Curriculum Policy

(including alternative provision, early years and individualised SEND curriculum)

ABA Pathways

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are statutory, regulatory, commissioning, curriculum or operational changes.

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1. Aims

ABA Pathways provides an individualised, ambitious and meaningful curriculum for children and young people with SEND. The curriculum is designed to increase access to education, communication, independence, participation, wellbeing and quality of life while maintaining high expectations and a clear connection to each learner's wider educational entitlement.

- Provide a broad, balanced and appropriately ambitious educational experience, adapted to each learner's starting point, needs and placement arrangements.
- Develop functional communication and ensure learners have meaningful ways to express preferences, make choices, refuse, request help and participate in decisions.
- Build knowledge and skills that increase independence and access to family, education and community life.
- Identify and reduce barriers to learning through assessment, reasonable adjustments, capable environments and evidence-informed teaching.
- Support generalisation and maintenance so that useful skills transfer beyond teaching sessions.
- Use ongoing data, observation and stakeholder feedback to evaluate whether teaching is effective and remains meaningful to the learner.
- Promote personal development, safety, relationships, self-advocacy and preparation for adulthood where age appropriate.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has regard to the current legal and statutory framework in England and to guidance relevant to the services ABA Pathways provides. ABA Pathways is not a maintained school or academy; responsibilities that remain with a commissioning school or local authority are not transferred simply because a learner attends alternative provision.

- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments.
- Education Act 1996, including section 19 duties where applicable.
- Department for Education Alternative Provision statutory guidance, including the February 2025 update.
- Department for Education non-school alternative provision voluntary national standards (2025), where applicable to commissioning and quality assurance.
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework in force from September 2026, where the EYFS applies.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, as applicable to safeguarding arrangements and commissioning.
- Education, Health and Care Plan requirements and the provision specified for individual learners.

Where government reform proposals are not yet in force, ABA Pathways may use them to inform service development but will not treat them as replacing current statutory duties.

3. Curriculum principles

• Person-centred and strengths-based: curriculum priorities reflect what matters to the learner and family as well as assessed educational need.

• Neurodiversity-affirming and respectful: difference is not treated as a deficit to be normalised.

• Communication-accessible: spoken language is not assumed to be the only valid form of communication; AAC, gesture, sign, visual systems and other communication methods are supported where required.

• Assent-led wherever possible: staff attend to indications of engagement, refusal, distress and requests for breaks and adapt teaching accordingly.

• Functional and meaningful: targets should have a clear rationale and benefit to the learner.

• Least restrictive: environmental adaptation, teaching and positive support are prioritised over restriction.

• Evidence-informed: teaching decisions are informed by assessment, data, professional judgement and the learner's response.

• Ambitious but realistic: support should increase opportunity rather than lower expectations because of disability.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Directors

• Ensure an appropriate curriculum framework, staffing, resources, safeguarding arrangements and quality assurance systems are in place.

• Monitor curriculum breadth, learner outcomes, equality, complaints, incidents and service improvement.

4.2 Consultants / programme supervisors

• Oversee assessment, curriculum priorities, individual programmes and review within their professional competence.

• Ensure teaching targets are operationally clear, measurable, meaningful and linked to relevant EHCP outcomes or commissioning objectives where appropriate.

• Review Hi Rasmus data, direct observations, learner feedback and wider professional information and amend programmes when progress is limited or needs change.

• Provide supervision, modelling, coaching and competency checks for practitioners.

4.3 Tutors and practitioners

• Know the learner's current programme, communication system, reasonable adjustments, risks and support plans.

• Implement teaching consistently while responding flexibly to the learner's communication, motivation, wellbeing and assent.

• Record session and progress data accurately and promptly in the agreed system, including Hi Rasmus where used.

• Raise concerns where teaching is not effective, data appear unreliable, or a learner's presentation changes.

5. Curriculum organisation and planning

The curriculum is individualised rather than based on one assessment tool. Assessment may draw on structured curriculum or developmental tools, direct observation, functional and communication assessment, educational information, EHCP outcomes, family priorities and multidisciplinary advice.

Where useful for an individual learner, ABA Pathways may use tools such as the Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP) and Essential for Living (EFL). These are used as assessment and planning resources rather than as a complete curriculum in themselves. National Curriculum and/or EYFS learning opportunities are incorporated where relevant to the learner's age, placement, starting point and educational entitlement.

