



# Millom School and Sixth Form



# Curriculum Rationale 2021-22

Date: September 2021

Review: September 2022



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## Millom School Vision and Values

All children and young people at Millom School will have access to appropriate high quality education in a community that enables them to achieve the skills, knowledge and qualities to become responsible and successful citizens.

## Intent of the Curriculum

We will achieve our vision by providing learning that shows:

- Millom School is a place for the whole community, with a local, national & international dimension
- Millom School is a place for personal growth, friendship, a place that encourages tolerance, understanding, respect for others, and the area in which you live.
- Millom School is a place for preparing you for the rest of your life.
- Millom School is a place to develop your talents and skills, along with the independence and self-discipline needed to be happy and successful.
- Millom School is a place for the present, today, as well as the future.

We aim to:

- Improve educational outcomes for all learners
- Improve the performance of every subject department
- Train and develop our staff to be the best they can be
- Develop the school site, buildings and classroom equipment (within budgetary constraints)
- Maintain and develop a positive, outward facing and inclusive school
- Ensure school leavers know right from wrong, have respect for themselves & others and are well skilled (particularly in literacy, numeracy, and ICT) and employable

At Millom School we believe:

1. A strong community of student and adult learners is based on mutual respect, empathy and personal integrity.
2. Students should be empowered, develop curiosity and foster their creativity to make a difference to society.
3. Happy, confident and secure students will learn more and will achieve greater things.
4. That to improve all of us need to work hard, play hard and push our boundaries.
5. Students who pursue their interests and talents will be happier, will have a sense of purpose and will develop a love of learning for life.
6. That to be successful in life all of us need to develop leadership and teamwork skills.



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Our Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 curricula are exceptionally varied for a small school as we firmly believe in providing a range of opportunities for our young people, allowing them to explore their creativity, become independent lifelong learners and leave school having developed key skills for employability. Our curricula meet the needs of our local area and are enriched with STEM activities preparing the young people of Millom and surrounding areas for work in design, manufacturing, engineering and project management. Our curriculum model also prepares students for success in a variety of progression pathways, including apprenticeships, further and higher education and technical routes.

There are several factors that have shaped our curriculum model and these include:

- the needs of the pupils
- transition from Year 6 into Year 7
- progression to Key Stage 4 and 5 and beyond
- staffing, facilities and resources
- input from the Governing Body
- input from the wider community
- input from supporting agencies and school partners, including employers
- guidance from the Local Authority
- Government policy.

## Implementation of the Curriculum

Millom School recognises the importance of allowing students to explore creative subjects so we have invested in offering subjects like music and drama at Key Stage 4 as well as Key Stage 3. We have also recognised the importance of pupil choice at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, and as such, we have developed a large range of vocational and academic courses to ensure that our students continue on an appropriate progression plan. Key Stage 4 programmes do not start until Year 10 to ensure that the Key Stage 3 curriculum is as broad and balanced as possible and to ensure that students are mature enough to make informed choices during the options process.

The subject content in all areas is effectively sequenced to promote incremental knowledge acquisition and embeds key skills such as revision techniques to facilitate the transition to Key Stage 4.

The curriculum structure from year 7 right through to year 13 supports the school's vision and core values, in particular, preparing skills for life, developing talents and pursuing interests, demonstrating employability skills and developing teamwork and leadership. This is captured by the school's Millom Learner attributes and the Learning Journey, which were developed by the leadership team in consultation with staff and the Student Leadership Council. The Learning Journey is a roadmap showing opportunities for learners to develop the Millom Learner as well as employability skills and knowledge of careers options and



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progression pathways, cultural capital, their understanding of spiritual, moral and social issues and their understanding of fundamental British Values.

The seven Millom Learner attributes are:

- \* Determined
- \* Communicator
- \* Investigator
- \* Positive
- \* Understanding
- \* Independent
- \* Collaborator

## **The Breadth of Our Curriculum**

Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 have 30 lessons per week of 50 minutes duration. This was implemented in 2020-21 in order to create more option choices for students in Key Stage 4.

Pupils in Key Stage 5 have between 14 and 18 lessons per week of 50 minutes in duration with timetabled study periods for each subject, including 50 minutes per week of tutor time (personal development). The majority of students in Year 12 also take the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) for a further periods per week.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 students study the following subjects:

English

Mathematics

Science

Information Technology, including Computer Science

Technology

Art

Drama

Geography

History

French

Music

Physical Education

Personal Development (Including PSHE and RE)



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The table below shows the number of lessons allocated to each subject in Key Stage 3:

Subjects	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	5
Science	3	3	3
IT/ Computing	2	1	1
Technology	3	3	3
Art	1	1	1
Drama	1	1	1
Geography	2	2	2
History	2	3	3
French	2	2	2
Music	1	1	1
Physical Education	2	2	2
Personal Development	1	1	1

