

Teacher Handbook

How to use the Neurodiversity-Attuning, Strength-Based Curriculum, Frameworks, Medium-Term Plans and Assessment Resources

Purpose of this handbook

This handbook gives teachers, tutors, leaders and support staff a clear operating guide for planning, delivering, adapting, evidencing and assessing the DDP Hub curriculum. It is designed to protect learner dignity, reduce cognitive load, and make curriculum intent visible in daily teaching practice.

FRAMEWORKS

Use to understand curriculum intent, sequencing, inclusion design and subject rationale.

MTPS

Use to organise weekly teaching, pacing, adaptations and lesson flow.

ASSESSMENT

Use to gather evidence, protect authentic voice and make progress visible.

How to Use the Curriculum Suite

1. Start with the DDP Framework

Read the subject framework first. This tells you the purpose of the subject, the neurodiversity-attuning principles, the sequencing logic and the intended learner experience.

2. Plan from the Medium-Term Plan

Use the MTP to build weekly delivery. It should guide lesson focus, pacing, vocabulary, skill development, adaptive teaching and evidence opportunities.

3. Teach through strengths

Begin with what learners can notice, explain, connect, make or apply. Avoid deficit language. Use regulation, routine and choice as part of teaching, not as separate behaviour management.

4. Assess through evidence

Use assessment mapping to gather varied evidence, including discussion, practical work, written responses, visual products, digital artefacts and supported reflection.

The golden rule

The framework explains why the subject is being taught, the MTP explains how it is sequenced, and the assessment mapping explains how learning is evidenced. Teachers should use all three together, not as separate documents.

Daily teacher workflow

1

Check the framework intent

Confirm the subject purpose, inclusion expectations and key learner outcomes.

2

Select the MTP week or sequence block

Identify the learning focus, key vocabulary, prior learning and intended output.

3

Prepare adaptations before the lesson

Plan visual supports, chunked instructions, reduced copy load, movement breaks, modelling and alternative recording methods.

4

Capture evidence during learning

Collect work samples, short notes, photos of practical outcomes, learner reflections and staff observations.

Understanding the Three Core Documents

Document	Teacher question it answers	How to use it
DDP Framework	What is the subject trying to achieve for neurodivergent learners?	Use before planning. It gives rationale, values, subject intent, access principles and the strengths-based lens.
Medium-Term Plan	What should be taught, in what order, and with what scaffolds?	Use weekly. It supports pacing, sequencing, key concepts, practice opportunities and curriculum coverage.
Assessment Mapping	How will we know the learner is making progress?	Use throughout the term. It guides evidence capture, accessible assessment and progress conversations.
Curriculum Map or Assessment Suite	How do formal qualification requirements connect to the DDP approach?	Use for GCSE and structured subject pathways. It helps align content, progression and exam preparation.

What teachers should not do

- Do not treat the framework as a one-off policy document.
- Do not deliver the MTP without considering sensory and executive-function needs.
- Do not use assessment as a punishment for fatigue, anxiety, handwriting difficulty or communication differences.
- Do not remove challenge. Adapt access, not ambition.

What teachers should do

- Use predictable routines, explicit modelling and clear success criteria.
- Offer alternative ways to show learning.
- Record small gains in confidence, independence and self-advocacy.
- Make assessment evidence authentic, not over-produced.

Planning alignment checklist

☐	The lesson links to the DDP framework intent.
☐	The MTP sequence has been followed or any change has been justified.
☐	Key vocabulary is pre-taught, displayed or revisited.
☐	Instructions are chunked and supported visually.
☐	Assessment evidence can be gathered without creating unnecessary pressure.
☐	There is a planned route for extension, support and alternative recording.

Neurodiversity-Attuning Delivery

Predictability

Begin with a visible lesson route. Tell learners what will happen, what might change, what they need to produce, and how they can ask for help.

Cognitive offloading

Use worked examples, sentence stems, diagrams, checklists, word banks, visual timers and staged instructions to reduce working-memory load.

Regulation-aware pacing

Plan moments of pause. Avoid long teacher talk, sudden transitions and hidden expectations. Use micro-tasks and review points.

Authentic voice

Let learners show understanding through speech, drawing, practical demonstration, digital work, mind maps or supported written responses.

Recommended lesson structure

Stage	Teacher action	Reason
Arrival and settle	Use calm greeting, visual agenda and low-demand start.	Supports safety, transition and readiness.
Prior learning	Use retrieval through discussion, image prompt, keyword match or short model.	Builds confidence without overloading memory.
Explicit teaching	Model the concept in small steps with one clear example.	Reduces ambiguity and makes success visible.
Guided practice	Practise together before independent work.	Allows correction without shame.
Independent or paired task	Offer supported choice in output format.	Protects autonomy and authentic evidence.
Review and evidence	Capture one clear piece of progress or reflection.	Turns learning into usable assessment evidence.