- Communication and interaction
- Literacy and numeracy / functional academics
- Cognition and learning
- Play, engagement and social participation
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical and sensory development
- Daily living and independence
- Community participation and safety
- Self-advocacy, choice and decision-making
- Preparation for adulthood, employment or meaningful occupation where age appropriate

6. Assessment and individualisation

Assessment establishes a learner's strengths, current repertoire, preferences, communication, barriers, environmental needs and priorities. Baseline information is gathered before or at the start of teaching so progress can be interpreted meaningfully.

- Targets are specific and measurable but remain connected to meaningful whole skills.
- Prompting is planned and faded systematically to reduce unnecessary prompt dependence.
- Mastery criteria are defined according to the skill and should consider independence, fluency, accuracy, generalisation and maintenance rather than a single successful session.
- Assessment is ongoing; programmes may be adapted, paused or discontinued when data and stakeholder feedback indicate that they are not beneficial or are no longer a priority.

7. Teaching, learning and reasonable adjustments

- Use explicit teaching, modelling, prompting, shaping, reinforcement, task analysis, naturalistic teaching, Precision Teaching or other evidence-informed methods where appropriate to the learner and target.
- Provide visual, sensory, environmental and communication adjustments.
- Embed learning within motivating and meaningful activities rather than relying solely on table-based teaching.
- Plan opportunities to practise skills with different people, materials, places and routines.
- Balance structured learning with play, leisure, movement, choice, breaks and learner-led activity.
- Ensure adjustments are reviewed for effectiveness and not retained simply because they have historically been used.

8. Communication, behaviour and capable environments

Behaviour is considered in context and may communicate pain, distress, sensory need, fear, uncertainty, refusal, lack of understanding, communication difficulty or environmental mismatch. Curriculum planning therefore includes proactive support and the creation of capable environments.

- Teach functional communication and self-advocacy.
- Increase predictability, meaningful activity, choice, communication access and positive relationships.
- Reduce avoidable triggers and barriers rather than expecting the learner to tolerate unnecessary distress.
- Use behaviour support plans when indicated and integrate relevant replacement skills into the curriculum.
- Never use restrictive physical intervention as a teaching method or punishment.

9. Alternative provision curriculum

For learners attending ABA Pathways as alternative provision, the curriculum will be agreed within the placement and commissioning arrangements and will reflect the learner's age, ability, aptitude, SEND, health needs, EHCP where applicable and intended outcomes.

- The commissioning school and/or local authority remains responsible for the statutory duties that apply to it.
- ABA Pathways will share progress, attendance and relevant placement information with the school and/or local authority overseeing the placement.
- Where a learner remains on a school roll, curriculum planning should support appropriate continuity with the learner's wider education while recognising that individualised SEND provision may require different methods, pace, environment and priorities.
- Placement objectives and curriculum priorities will be reviewed regularly so AP does not become an unreviewed arrangement by default.

10. Early years curriculum

Where the EYFS applies, ABA Pathways will work within the current statutory framework and provide developmentally appropriate learning through responsive interaction, play, routines, exploration and structured teaching where beneficial.

- Prioritise communication, relationships, engagement, play, independence, physical development and participation in everyday routines.
- Avoid narrowing early years provision to discrete targets alone; children require rich opportunities to explore, initiate and learn through play.
- Use assessment proportionately and avoid excessive data collection that detracts from responsive interaction with the child.

11. Personal development, independence and preparation for adulthood

Curriculum planning extends beyond academic attainment. Learners should be supported to develop autonomy, relationships, health and safety skills, community access, daily living, leisure, self-advocacy and, for older learners, preparation for adulthood, employment or meaningful occupation.

12. Data collection and analysis using Hi Rasmus

ABA Pathways uses Hi Rasmus, where appropriate to the service and learner, to record teaching data, programme progress, session information and behaviour support data. Data collection supports professional decision-making; it does not replace observation, learner voice, family feedback or professional judgement.

- Targets are entered with clear definitions, measurement methods and mastery criteria.
- Practitioners record data during or promptly after teaching so records are contemporaneous and attributable.
- Prompt levels and independence are recorded consistently where these are relevant to the target.
- Consultants review trend, level, variability, rate of acquisition, prompt dependence, maintenance and generalisation rather than relying only on a headline percentage.
- Progress is reviewed across meaningful time periods and in context, including changes in attendance, health, environment, staffing, motivation and programme conditions.
- Where progress is flat, highly variable or deteriorating, the team considers whether the target, teaching procedure, reinforcement, prompt strategy, environment, prerequisite skills or measurement system needs to change.
- Data will be shared with parents/carers and relevant schools, local authorities or professionals in accordance with the placement arrangement, safeguarding duties and data-protection requirements.

