

Brunel School Teaching, Learning, and Engagement Policy

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Contents

Introduction	2
Core Principles	2
Curriculum Intent.....	2
Curriculum Design and Delivery.....	3
Mastery of Foundational Knowledge and Skills.....	3
Whole-School Policies and Their Impact on Curriculum Delivery and Inclusion.....	3
Staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Training.....	4
Assessment and Feedback.....	4
Pedagogical Foundations and Best Practises.....	5
Exit Points and Qualifications	6
Safeguarding and Wellbeing.....	6
Preparation for Adulthood.....	7
Roles and Responsibilities.....	7
Monitoring and Review.....	7
Appendix 1. Inclusion.....	8

Introduction

Brunel School provides a highly inclusive, trauma-informed, and ambitious curriculum that removes barriers to learning for pupils with significant SEMH needs. Teaching is adaptive, evidence-based, and focused on developing the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally. Pupils feel safe, belong, and make strong progress from their starting points. Leadership ensures inclusion is embedded in every aspect of school life, resulting in improved attendance, regulation, engagement, and readiness for adulthood.

At Brunel School, our Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Engagement policy is designed to create an inclusive, nurturing, and empowering environment where every pupil can flourish academically, emotionally, and socially. Grounded in our core concepts, curriculum intent, and the embedded Prosper Programme, this policy ensures that learning is meaningful, accessible, and prepares pupils for safe, successful adult lives.

Core Principles

Our approach to teaching and learning is underpinned by the following **core concepts** which thread through the curriculum and reflect our commitment to safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, and preparation for adulthood:

Time and Change
Rights and Responsibilities
Health and Wellbeing
Identity and Belonging
Diversity and Inclusion
Cause and Effect
Communication
Sustainability and Ethics
Conflict and Resolution

These concepts guide curriculum design, pedagogy, and pupil engagement to ensure holistic development and readiness for life beyond school.

Curriculum Intent

Brunel School delivers a bespoke, inclusive, and broad learning experience tailored to the needs of each pupil. Our curriculum:

- Builds strong, trusting relationships in a safe and supportive environment, central to which is the Prosper programme—a therapeutic approach that identifies and addresses pupils' specific barriers to learning and emotional wellbeing.
- Instils lifelong curiosity and practical skills to navigate a diverse and modern world.
- Expands progressively from Year 7 to Year 11 across academic, vocational, social, emotional, and outdoor learning.

- Supports pupils to understand their own strengths and weaknesses, nurture emotional resilience, and develop a toolkit of strategies through the Prosper programme.
- Promotes confidence, resilience, and transferable skills essential for adulthood and career pathways.
- Reflects and exceeds mainstream school experiences to ensure real inclusion.

Curriculum Design and Delivery

Our curriculum is knowledge-rich, emphasising deep understanding of subject matter through carefully sequenced teaching that supports retention and fluency.

It aligns with the national curriculum within a coherent wider vision, ensuring vertical and horizontal coherence. This sequencing builds on prior knowledge and links concepts across subjects for meaningful learning.

Core concepts are revisited deliberately to deepen understanding without unnecessary repetition, supporting mastery and engagement.

Teachers work collaboratively to anticipate common misconceptions and design lessons that explicitly teach the knowledge and skills pupils need to succeed.

Mastery of Foundational Knowledge and Skills

Pupils master foundational concepts before progressing to more complex ideas, building confidence and competence.

Literacy and communication skills are developed explicitly, including reading, writing, oral language, and discipline-specific vocabulary, supporting access to the whole curriculum.

Numeracy skills are integrated across subjects to promote positive attitudes and application in real-world contexts.

Inclusive, Trauma-Informed Pedagogy and the Prosper Programme

Teaching is adapted to meet the diverse needs of pupils, including those with SEND and SEMH needs, ensuring accessibility and engagement.

The Prosper programme is embedded throughout teaching and learning, providing therapeutic support that addresses emotional and social barriers to learning.

Learning environments are nurturing and safe, fostering a sense of belonging and wellbeing, with strategies from the Prosper programme supporting emotional regulation and personal development.

Staff receive ongoing training in trauma-informed approaches aligned with the Prosper programme to ensure consistency and compassion in practice.