In Year 9 students choose their options for Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11). Currently all students are required to take the following subjects:

GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature

GCSE Mathematics

Combined Science – 2 GCSEs (or Triple Science, which is three GCSEs)

Physical Education (not examined)

Personal Development (not examined; includes PSHE and RE)

Students also have a choice of up to 4 option subjects from the following:



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GCSEs in Triple Science  
GCSE Art / Art Photography  
Performing Arts (BTEC Level 2 Tech award)  
Information Technology (OCR National)  
GCSE Computer Science  
Sport (BTEC Level 1/2 First Award)  
GCSE Media  
GCSE Music  
GCSE Design and Technology  
Hospitality and Catering (WJEC Level 1/2 Award)  
Health and Social Care (BTEC Level 2 Tech award)  
GCSE French  
GCSE History  
GCSE Geography  
Asdan Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (for targeted students only)

The table below shows the number of lessons allocated to each subject in Key Stage 4:

Subjects	Year 10	Year 11
English	5	5
Mathematics	5	5
Science	6	6
Options	12	12
Physical Education	1	1
Personal Development	1	1

At KS5, students are able to opt for the following subjects:

### Academic qualifications:

A-Level English Literature

A-Level Mathematics



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A-Level Biology  
A-Level Chemistry  
A-Level Physics  
A-Level History  
A-Level Geography  
A-Level Fine Art / Art Photography  
A-Level Design and Technology: Product Design  
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

## **Vocational qualifications:**

Certificate / Extended Certificate in Applied Science (BTEC)  
Certificate / Introductory Diploma Business (Cambridge Technical)  
Certificate / Extended Certificate Performing Arts (BTEC)  
Certificate / Extended Certificate Information Technology (Cambridge Technical)  
Certificate / Extended Certificate in Health and Social Care (BTEC)  
Extended Certificate Sport (BTEC)

Students are encouraged to take a range of 'facilitating subjects' to maximise their progression choices at Post-16. We ask students to choose a range of science and humanities GCSEs, however, we currently do not require students to study a language at GCSE. The option of GCSE French is available should pupils wish to choose this. The importance of studying a language at GCSE is emphasised as part of the Year 9 options process, for example, the French nuclear group Orano have carried out assemblies and workshops with years 8-10.

Students have a wide range of courses to choose from in Key Stage 4 and 5 to allow them to pursue the subjects they are interested in or have a particular talent for, but this also allows them to explore the more academic and creative subjects, developing a host of skills for future progression or employment, including further study at college or university, technical routes and apprenticeships. Parents are well informed of options choices, as we publish this information in 'Options Booklets' on our website. Parents are also invited into school to attend our Year 9 Options Evening and our Sixth Form Evening where parents and pupils can talk to teaching staff about the courses we offer. Pupils are well supported through this process and every pupil in Years 9 and 11 have at least one progression interview with a senior member of school staff, which is linked to careers and pathways post-16 and post-18. Generally students opt for three qualifications in Year 12 and carry those subjects into Year 13. However, in exceptional circumstances students have the option of studying four subjects if they choose to. Students can choose qualifications from the academic group, the vocational group or a mixture of both. Students intending to study solely vocational





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programmes are recommended to choose four subjects. Students who do not gain a grade 4 in GCSE English or Mathematics (equivalent to a grade C) at Key Stage 4 are required to re-sit during Key Stage 5. It is possible for students to re-sit GCSEs in English and/or Mathematics alongside three full qualifications. If students are required to re-sit then we recommend they choose from the vocational group. All Year 12 and 13 students also have one-two periods of tutor time per week, where they study life skills and aspects of personal development, including progression planning. The majority of students in Year 12 take the EPQ. All 6th form students are also expected to complete 35 hours of voluntary activities per year and students in Year 12 complete a week's work experience at the end of the year

### **The Balance of Our Curriculum**

Our current curriculum model shows strong continuity between Key Stages. Students study specific subject content and develop key skills for those subjects from Year 7. From the onset, students are aware of progression pathways and understand that they may continue studying those subjects through to Year 13 should they choose to do so. This encourages and motivates them to develop interest and expertise in those subject areas from early on in their academic career. Teachers assess pupils' progress in Key Stage 3 using criteria that have been developed from the GCSE and vocational programmes at Key Stage 4 and 5 to ensure that pupils are developing skills that will set them in good stead should they study that subject further. Our students participate in Physical Education throughout Key Stage 3 and 4 as we recognise the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle and allowing students time to develop a stronger 'work-life balance'. Students study Art, Music and Drama at Key Stage 3 to allow them to investigate and explore their creativity, which they may choose to follow further at Key Stage 4 and 5. We have included personal development within our curriculum model for each Key Stage to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students, including British Values. We believe in students having choice and the ability to personalise their education. Consequently, we have a range of GCSEs, AS and A-Level and vocational qualifications for students to choose from to allow every student to maximise their full potential no matter their specific strengths. This allows students to balance the skills needed to be successful in examinations and non-examination assessments. The intended outcomes of this are linked to successful progression – we want our students to leave us with the qualifications, expertise and skills needed for their next steps. Students with Special Educational Needs also have the option of choosing the ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) programme in Year 10, which is done by negotiation with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator as part of the Year 9 options process. This programme allows the pupils to develop life and study skills and helps balance the rigour of their academic courses.