The examples below are anonymised illustrations of the types of visual analysis that may be produced from Hi Rasmus progress data; they do not represent an identifiable learner.

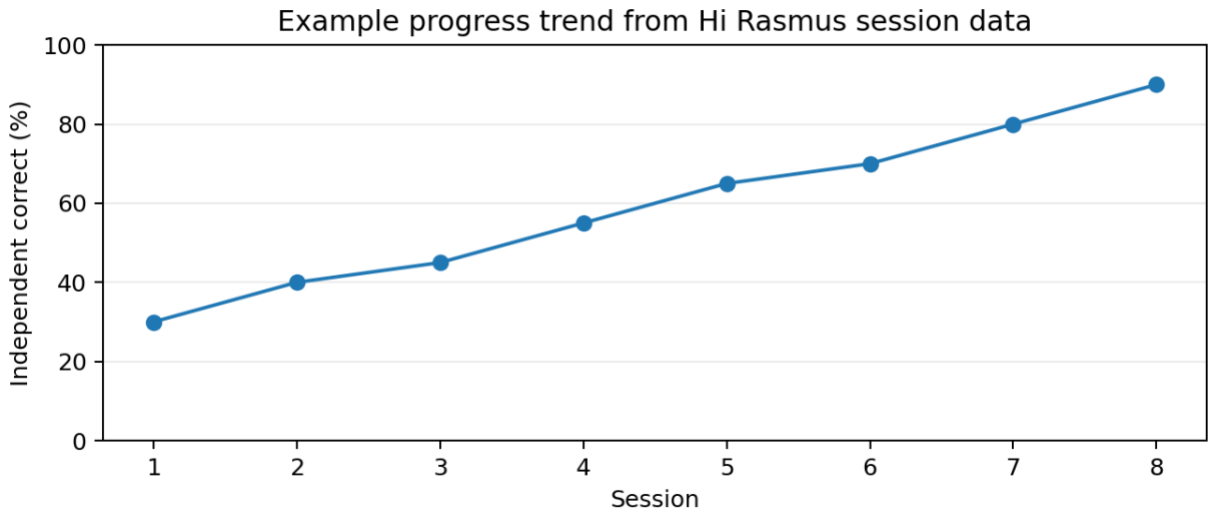

Figure 1. Example session-by-session trend showing increasing independent responding.

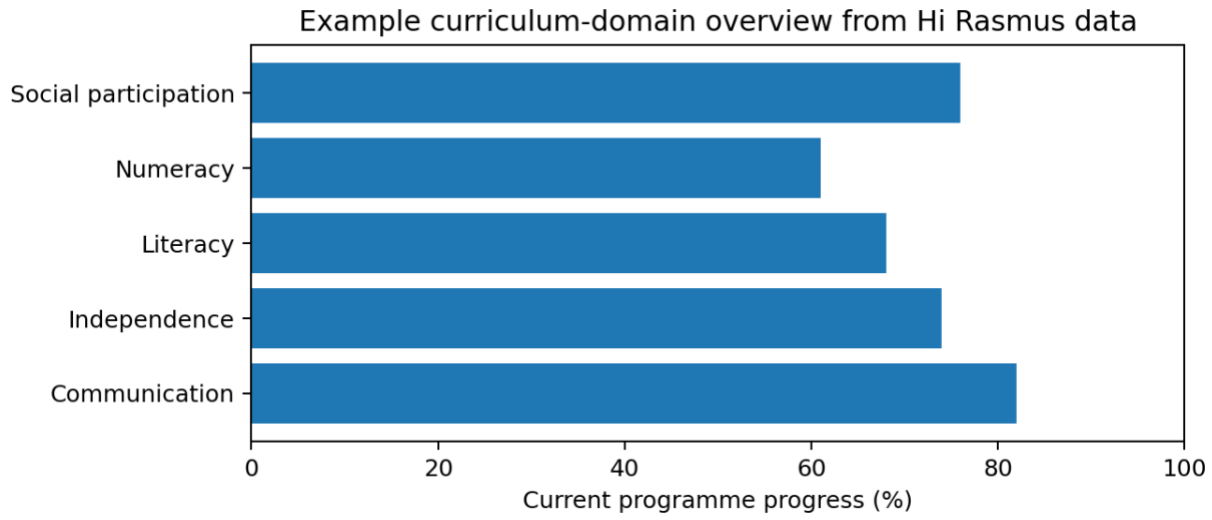

Figure 2. Example curriculum-domain overview used to support review and prioritisation.

