



Stone Soup Academy Curriculum Statement

Academic year 2026-2027

Document information	Details
Document owner	Headteacher and Curriculum Lead
Approved by	Trustees
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Review cycle	Annual, with termly curriculum assurance
Next formal review	July 2027
Applies to	All pupils, staff, subjects, sites and commissioned provision

Our curriculum commitment

Stone Soup Academy provides an ambitious, inclusive and carefully sequenced curriculum for pupils in Years 9 to 11 who have often experienced disruption, exclusion, trauma or other barriers to education. Our curriculum is rooted in our vision, Creating Unimagined Futures, and our values of Respect, Celebration, Kindness, Collaboration and Positivity.

We understand curriculum as the totality of pupils' planned experience: subject learning, reading and communication, personal development, relationships, safeguarding, careers, enrichment, therapeutic and pastoral support, cultural experiences and preparation for adulthood. These elements work together; none is a substitute for a high-quality academic and vocational curriculum.

Our entitlement: Every pupil is entitled to high expectations, expert teaching, a broad range of worthwhile knowledge and experiences, appropriate qualifications, reasonable adjustments and the support needed to achieve and thrive.

1. Context and rationale

Our pupils arrive with diverse starting points. Many have SEND, social, emotional and mental health needs, disrupted prior learning, low confidence, weak attendance histories or involvement with children's social care. Leaders do not allow these circumstances to limit ambition. Instead, we identify needs accurately, remove barriers and prioritise strong everyday inclusive teaching, supplemented by targeted academic, pastoral or specialist support where required.

The curriculum is designed to reconnect pupils with education, close gaps in foundational knowledge, develop subject expertise and prepare pupils for sustained progression to further education, apprenticeships, training or employment. Decisions about curriculum content, staffing and resources are informed by pupil need, statutory requirements, qualification pathways, assessment evidence, destination information and quality assurance.

2. Alignment with the September 2026 inspection framework

This statement reflects the Ofsted State-funded School Inspection Toolkit, version 2.0, for use from 7 September 2026. In particular, the academy's curriculum and teaching seek to:

- provide a high-quality, ambitious curriculum for all pupils, with particular regard to disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils known or previously known to children's social care and pupils facing other barriers;
- meet statutory curriculum requirements and provide an entitlement at least as ambitious in breadth and depth as the national curriculum, adapted appropriately to Stone Soup Academy's context;
- identify clear end points and sequence knowledge and skills cumulatively within and across years;
- secure strong foundations in communication, oracy, reading, writing and mathematics so pupils can access the whole curriculum;
- develop teachers' subject and pedagogical expertise and ensure the intended curriculum is taught consistently well;
- use assessment to check understanding, inform teaching, secure fluency and identify where curriculum or teaching should adapt;
- make reasonable adjustments without lowering expectations, taking account of EHC plans, specialist advice and pupils' changing needs;
- evaluate impact through what pupils know, remember, can do, produce and apply, and through their achievement, participation and destinations.

3. Curriculum intent

3.1 Ambition and breadth

Our curriculum enables pupils to acquire powerful knowledge, practical competence, recognised qualifications and the personal qualities needed for adult life. It balances academic, creative, technical and vocational learning while protecting the central importance of English, mathematics, science, reading and communication. Pupils encounter ideas, people, places and opportunities that extend beyond their previous experience and build cultural capital.

3.2 Inclusion and high expectations

All pupils study an ambitious curriculum. Leaders and teachers consider starting points, SEND, disadvantage, social care status, protected characteristics, attendance and well-being when planning access, not when deciding how much pupils are capable of achieving. The graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review supports timely adaptations and specialist involvement. Pupils and parents contribute to decisions about support and aspiration.

3.3 Strong foundations

Reading, vocabulary, oracy, writing and mathematics are curriculum priorities. Pupils' foundational knowledge is assessed accurately on entry and reviewed thereafter. Where older pupils are at the early stages of reading, communication, writing or mathematics, leaders provide ongoing, targeted teaching and practice. Pupils who need to learn or consolidate decoding receive systematic synthetic phonics delivered by appropriately trained staff. Subject teachers explicitly teach disciplinary vocabulary, spoken language, reading and writing within their subjects.

3.4 Personal development and preparation for adulthood

The curriculum develops pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. PSHE, RSHE, religious education, citizenship, careers, enrichment and safeguarding education teach pupils how to stay safe, form healthy relationships, respect protected characteristics, understand fundamental British values, manage risk, contribute to their community and make informed decisions. Careers education reflects the updated Gatsby Benchmarks and gives pupils encounters with employers, further education, technical and vocational routes and impartial guidance.