Whole-School Policies and Their Impact on Curriculum Delivery and Inclusion

Brunel School recognises that whole-school policies significantly influence the capacity to deliver an effective, inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and SEMH needs. Transparent systems and tools are in place for monitoring and

evaluating curriculum implementation, ensuring alignment with our school values, vision, and core concepts. Regular line management meetings focus on curriculum coherence, assessment, and pedagogy, enabling subject leaders to critically reflect on and review their areas, ensuring the curriculum remains ambitious and fully inclusive. Particular attention is given to the experiences of specific pupil groups, such as SEND, with collaborative solutions sought to remove barriers and promote equal access. Budget planning supports the provision and maintenance of appropriate, accessible resources and equipment, including adaptations to meet SEND needs. Collaborative sharing of resources across the Trust and partnerships further enhances provision while managing costs effectively. This holistic approach ensures that whole-school policies facilitate rather than hinder high-quality, inclusive education.

Statutory Compliance

Brunel School fulfils all statutory duties under the *SEND Code of Practice (2015)*, the *Children and Families Act (2014)*, and the *Equality Act (2010)*, including the requirement to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and those with additional needs. Our inclusive curriculum and the Prosper programme are designed to ensure that pupils with SEND and SEMH needs receive high-quality, personalised provision that meets their EHCP outcomes and supports full access to the curriculum. Leaders systematically evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged groups, ensuring that legal duties around identification, assessment, planning, and review are met with fidelity and embedded within day-to-day teaching, learning, and pastoral practice.

Staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Training

At Brunel School, we prioritise ongoing professional development to equip staff with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to deliver our ambitious, trauma-informed curriculum effectively. CPD is closely linked to school priorities and the evolving needs of our pupils, including a strong focus on SEND, SEMH, and the embedded Prosper programme. Staff training covers readiness for change, skill development, and strategies for embedding new approaches, supported by regular opportunities for reflection and collaborative learning. Line management meetings and departmental discussions provide forums for sharing research, developing subject knowledge, and evaluating curriculum impact. Expertise within the school is harnessed to train colleagues, ensuring sustainable professional growth. We recognise that teacher preparedness and enthusiasm for change are critical to successful implementation and improved pupil outcomes, and we monitor CPD effectiveness through feedback and impact evaluation to continuously refine our approach.

Assessment and Feedback

Formative assessment and ongoing feedback guide pupils' progress in academic and social-emotional domains.

Assessment practises support pupils to reflect on their learning and develop self-regulation skills, with the Prosper programme informing personalised targets and strategies.

We capture progress towards individual EHCP targets using Evidence for Learning. It allows teachers to collect a wide range of qualitative data, including photos, videos, shared work

and written observations, to build a comprehensive picture of each of our pupils' learning journey. This can be shared with parents, keeping them informed of their child's education and progress.

Pedagogical Foundations and Best Practises

Brunel School's teaching and learning approach is informed by evidence-based frameworks and research, ensuring high-quality, adaptive, and inclusive pedagogy that meets the diverse needs of our pupils.

Our curriculum vision encompasses the national curriculum within a coherent wider vision to develop pupils' knowledge, skills, and values.

Teachers secure subject knowledge to motivate pupils and teach effectively, ensuring mastery of foundational concepts before progression.

Anticipating and addressing common misconceptions is central, achieved through collaboration among staff.

Pupils are supported to build complex mental models by linking new ideas to existing knowledge through carefully sequenced teaching.

Literacy development is explicit and discipline-specific, including systematic synthetic phonics for decoding and vocabulary instruction to support comprehension and communication.

1. EEF Five-a-Day Teaching and Learning Toolkit

We embed the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) Five-a-Day principles to enhance teaching impact:

Metacognition and self-regulation: Pupils are taught to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning strategies, supported by the Prosper programme's focus on emotional resilience and strategy development.

Feedback: Timely, specific, and actionable feedback supports pupils' progress.

Collaborative learning: Opportunities for peer discussion and cooperative tasks build understanding and social skills.

Effective questioning: Teachers use purposeful questioning to probe understanding and promote deeper thinking.

Scaffolding: Support structures are provided and gradually removed to develop independence.

2. Adaptive Teaching

Teaching is responsive to pupils' ongoing needs, adapting content, pace, and methods based on formative assessment and pupil engagement.

Differentiation ensures all pupils access the curriculum meaningfully, including those with SEMH and SEND needs.

Staff use a range of strategies, including those from the Prosper programme, to scaffold learning and provide challenge appropriate to individual readiness.

3. Bloom's Affective Domain

Recognising the importance of emotional and attitudinal development, our teaching addresses Bloom's affective domain:

Receiving: Pupils are encouraged to be open and attentive to learning experiences.

Responding: Active participation and engagement are fostered.

Valuing: Pupils develop appreciation and commitment to learning and school values, reinforced through the Prosper programme.