13. Progress review, generalisation and maintenance

- Review progress using data alongside direct observation and feedback from the learner, family and wider team.
- Check that mastered skills remain available after teaching is reduced or withdrawn.
- Plan and measure generalisation across people, settings, materials and naturally occurring situations.
- Avoid treating mastery within an app or teaching session as sufficient evidence that a skill is functional in everyday life.
- Document material programme changes and the rationale for them.

14. Inclusion and equality

ABA Pathways maintains high expectations while making reasonable adjustments so disability does not create avoidable barriers to participation. Curriculum access will not depend on spoken language, sitting still, eye contact or other behaviours that are not necessary to the learning outcome.

Cultural, linguistic, sensory, physical and communication needs will be considered in planning. Where English is an additional language, staff will distinguish language acquisition from SEND and provide appropriate communication access.

15. Safeguarding within the curriculum

Safeguarding is integral to curriculum delivery. Staff must remain professionally curious where there are changes in behaviour, communication, attendance, mood, engagement, physical presentation or learning. Such changes must not automatically be attributed to autism, SEND or behaviour.

- Teach safeguarding, consent, boundaries, online safety, relationships, personal care, community safety and help-seeking in a developmentally and communication-accessible way where relevant.
- Follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and report concerns immediately through the agreed safeguarding route.
- Ensure curriculum activities, community access and online resources are appropriately risk assessed.

16. Working with families, schools, local authorities and professionals

Curriculum priorities are developed collaboratively. Parents/carers and learners should understand what is being taught, why it matters and how progress is being evaluated. Relevant schools and local authorities overseeing AP placements will receive progress information in accordance with agreed reporting and review arrangements.

ABA Pathways will contribute to EHCP reviews, placement reviews and multidisciplinary discussions where requested and will identify where current provision, outcomes or support may need reconsideration.

17. Staff training, supervision and quality assurance

- Staff receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to their role and the learners they support.
- Consultants provide regular supervision, observation, feedback and competency-based coaching.
- Data quality is checked for consistency, completeness and reliability; where necessary, interobserver agreement or other reliability checks may be used.
- Quality assurance considers curriculum breadth, learner wellbeing, meaningful outcomes, generalisation, safeguarding, equality and the proportionality of data collection.

18. Monitoring and review

Directors and consultants will monitor implementation through programme supervision, review of Hi Rasmus and other progress data, observation of practice, learner and family feedback, commissioner feedback, EHCP/provision alignment, safeguarding information, complaints and audits.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following significant statutory guidance, commissioning, curriculum or service changes.

19. Links with other policies

- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy / Behaviour Support procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Equality Policy
- EYFS Policy
- Assessment procedures
- Restrictive Physical Intervention / Restraint Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection / Confidentiality procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct

Appendix 1: Hi Rasmus data cycle

- 1. Define: Identify a meaningful skill and specify what successful performance looks like.
- 2. Baseline: Establish current performance where appropriate.
- 3. Teach and record: Implement the agreed procedure and record relevant performance accurately.
- 4. Visualise: Review graphs, mastery information and session data.
- 5. Analyse: Consider trend, variability, independence, prompt use, context and learner wellbeing.
- 6. Decide: Continue, adapt, generalise, maintain, pause or discontinue based on evidence.
- 7. Share and review: Discuss progress with the learner, family and relevant professionals/commissioners.

Appendix 2: Example interpretation of progress visuals

An upward trend may indicate improving performance, but the team should still check whether the learner is becoming more independent, whether the skill occurs with different people and in different settings, and whether gains are maintained. A flat trend does not automatically mean the learner has failed; it should prompt review of the teaching conditions, target relevance, prerequisites, communication access, health and environmental factors.

Visual data are therefore used as one part of a broader person-centred review process. Decisions should be explainable, proportionate and linked to meaningful benefit for the learner.