4. Curriculum structure and pathways

4.1 Year 9 foundation curriculum

Year 9 rebuilds engagement and establishes the knowledge, routines and learning behaviours needed for Key Stage 4. Pupils study:

- English and mathematics;
- science;
- art and photography;
- Business, ICT, media and music;
- food and sport;
- PSHE, RSHE and religious education;
- reading, communication and enrichment.
- Subject curriculums identify the important knowledge and skills pupils need by the end of Year 9 and how these prepare them for Key Stage 4. Time is provided to revisit content, address gaps and strengthen fluency without narrowing pupils' entitlement.

4.2 Years 10 and 11

All pupils study English, mathematics, PSHE, RSHE and religious education. Pupils follow appropriate English and mathematics pathways, including GCSE and/or Functional Skills where this best supports progress from their starting points and future destination. Option choices are guided by pupil aspiration, prior attainment, SEND, qualification suitability and destination planning—not by lowered expectations.

Curriculum element	Planned offer for 2026-2027
Core	GCSE English Language and Literature; GCSE Mathematics; PSHE; RSHE; religious education; reading and personal development.
Science	AQA GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy.
Creative and expressive	GCSE Art, Craft and Design; GCSE Photography; Pearson BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 in Creative Media Production; RSL Level 1/Level 2 Certification in Music Production
Business and enterprise	Pearson BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 in Enterprise.
Sport	BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First in Sport
Food	NCFE Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates in Food and Cookery Skills.
Additional pathways	Functional Skills and other approved qualifications where assessment shows these form part of an ambitious, coherent pathway to the pupil's next stage.

The precise qualification offer remains subject to awarding-body approval, staffing, viable group sizes and annual curriculum review. Any change must preserve ambition, breadth, progression and pupils' best interests.

4.3 College, vocational and external provision

Where appropriate, pupils may attend a carefully selected college or external course for part of the week, such as Hair and Beauty or Construction/Multi-Skills. Stone Soup Academy retains responsibility for pupils' education, safeguarding, attendance and welfare. Placements are commissioned in pupils' best interests and are subject to written checks, curriculum rationale, risk assessment, daily attendance monitoring, progress review, safeguarding assurance and regular communication with the provider, pupil, parent and referring school.

4.4 Enrichment and cultural entitlement

Weekly enrichment and the wider programme may include sport, fitness, music, food, ice skating, creative activities, outdoor learning, residential experiences, educational visits, work experience, employer encounters, university engagement, arts and cultural visits and community projects. Leaders track participation and make reasonable adjustments so disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and pupils facing other barriers can participate and benefit fully.

5. Curriculum implementation

5.1 Coherent planning and sequencing

Each subject has a curriculum rationale, identified end points and a sequenced plan showing how knowledge and skills build cumulatively. Plans distinguish substantive and disciplinary knowledge, identify essential vocabulary and reading, anticipate common misconceptions and show how Year 9 prepares pupils for later learning. Teachers revisit important content and provide sufficient practice to support retention and fluency.

5.2 High-quality teaching

Teaching is evidence-informed and responsive to the subject, phase and pupils' needs. Teachers:

- communicate ambitious learning goals and select the most important knowledge and concepts;
- explain and model clearly, using examples and carefully chosen representations;
- activate relevant prior knowledge and connect new learning to the curriculum sequence;
- check understanding systematically and respond to errors and misconceptions;
- provide guided and independent practice so knowledge becomes secure and usable;
- teach subject-specific vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking and listening explicitly;
- make reasonable adjustments, use scaffolds purposefully and remove them when pupils become more independent;
- maintain high expectations for participation, behaviour, presentation and the quality of work.

5.3 Inclusive teaching and the graduated approach

High-quality inclusive teaching is the academy's first response to need. Teachers use one-page profiles, EHC plans, PAGES information, baseline assessment, specialist advice and pupil/parent voice to understand barriers. Adaptations may include explicit instruction, chunking, visual supports, pre-teaching,

additional practice, assistive technology, adapted resources, communication supports, sensory or regulation strategies and changes to the learning environment. Adaptations are reviewed for impact and must promote access, independence and achievement rather than reduce curriculum ambition.

5.4 Reading, oracy, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum

Reading is a whole-academy responsibility. Leaders assess reading accurately, identify decoding and fluency needs, and ensure targeted support is delivered by trained staff. Every subject specifies the texts, vocabulary, communication and disciplinary literacy pupils need. Teachers model fluent reading, teach vocabulary directly, support comprehension and give pupils structured opportunities to discuss, explain, reason and present. Mathematical fluency and the application of number are reinforced across relevant subjects.