Organisation: They learn to prioritise and integrate values into their behaviour and decisions.

Characterisation: Pupils internalise values, reflecting them consistently in their actions and interactions.

4. Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction

Our teaching practice reflects Rosenshine's evidence-based principles to promote effective instruction:

Daily review: Revisiting prior learning to strengthen retention.

Present new material in small steps: Breaking down complex content to manageable chunks.

Ask many questions: To check understanding and stimulate thinking.

Provide models: Demonstrations and worked examples guide pupil learning.

Guide pupil practice: Support during initial practice to build confidence.

Check for understanding: Frequent formative checks to identify misconceptions.

Obtain high success rates: Ensuring pupils achieve mastery before moving on.

Provide scaffolding: Temporary support to assist learning.

Require and monitor independent practice: Encouraging autonomy and fluency.

Engage pupils in weekly and monthly review: Spaced practice to consolidate knowledge.

Exit Points and Qualifications

Brunel School prepares pupils for a range of academic and vocational qualifications that reflect their personalised learning pathways and future aspirations:

GCSEs in core subjects where appropriate, ensuring pupils meet national standards.

Functional Skills qualifications in English and Maths to support practical literacy and numeracy skills essential for daily life and employment.

BTEC qualifications offering vocational learning in areas aligned with pupils' interests and career goals. Eg Home Cooking, Leadership in Sport and Digital Skills.

Entry Level Pathways for Science and Humanities

Unit Awards providing modular accreditation for smaller steps of achievement, supporting confidence and motivation.

These exit points ensure pupils leave Brunel School with recognised qualifications that support progression to further education, training, or employment, and equip them for independent living.

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Safeguarding is embedded in all teaching and learning activities, ensuring pupils feel safe, respected, and valued.

Staff are trained to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns promptly and compassionately.

Attendance and wellbeing tracking are linked to pastoral support and the nurturing school environment.

Pupils are taught about their rights, responsibilities, and how to stay safe in a range of contexts, supporting the Safe Today, Safe Tomorrow mission.

The Prosper programme plays a critical role in promoting pupils' emotional wellbeing and resilience, integral to safeguarding.

Preparation for Adulthood

The curriculum equips pupils with skills for independent living, emotional resilience, and positive community participation.

Pupils develop an understanding of their identity, diversity, and inclusion, fostering a strong sense of belonging and self-advocacy.

Career pathways and aspirational goals are identified and supported through personalised planning.

Pupils learn conflict resolution, ethical decision-making, and sustainability to prepare them as responsible citizens.

The Prosper programme supports pupils' development of self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social skills essential for adulthood.

Roles and Responsibilities

Leaders and Managers ensure the policy is implemented with fidelity and aligned with school improvement priorities, embedding the Prosper programme across all areas.

Teachers and Support Staff deliver the curriculum through trauma-informed, inclusive pedagogy, and maintain high expectations, utilising strategies from the Prosper programme.

Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in their learning and personal development, supported by therapeutic interventions as needed.

Parents and Carers are partners in supporting pupils' progress and wellbeing, engaged through communication about the Prosper programme and personalised pathways.

Monitoring and Review

Teaching, learning, and engagement practises are regularly monitored through observations, pupil feedback, and performance data.

The impact of the Prosper programme on pupil wellbeing and progress is systematically evaluated.

The policy is reviewed annually or as needed to reflect evolving best practises and contextual needs.

This policy reflects the latest DfE guidance on curriculum coherence, mastery, and knowledge-rich teaching, adapted for Brunel School's special context and priorities, with the Prosper programme embedded as a core pillar of our approach (Curriculum and Assessment Review, Nov 2025).

Appendix 1. Inclusion.

1. Intent: How Brunel School Designs for Inclusion

1.1 Clear inclusive curriculum intent

- Curriculum is bespoke, broad, and personalised for pupils with SEMH and SEND needs.
- Strong focus on identity, belonging, diversity, communication, wellbeing, and rights and responsibilities, embedded through the Core Concepts.
- The Prosper programme is integrated into curriculum design, identifying and addressing emotional, social, and cognitive barriers to learning.
- Curriculum matches and often exceeds mainstream expectations to avoid inequality of opportunity.

1.2 Alignment with national expectations

- Follows National Curriculum where appropriate, with adaptive pathways (GCSE, Functional Skills, BTEC, Entry Level, Unit Awards).
- Fully aligned with DfE curriculum sequencing, mastery and coherence guidance.

