



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 young person at the centre and meets their strengths and needs.

The underlying characteristic is to provide our pupils with the opportunity to reach their full 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.

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

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

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 pupil at every stage of their development.

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>
	<u>Explorers</u> 	<u>Discoverers</u> 	<u>Challengers</u> 
EHCP Link	As an Explorer, I can:	As a Discoverer, I can:	As a Challenger, I can:
Communication and Interaction	Communicate through my actions, gestures, facial expressions, vocalisations, and / or single words (spoken or using AAC). Engage and respond when familiar adults join in with my activity, actions or sounds.	Communicate using word combinations (spoken or using AAC) and/or a symbolic means of communication. Participate in two-way interactions with a familiar adult.	Communicate using sentences and link ideas using basic conjunctions, for example: <i>and / or / because</i> (spoken or using AAC). Participate in structured rule-based games and group discussions with peers (either verbally or using AAC).
Cognition and Learning	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.
Social, Emotional and Behavioural	Express my emotions through actions, gestures, facial expressions, and vocalisations, and may accept when adults provide regulating activities or input. Need adult support to stay safe.	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. Start understanding rules and how to stay safe. Need adult support to make safe decisions.	Use a range of emotional vocabulary to describe my own and other people's feelings, and I can reflect on situations with minimal support. Can stay safe in a wide range of situations and scenarios. Might need support with new situations to identify and manage dangers.
Physical and Sensory	Engage in exploratory mark making activities. Use PE equipment and apparatus with adult support. Explore the world mainly through my senses, with adult supervision.	Beginning to copy lines and draw simple shapes. Actively engage in PE sessions and use apparatus and equipment confidently. Beginning to explore the world, safely, with minimal support.	Write words and 2 – 3 word phrases or simple sentences (using handwriting or ICT). Actively engage in PE sessions and use apparatus and equipment independently.

	Need support with sensory regulation – adults to control the stimuli to meet my needs and preferences.	Starting to recognise tools to self-regulate my sensory needs. May use sensory equipment and regulatory tools consistently.	Explore the world safely, understanding what is safe and unsafe to do. Understand what sensory tools, strategies and equipment I need to self-regulate. Can use sensory equipment and regulatory tools independently.
Community and Independence	Cooperate with adults during activities of daily living (e.g. dressing, toileting, washing hands), with visual / gesture / touch support. Access the community with adult support and supervision.	Carry out some basic activities of daily living independently e.g. following a visual jig, imitating a model or responding to a gesture cue. Access the community with adult support and able to follow rules and routines in order to stay safe.	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. Access the community with minimal support and understand rules to stay safe.

