OUR CURRICULUM RATIONALE

THE JAMES YOUNG HIGH SCHOOL NARRATIVE

OUR CURRICULUM – THE NARRATIVE

Our curriculum was significantly re-designed after consultation with teachers, parents and pupils in 2014-2015 and was implemented in 2015-2016. A rationale was created as a direct result of this consultation and has evolved since.

Our curriculum design is underpinned by the Values for Our School – **JYHS CARES** and the key pillars which support this vision.

Compassion

All strands of our Curriculum is routed in the Wellbeing indicators. We have key aspects of our curriculum such as icontribute, RMPS core which fundamentally address this value

Aspiration

We pursue excellence through resilience, hard work and determination'

Including:

Targeted interventions & pathways

Strongest subject focus

DYW focus to widen horizons

Building our resilience - 'not drop' subjects

Respect

We are all learners...who have opportunities to achieve our full potential and we respect each others strenghts and differences ensuring we can all shine

Including:

i-journey - our wider achievement pathway

Targeted interventions & pathways

Clear pathways from BGE to senior phase

Evolving pathways using LMI and pupil 16+ data

Equality

Inclusivity is a key feature of our curriculum in subject areas but also structurally so we can all achieve our very best such as our inclusion of an SCQF pathway, Youth Achievement Awards

Success

We offer a range of pathways to ensure all learners have the opportunity to experience success. Through curriculum offers such as Skills for Work and Youth Achievement Awards to wider opportunities such as our iparticipate programme.

Stemming from our Vision is the overarching aim of our curriculum is to:

Educate the whole learner for an unknown future

Our curriculum structure by design; meets the needs of all our learners; our demographic is such that approximately 35% of our cohort is from Quintile 1 & 2 and 52% from Quintiles 4 & 5. Approximately 40 – 55% of our cohort move into a Higher Education Pathway post school. We continually re-evaluate; using LMI and 16+ data, and increase the range of learning pathways offered from to further support all learners. Examples include introducing Health & Social Care; one of the top 3 employment sectors in West Lothian and highlighted by over 60 of our pupils in 2018-2019 as a career option. In addition the development of an Engineering pathway growing from S3 in session 2021-2022 to National 5 and Higher in subsequent years. Not only is this a key pathway identified by 50 pupils in our 16+ data as at December 2020 but LMI as at December 2020 and December 2025 suggests Manufacturing including Engineering is a key area of long term growth in West Lothian in addition to the contribution this area can make to the Climate Change Emergency agenda with the aim of Net Zero[i].

Our curriculum rationale integrates and is informed by national priorities and documentation:

- Building the Curriculum 3, 4 & Briefing Papers
- National Improvement Priorities
- Benchmarks
- HGIOS 4
- Developing Young Workforce

Our curriculum encompasses fully the widest definition of curriculum:

The totality of all that is planned for young people throughout their education'

Building the Curriculum 3, Education Scotland, 2008 p 13.

Our focus is not simply on a subject model but in tandem has a focus on personal and wider achievement, IDL and ethos and life of our school community. It has challenged us and will continue to challenge us to think creatively in the way in which we envisage, plan and deliver an excellent curriculum to ensure all our young people are acquiring the full range of skills, attributes and qualifications necessary for them to live and work in a contemporary world.

Design Principles

The seven principles of curriculum design are intended features that apply to all stages of learning, with a different emphasis at different stages. The principles are:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation & choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

These principles apply to the curriculum at a strategic planning level, in the classroom and other settings where our young people learn. See Appendice 3 for further expansion as to how the principles of design apply in our curriculum.

Cross cutting themes & IDL

Opportunities to develop themes across our curriculum are evident at appropriate points in subject areas including equality, enterprise, creativity and sustainability. See Appendice 4 for expansion of these themes.

Opportunities for IDL are integral in our i-journey options; for instance in S2 i-contribute teachers across English, RMPS & Social Subjects are supporting the delivery of a creative and citizenship based course. We have continued to organically expand our opportunities for IDL as we see IDL as simply good pedagogical practise and not an add on. Our creation of S1 Schools allows 7 teachers from each area of our school to work together to understand and support learning for a section of our S1 cohort. Naturally discussions will include curriculum links as a by-product. Our introduction of an integrated Social Subjects in S1 has created interdisciplinary learning for both pupils and teachers alike.

