maintain alignment with ISS and current evidence; ensure suitable staffing, timetable, schemes, assessment and CPD; monitor implementation and report to the Proprietor.
SLT	Maintain maps and schemes; check sequence, resources and qualification accuracy; support staff; undertake learning walks, planning/work scrutiny and assessment moderation; correct inconsistencies.
Teachers and mentors	Know pupils' starting points, EHCP outcomes and adjustments; plan and teach the agreed curriculum; assess thoroughly; record evidence and next steps; promote reading, communication, numeracy, careers, SMSC and equality where relevant.

Advisory Board	Provide informed scrutiny and challenge; review curriculum breadth, implementation, pupil progress, equality, attendance and improvement actions; record questions and recommendations.
All staff	Promote safeguarding, respectful conduct, fundamental British values and high expectations; raise concerns when a pupil cannot access the planned curriculum or resources are unsuitable.

14 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Proprietor / Advisory Board as per the Policy and Procedures Review Schedule.

Appendix A ISS curriculum mapping

ISS requirement	Where this policy provides for it	Primary supporting evidence
2(1) Written policy, plans and schemes; ages, aptitudes, needs and EHCPs; no undermining of FBV	Sections 1-3, 8-9, 12-14	Curriculum map; schemes; timetable; EHCP/provision plans
2(2)(a) Seven areas for compulsory-age pupils	Section 4.1 and 4.3	Curriculum map; timetable; PE, Art and subject schemes
2(2)(b) Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy	Section 5	English/Maths plans; vocational work; V.E.C.T.O.R.; reading records
2(2)(c) English where principal language is not English	English is the principal language of instruction; Section 5 supports continued proficiency	English plans and assessment
2(2)(d) PSHE and respect for protected characteristics	Section 6	V.E.C.T.O.R. schemes and portfolios; PSHE/RSE plans
2(2)(e) Accurate, current, impartial careers guidance	Section 7	Guidance records; transition plans; destination evidence
2(2)(f) Below compulsory school age	Not applicable to the current policy scope; review immediately if registration or cohort changes	Registration details and admissions checks
2(2)(g) Appropriate post-compulsory programme	Section 4.2	Individual timetables; vocational/Functional Skills plans; enrichment
2(2)(h) All pupils can learn and make progress	Sections 3, 9-12	Assessment/EHCP trackers; pupil work; moderation and review
2(2)(i) Preparation for life in British society	Sections 6-7	V.E.C.T.O.R.; PfA; careers and community evidence
2A RSE	Section 6 and separate RSE policy	Consulted/published RSE policy; curriculum map; teaching evidence
3 Quality of teaching	Sections 8-10	Planning; observations; work scrutiny; resources; assessment
4 Performance evaluation framework	Section 10	Progress and qualification records; reports to parents and leaders