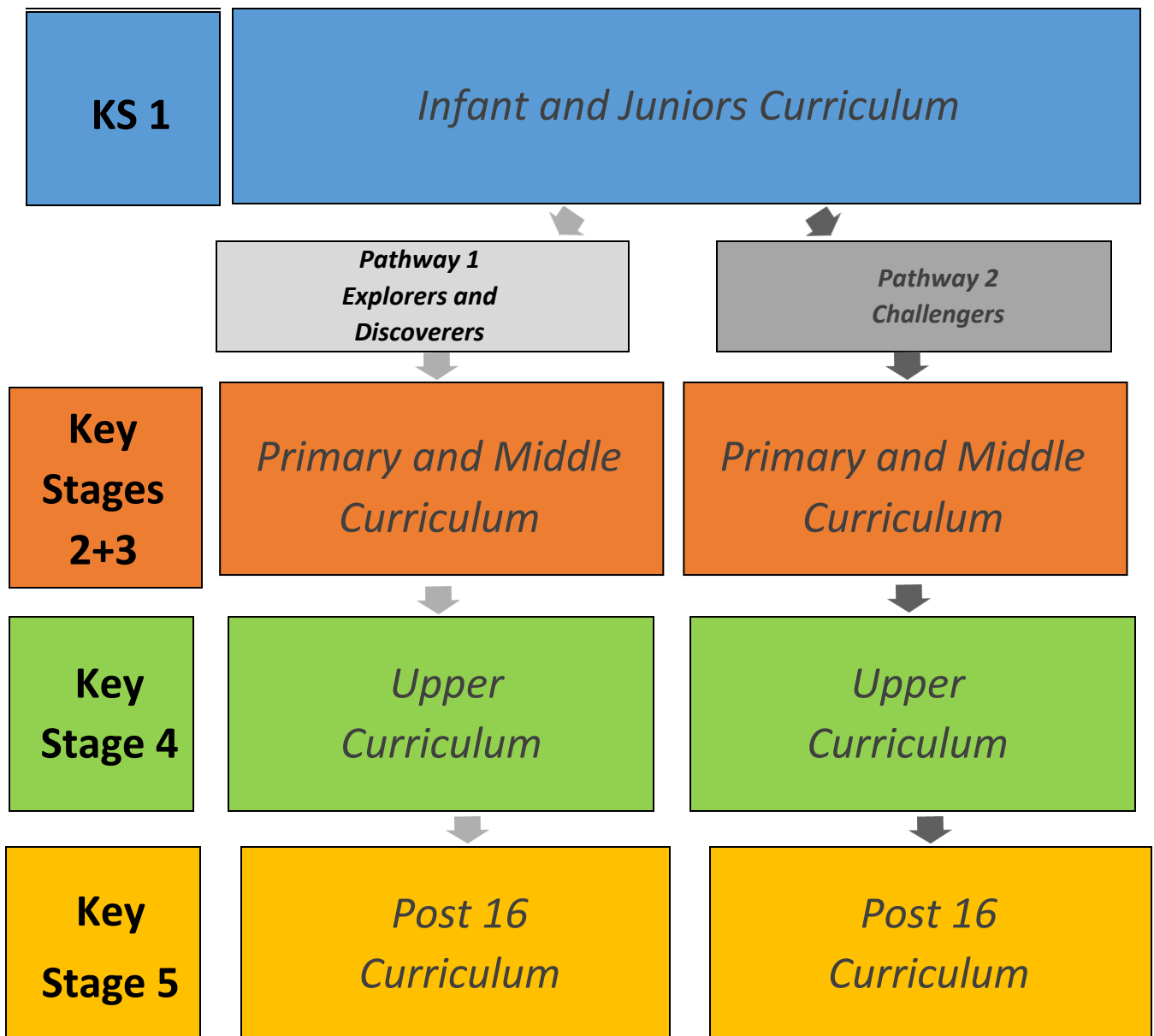
PATHWAYS AND 4 CURRICULUMS

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 pupil:

Pathway 1 is designed for our pupils who we classify as ***Explorers*** and ***Discoverers***. This includes those learners who learn better 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 using autism specific approaches to implant planned, purposeful play through a mix of *child-initiated* and *adult-led* learning.

Pupils working in Key Stages 2 and 3 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	Something MOTIVATING	LIVING THINGS	MY SURROUNDINGS	BEING ACTIVE
1	2022-2023 All about me	2022-2023 Celebrations	2022-2023 Sensory Exploration	2022-2023 Field to fork	2022-2023 Going places	2022-2023 Keeping healthy, keeping fit
2	2023-2024 My story	2023-2024 Religious stories	2023-2024 Investigating Water	2023-2024 Habitats	2023-2024 Environment	2023-2024 Time to play sport
3	2024-2025 My Family and Friends	2024-2025 Spiritual places + people	2024-2025 Food and drink	2024-2025 Animals	2024-2025 The Great Outdoors	2024-2025 Summer holiday
4	2025 – 2026 My School	2025 – 2026 Festivals and Lights	2025 – 2026 Fun and Games	2025 – 2026 Life cycles	2025 – 2026 Out in the community	2025 – 2026 Keep on moving

To ensure Radlett Lodge School's curriculum offer is broad and balanced, stimulating, challenging and relevant 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 four years.