### **The Delivery of Our Curriculum**

Our teachers deliver the curriculum at each Key Stage in a variety of ways to maximise the engagement of learners. This may involve hands on activities, practical work where appropriate, group work, use of IT, presentations and written tasks. The Head of





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Mathematics has developed 'Maths Across the Curriculum', a document outlining key mathematical principles and strategies for teaching maths to improve consistency across the different subject areas. We also have a literacy policy to ensure that marking for literacy is rigorous and consistent across the departments and across the Key Stages helping pupils to accelerate their literacy skills. Heads of Department and subject leads have input into the decisions made regarding qualification and exam board choices. Each Head of Department has a specific justification for the ways in which the teachers plan, deliver and assess their subjects at each Key Stage showing continuity between these stages for smooth transition.

Each subject has developed a rationale document outlining:

- The importance of the subject so pupils understand why they are studying it and how it links to real life
- The key concepts and big ideas underpinning the subject
- The topics studied in each year
- The key capacities and skills pupils will develop, which is linked to the Millom Learner
- How pupils are learning and being assessed
- How the learning of all pupils is being supported, including stretch
- How pupils can progress in terms of opportunities at Key Stages 4 and 5 and beyond
- How the subject supports the school's careers strategy and the careers the subject links to
- How pupils can enrich their knowledge and understanding in that subject

Each subject has also developed a roadmap outlining the pupil's learning journey in that subject. This document maps out opportunities for pupils to develop:

- Millom Learner attributes and values
- Employability skills
- Understanding of progression pathways and careers
- Cultural capital
- Understanding of spiritual, moral and social issues
- Understanding of fundamental British Values
- Subject specific literacy and numeracy

## Impact of the Curriculum

The progress of pupils at each Key Stage is tracked against prior attainment – Key Stage 2 results for pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 and attainment at Key Stage 4 for those pupils in Key Stage 5. Pupils are informed of their targets and assessments are tracked against target. Pupils are given specific advice and guidance to meet or exceed targets. Form tutors and



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Directors of Learning and Standards track the pupils' overall performance including attitude to learning, behaviour, attendance, enrichment and contribution to the school community.

Our range of qualifications at Key Stages 4 and 5 and high quality teaching and learning have allowed us to improve pupil outcomes, meaning that the pupils are leaving school better qualified for further study or employment. This can be attributed to several factors including: expert delivery by teaching staff (including decisions made on qualification types, exam boards assessment methods and optional units that match staff expertise), improved pupil choice, the ability to select a mixture of academic and vocational qualifications, careers advice and guidance that supports the curricula at each Key Stage and the continuity of the curriculum model from Key Stage 3 to 5. Millom School have an excellent track record in supporting learner progression and the percentage of pupils in sustained education or employment with training has been over 98% for the last 3 years, representing only 1 or 2 students per year identified as NEET (not in education, employment or training). This is a figure below the national average for maintained schools. The extra-curricular programme at Millom School is sustained and varied, allowing out students to explore many opportunities to learn both within and outside the classroom and to develop key employability skills for future progression. This includes:

- The Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes at Bronze and Silver
- The Careers Strategy e.g. Year 11 Mock Interviews, Year 10/12 Work Experience, Unifrog careers platform
- Educational trips and visits e.g. London Docklands trip, geography field work
- Residential trips and visits e.g. trip to Ecuador/Cambodia/Borneo/Iceland, trips to London and Edinburgh, The Year 7 Conway residential, the annual ski course in Austria
- Bike Club, which includes bike maintenance and repair and a group cycling the Coast-2-Coast
- 'Chill Zone' enrichment clubs and activities
- STEM club, roadshows and competitions
- The Garden Bungalow Project where pupils learn about growing their own produce and maintaining the land.
- The Hardknott Forest Project, which includes learning about sustainability (removal of tree species, tree planting, bridge building using sustainable sources)
- The Eskdale Forest Project, which involved pupils creating steps within a path to allow better access for walkers
- Activity Week
- Sporting opportunities e.g. cross-country, team sports, competing at local, county and national level
- Performing arts opportunities e.g. drama production, music concerts
- Leadership opportunities e.g. Student Council and 6th Form Charity Committee



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- Charity events e.g. Comic Relief, Sports Relief, Boxes of Hope, Children in Need, Macmillan coffee morning
- A varied programme of external speakers in Key Stage assemblies