5.5 Assessment

Assessment serves the curriculum; it does not replace it. Teachers use formative assessment during lessons to check whether pupils have understood and retained intended learning. Summative assessment is proportionate, aligned to subject end points and qualifications, and moderated to improve reliability.

Assessment information is used to:

- identify misconceptions and foundational gaps;
- adapt teaching and curriculum sequencing;
- plan timely intervention and additional practice;
- evaluate progress from reliable starting points;
- analyse achievement and participation by subject, year and pupil group;
- report clearly to pupils, parents, referring schools, leaders and trustees.
- Leaders avoid unnecessary data collection and do not assume that frequent testing alone demonstrates progress. The most important evidence is the quality and security of pupils' knowledge, skills, work and application over time.

5.6 Staff expertise and professional learning

Leaders deploy staff so pupils receive subject-appropriate expertise. Professional learning is aligned to whole-academy, subject, team and individual priorities. It includes subject knowledge, curriculum planning, reading, assessment, adaptive teaching, SEND, trauma-informed practice, behaviour, safeguarding and qualification requirements. Staff receive protected opportunities to apply, discuss, observe, coach, moderate and refine practice. Leaders evaluate professional learning through changes in teaching and pupil learning, not attendance at training alone.

6. Quality assurance and curriculum leadership

Senior and middle leaders maintain an accurate, evidence-informed understanding of curriculum and teaching across both sites. Quality assurance is developmental, proportionate and triangulated. It includes:

- curriculum and subject reviews;
- learning walks and lesson visits;
- work scrutiny and moderation;
- assessment and qualification analysis;
- reading and foundational-skills information;
- pupil, parent and staff voice;
- SEND and disadvantaged-pupil reviews;
- attendance, behaviour and participation information;

- external provision monitoring;
- destinations and sustained-destination information.
- Leaders identify variation between subjects, year groups, sites and pupil groups, take timely action and check whether improvement is sustained. Trustees receive accessible information, visit the academy, test leaders' evaluations and hold leaders to account for curriculum quality, inclusion, impact, staff expertise and resource deployment.

7. Curriculum impact

The intended impact is that every pupil knows more, remembers more and can do more. Pupils develop detailed subject knowledge, secure foundational skills, strong learning habits, appropriate qualifications and the confidence to progress. They feel included, safe and able to belong; they understand their options and are prepared for education, employment, training and adult life.

We evaluate impact through a balanced evidence base rather than one measure. Leaders consider: the knowledge and skills evident in pupils' talk, responses, work and independent application; progress from accurately established starting points and the rapid closure of foundational gaps; attainment and progress in national examinations and accredited qualifications, interpreted in the academy's context;

- outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils known to social care and others facing barriers;
- reading, vocabulary, communication and mathematical fluency;
- attendance, engagement, behaviour, participation and sense of belonging;
- completion of ambitious pathways and progression to suitable, sustained destinations;
- pupil, parent, employer, provider and referring-school feedback.

8. Improvement priorities for 2026-2027

- Complete and quality assure curriculum end points, sequencing, disciplinary knowledge and assessment in every subject and year group.
- Implement a consistent academy-wide model for high-quality inclusive teaching and evaluate its impact across both sites.
- Strengthen the assessment and teaching of reading, including systematic synthetic phonics for older pupils who require it, alongside vocabulary and oracy in every subject.
- Improve the reliability and use of starting-point, formative and summative assessment, including moderation and vulnerable-group analysis.
- Evaluate whether adaptations, targeted academic support and the graduated approach improve independence, learning and well-being.
- Strengthen subject leadership, professional learning, coaching and the use of evidence to reduce variation in curriculum implementation.
- Track participation and impact across enrichment, careers, work experience and external provision, ensuring full access for vulnerable groups.
- Use curriculum, achievement and destination evidence to refine pathways and demonstrate sustained improvement over time.

9. Key statutory and advisory references

- Ofsted, State-funded School Inspection Toolkit, version 2.0, for use from 7 September 2026.

- Department for Education, The Reading Framework: teaching the foundations of literacy.
- Department for Education, Careers guidance and access for education and training providers, including the updated Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Department for Education, Alternative Provision statutory guidance and guidance on arranging alternative provision.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Current statutory guidance for relationships, sex and health education and religious education.
- Current qualification specifications and awarding-body requirements.

10. Review and accountability

The Headteacher is accountable to trustees for the quality and impact of the curriculum. The Curriculum Lead coordinates implementation and quality assurance; subject and faculty leaders are responsible for the coherence and effectiveness of their curriculums; the SENCo leads whole-academy improvement for pupils with SEND; teachers are responsible for teaching the intended curriculum and assessing learning accurately. The statement is reviewed annually and whenever statutory guidance, pupil need or curriculum provision changes materially.