1.3 High aspirations for all pupils

- Curriculum prepares pupils for adulthood, employment, and participation in society.
- Personalised pathways are linked to pupils' strengths, interests, and EHCP outcomes.

2. Implementation: How Inclusive Teaching Happens in Practice

2.1 Trauma-informed, SEMH-aware pedagogy

- All staff trained in trauma-informed approaches and use consistent strategies from the Prosper programme.
- Daily routines support regulation, emotional safety, and readiness to learn.
- Classrooms are low-anxiety, predictable, and relationship-led.

2.2 Adaptive, inclusive teaching

- Teaching is responsive to individual needs, including SEND profiles and emotional states.
- Lessons include scaffolding, modelling, chunking, and high scaffolding-to-independence ratios.

- Literacy and numeracy barriers addressed through explicit vocabulary instruction, reading support, and functional numeracy across subjects.

2.3 Research-informed instructional practice

Evidence-based approaches include:

- EEF Five-a-Day: metacognition, feedback, collaborative learning, questioning, scaffolding.
- Rosenshine's Principles: sequencing, modelling, review, high success rates.
- Bloom's affective domain: engagement, valuing learning, internalising positive behaviours.

2.4 Removing barriers to participation

- Reasonable adjustments implemented consistently (sensory needs, flexible grouping, alternative regulation spaces).
- Multi-disciplinary work ensures needs are met (therapeutic input, pastoral team, SEND specialists).

3. Impact: How Inclusion Affects Pupils' Outcomes

3.1 Academic progress

- Pupils make sustained progress from starting points across academic and vocational routes.
- Sequenced curriculum builds knowledge securely, helping pupils with disrupted learning histories.
- Pupils successfully achieve a range of qualifications suited to their needs and aspirations.

3.2 SEMH progress and wellbeing

- Prosper programme tracking shows improvements in regulation, confidence, and emotional literacy.
- Reduced dysregulation incidents and improved engagement sustained over time.
- Pupils articulate strategies for emotional management and demonstrate increased resilience.

3.3 Attendance and engagement

- Improved attendance for most pupils due to safe relationships, predictable routines, and personalised pastoral support.

- High engagement in learning observed through cooperative tasks, sustained attention, and positive relationships with staff.

3.4 Preparation for adulthood

Pupils leave Brunel School with:

- qualifications aligned to their next steps
- improved independence and self-advocacy
- knowledge of rights, responsibilities, diversity, and safety
- regulated behaviour, conflict-resolution skills, and community-readiness
- clear progression pathways into FE, apprenticeships, or training

4. Behaviour & Attitudes

4.1 Safe, calm, positive environment

- Trauma-informed consistency reduces conflict and anxiety.
- Relationships are central; pupils trust adults and feel valued.
- Restorative approaches embedded across school.

4.2 Culture of high expectations

- Staff maintain high aspirations while using supportive, therapeutic strategies.
- Pupils understand routines, boundaries, and safety expectations.

4.3 Positive behaviour outcomes

- Fewer disengagement patterns.
- Pupils increasingly regulate emotions without escalation.
- Strong safeguarding culture, with pupils feeling safe and protected.

5. Leadership & Management

5.1 Strong strategic alignment

- Inclusion is a non-negotiable thread across all policies, procedures, and improvement plans.
- Leaders ensure the curriculum is ambitious, coherent, and meets SEND/SEMH needs.

5.2 Monitoring and evaluation of inclusion

- Regular deep dives, learning walks, book looks, and Prosper impact reviews.
- Leaders analyse experiences of vulnerable groups (SEND, PP, LAC).
- Clear systems for identifying barriers and adapting provision.

5.3 High-quality CPD

- CPD includes trauma-informed practice, SEND pedagogy, literacy, regulation, and EEF strategies.
- Staff confidence and consistency monitored through line management and coaching.

6. Partnerships with Families and External Agencies

6.1 Parents and carers

- Families engaged in personalised pathways, reviews, and SEMH interventions.
- Clear communication about progress, regulation, behaviour, and support strategies.

6.2 External agencies

- Effective collaboration with CAMHS, social care, educational psychologists, youth services, and community partners.

7. Statutory Alignment (SEND/EHCP/Safeguarding)

7.1 Clear compliance with SEND Code of Practice

- Identification-assessment-plan-review cycle embedded.
- Personalised targets aligned with EHCP sections B, F, and E outcomes.

7.2 Equality Act 2010 compliance

- Strong reasonable adjustments culture.
- Clear focus on reducing disadvantage and increasing access.

7.3 Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is central to curriculum, daily routines, and staff training.
- Prosper programme supports early identification of emotional risk.