Rationale for the order of our topic cycles

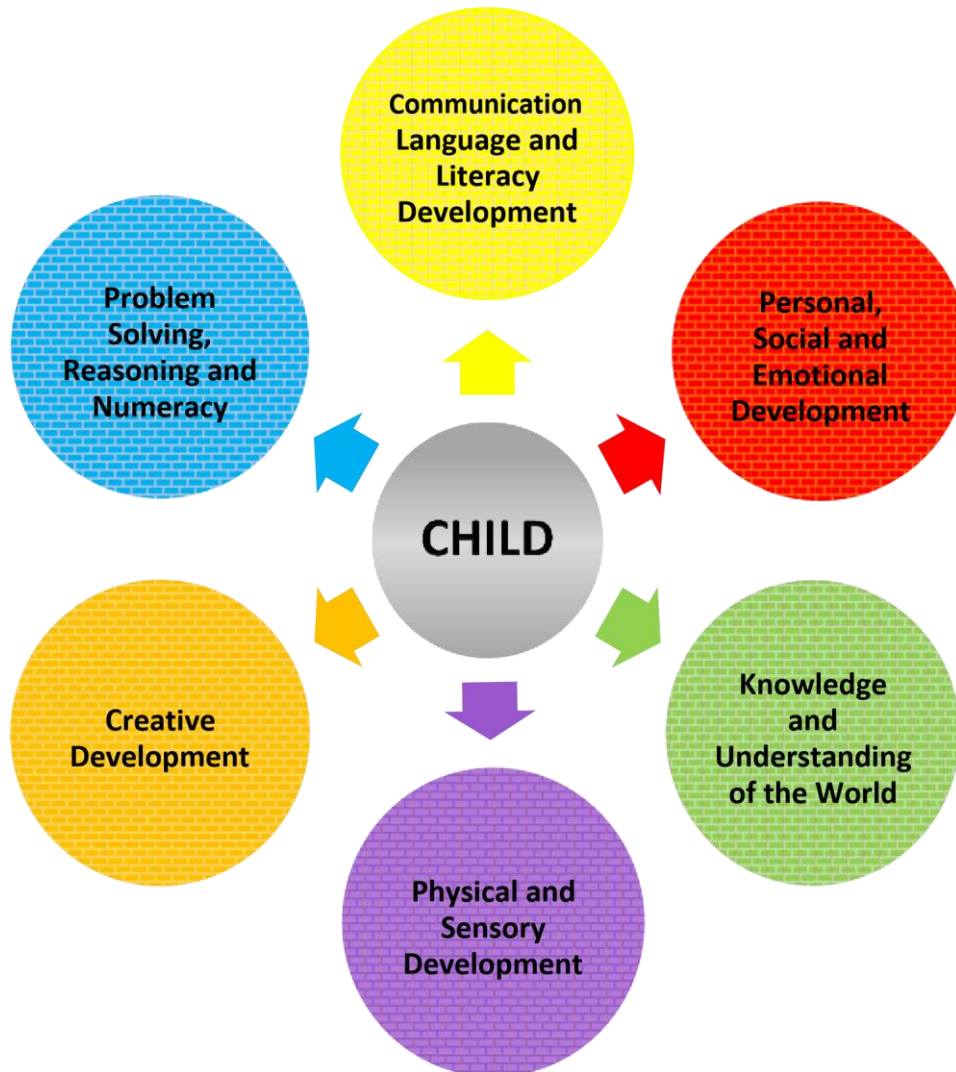
Each year the pupils go through a similar range of topics following a structured pattern, starting with:

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

Implementation	<p>Our Curriculum is filled with rich first-hand purposeful experiences... 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 TDT (Trans-Disciplinary Team) initiatives; using autism specific strategies (e.g. SCERTS, Intensive Interaction and Attention Autism); with weekly education visits (EV) trips; and the use of sensory circuits and diets as part of creating optimal learning environments.</p>
	<p>Our curriculum is flexible and responsive to individual needs and interests... by using a person-centred planning approach in every pupils' unique areas of interest and strengths; PLO (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 support plans (ISP).</p>
	<p>Our curriculum embeds the principle of sustainability... 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>Our curriculum has an eye on the future and the needs of future citizens... through PSHE and SMSC; life skills and independence; student council; work experience; careers; transition programmes; community links and enterprise projects.</p>
	<p>We encourage the use of environments and expertise beyond the classroom... 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>Our curriculum links between areas of knowledge and the major issues of our time... at Key Stages 1, 2 + 3: through our thematic approach giving broad topic areas which incorporate current affairs; 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 at Key Stage 5: as pupils are preparing for adulthood and have curriculum plans designed around a pupil centred planning approach.</p>
	<p>Our curriculum has a local, national and international dimension... 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 (Community Based Education) visits.</p>