Language rule for staff

Use language that describes access, strategy and development. Avoid language that frames the learner as the problem. For example, say "the task needs more structure" rather than "the learner refused to engage".

Using Assessment Without Creating Barriers

Assessment in the DDP Hub curriculum should identify progress, not expose difficulty. Teachers should use assessment mapping to gather a balanced evidence picture across knowledge, application, communication, reflection, independence and confidence.

Evidence can include

- Written work, annotated drafts or scaffolded responses
- Verbal explanation recorded by the teacher
- Practical work, photographs or digital artefacts
- Quiz responses, concept maps or exit tickets
- Self-reflection, peer discussion or supported evaluation

Assessment must protect

- Authentic learner voice
- Reasonable adjustments
- Communication differences
- Processing time and regulation needs
- Evidence of progress over time

Assessment cycle

Cycle point	Teacher action	Recorded evidence
Baseline	Identify starting points, access needs, confidence and prior knowledge.	Short diagnostic activity, observation, learner voice note.
Formative check	Check understanding during lessons using low-pressure methods.	Exit ticket, mini-whiteboard, verbal response, annotated work.
Portfolio capture	Select evidence that shows knowledge, skill and independence.	Work sample, photo, digital file, teacher note.
Review	Discuss progress with the learner and identify the next step.	Feedback note, learner reflection, target update.

Feedback model

Use: "You have shown...", "This matters because...", "Your next step is...", "You can use this strategy to help...". Feedback should be specific, respectful and usable.

Using the Resource Directory

Each subject block in the portal contains the documents needed to support planning, teaching and assessment. Teachers should open the relevant subject block at the start of each planning cycle and check that the framework, MTP and assessment documents are being used together.

Subject area	Primary teacher use
Aesthetic and Creative Art	Use for creative expression, visual communication, personal response and portfolio evidence.
Citizenship	Use for social understanding, community participation, rights, responsibilities and GCSE pathway preparation.
Combined Science	Use for scientific knowledge, practical enquiry, concept development and accessible assessment.
English	Use for reading, writing, spoken language, GCSE curriculum mapping and assessment suite alignment.
Mathematics	Use for numeracy confidence, GCSE mapping, application, reasoning and assessment suite planning.
Digital Literacy and Online Safety	Use for digital citizenship, online safety, assistive technology and practical digital fluency.
ICT and Computer Science	Use for computer science framework, ICT sequencing, digital problem-solving and assessment mapping.
PSHE and RSE, KCSIE 2025	Use for safeguarding-informed teaching, healthy relationships, identity, wellbeing and personal safety.

For teachers

Use the subject blocks to plan lessons, prepare adaptations, identify evidence opportunities and check curriculum coverage.

For leaders

Use the blocks to review subject quality, consistency, sequencing, compliance, assessment evidence and staff confidence.

Monitoring Use Across the School

Weekly checks

- Lessons align with the MTP sequence.
- Adaptations are planned before delivery.
- Evidence is captured in varied formats.
- Learners understand the purpose of the task.

Half-termly checks

- Framework intent is visible in teaching.
- Assessment evidence shows progress over time.
- Staff are using consistent language and expectations.
- Subject coverage is broad, balanced and purposeful.

Learning walk prompts

☐	Can learners explain what they are learning and why it matters?
☐	Are instructions visible, chunked and accessible?
☐	Is there evidence of modelling before independent work?
☐	Are learners able to use alternative recording methods where appropriate?
☐	Does feedback identify a clear next step?
☐	Is the classroom environment supporting regulation and attention?
☐	Is assessment evidence linked to the assessment mapping document?

Leadership principle

Quality assurance should check whether the curriculum is being used with fidelity and flexibility. Fidelity means the intent and sequence are protected. Flexibility means access is adapted to the learner.

Staff Reference Sheet

Before teaching

- Open the subject framework.
- Check the relevant MTP sequence.
- Identify the learning intention.
- Prepare vocabulary and visual scaffolds.
- Plan how evidence will be captured.

During teaching

- Use predictable routines.
- Model before expecting independent output.
- Chunk instructions and pause regularly.
- Offer supported choice.
- Record authentic learner responses.

After teaching

- Update evidence records.
- Note access strategies that worked.
- Identify next steps.
- Adjust pacing where needed.
- Share concerns early with the curriculum lead.

Assessment reminders

- Assess learning, not compliance.
- Use varied forms of evidence.
- Protect learner voice.
- Make feedback specific and kind.
- Use assessment mapping to avoid gaps.

Final staff commitment

We use the DDP Hub curriculum to build confidence, skills, independence and self-advocacy. We adapt access without lowering aspiration. We make progress visible, meaningful and respectful.

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