FRAMEWORK

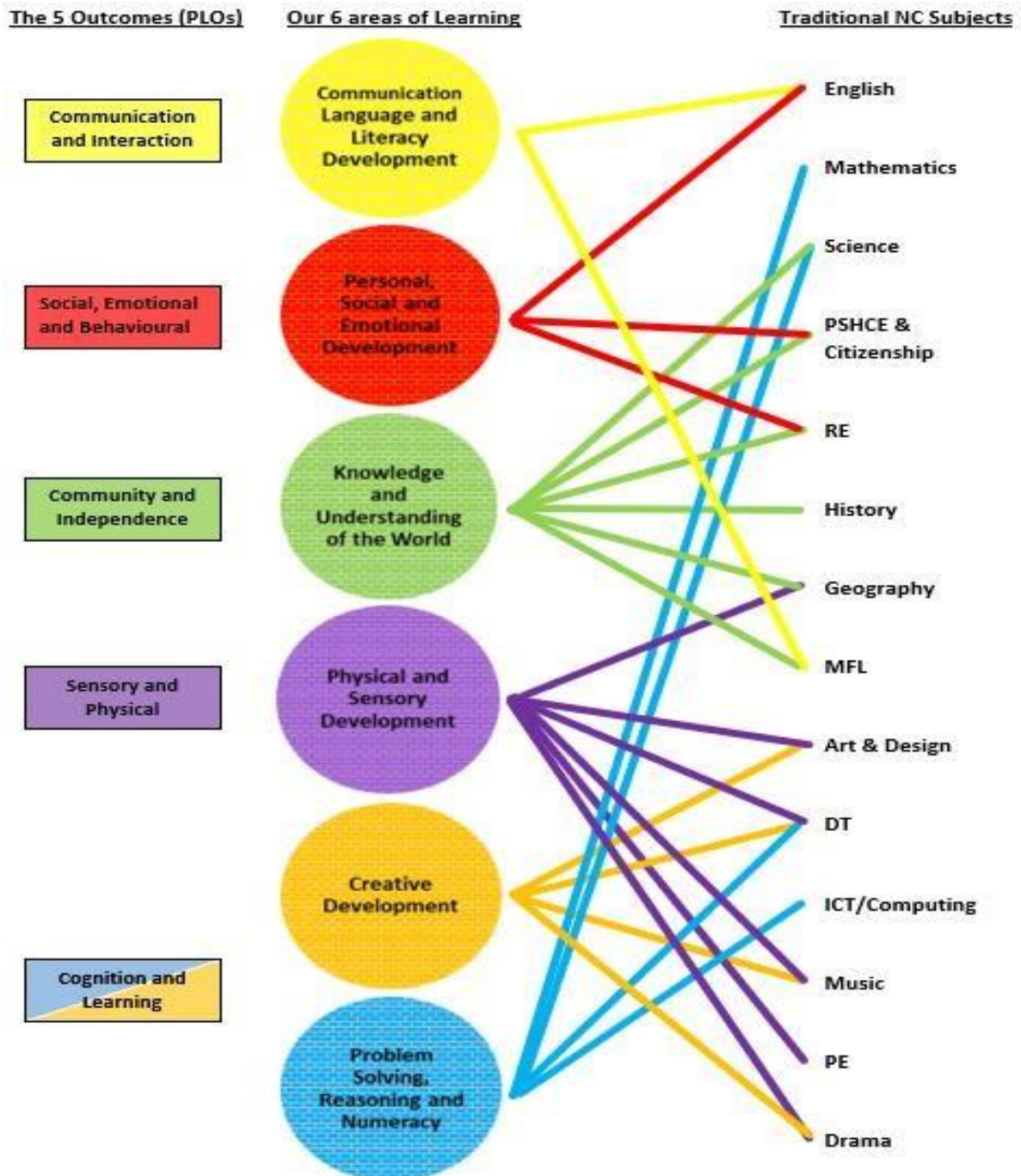
The framework which underpins our curriculum is based on the DfE's *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): 7 areas of learning*, but we have adapted it to meet the needs of our pupils by combining 'literacy' with 'communication and language'. Therefore, the **6 learning areas** at RLS are:



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 people experience differences in the way they 'sense' the world around them as compared to non-autistic people. 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 SPELL (NAS) continues 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 to the local neighbourhood)

<u>Intended Impact</u>	Measured by:
	• All progress: PLO, SCERTS, subject specific targets, assessment, etc
	• Parental input and Pupil input
	• Behaviour and incident data - CPOMS
	• Lesson observations and learning walk feedback
	• Curriculum feedback from teachers
	• Staff feedback and well-being
	• Annual pupil review meetings
	• Outcomes/next steps/pupil destinations
	• Topic books

The review date for this policy will be January 2025.

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