Developing Our James Young Workforce

DYW is expanding and our expectations are that all subject areas engage with and organically grow careers education by:

- Engaging and reinforce our Metaskills Framework where there is a natural fit
- Collaborating with leading to co-designing curriculum content with business partners
- Referencing and strengthening careers pathways and information through subject areas to widen the horizons of our pupils

See our DYW Strategy for further details**: 2021-06 i-suCEed - DYW Evolving Vision.docx**

Our BGE Curriculum & Transition

The key focus of S1-3 is to ensure all learners receive their entitlement to a pure broad general education. There is appropriate breadth and depth in learning, allowing pupils to apply their learning in challenging and unfamiliar contexts to provide a firm foundation for progression into the senior phase. Our curriculum has appropriate specialisation in S3 and continued breadth of experience. Pupils are tracked across the curriculum using JYHS on Track to allow for targeted interventions at key points.

Learning Journey in S1

Pupils are learning across each curricular area (see Appendice 1). Almost all pupils will be experiencing Level 3.

- Languages and Literacy
- Mathematics & Numeracy
- Social Studies
- Science
- Technologies
- Expressive Arts
- RME
- Health & Wellbeing (PE, PSE)

Drama experience is delivered through the English department and dance as part of the PE Curriculum. The PSE and PE programmes provide for many aspects of HWB as well as this being a focus within individual subject areas. Pupils study Maths & English for 5 periods; this is an enhanced period allocation to support the National Priorities. Pupils have 4 periods in Modern Languages, which equates to 3 periods of French (L2) and 1 period of Spanish (L3) to ensure 1+2 Languages is embedded.

Previously through i-journey a period of i-discover with a clear rationale around STEM, allowing success to come through failure and resilience building. In session 2026-2027 we made a change to this to incorporate this learning into our Science curriculum to help boost attainment in this area by creating additional time – a move from 3 periods to 4 periods in S1.

Our curriculum structure in S1 currently allows our pupils to benefit from and experience learning and teaching with a variety of teachers. However in Session 2025-2026 we created an adapted S1 experience as a result of S1 pupils consistently telling us their teachers did not know them very well. As a result of our enhanced S1 experience has evolved to include S1 Schools, longer blocks of learning as well as a merging of Social Subjects to reduce the number of teachers an S1 student has: **S1 - Our Schools Overview.doc.**

Learning Journey in S2

Pupils are learning across each curricular area (see Appendice 1). Almost all pupils will be continuing to develop Level 3; whilst some may experience Level 4 content.

- Languages and Literacy
- Mathematics & Numeracy
- Social Studies
- Science
- Technologies
- Expressive Arts
- RME
- Health & Wellbeing (PE, PSE)

By the end of S2 most pupils will have experienced all Level 3 outcomes. Drama experience is delivered through the English department and dance as part of the PE Curriculum. The PSE and PE programmes

provide for many aspects of HWB as well as this being a focus within individual subject areas. Pupils have 4 periods in Modern Languages, which equates to 3 periods of French (L2) and 1 period of Spanish (L3) to ensure 1+2 Languages is embedded.

Pupils will also experience through i-journey a period of i-contribute in S2 with a clear rationale around Modern Studies Experiences & Outcomes as well as allowing pupils to develop community involvement through YPI (see Appendice 2)

Our curriculum structure in S2 currently allows our pupils to benefit from and experience learning and teaching with a variety of teachers – an expansion of teacher and subjects from S1 as pupils are now more settled in our school.

Small Group Intervention – i-grow (See Appendice 2)

For pupils who require a significant intervention to raise their levels in confidence in Literacy and Numeracy we have created a varied curriculum model. Pupils have 2 period of integrated Social Subjects to allow additional time from this curriculum area to be allocated focused and targeted interventions within Literacy and Numeracy for the additional 3 periods. This model avoids the need for extraction and ensures pupils have access to their full BGE entitlements in S1 & S2.

Learning Journey in S3

Pupils are able to specialise in S3; however, they continue to study within **all** curriculum areas. This allows for depth & challenge at Level 4. In total pupils will study 10 subjects at this time – one from each curricular area, plus an additional 2 Masterclass subjects as well as core subjects. The inclusion of Masterclasses allows pupils to individualise their programme of learning depending on their key strengths or future career paths – for instance study 3 science subjects. Our S3 curriculum is not dominated by assessment standards for National Qualifications but rather ensuring all learners are appropriately challenged and well prepared for the senior phase. Learning in subjects is deepened and expectations raised – ensuring learners can make informed choices about their strongest subjects into the senior phase.

The work of Our Curriculum in 2025-2026 evaluated our then current S3 structure and did it remain fit for purpose in light of our context and attainment. This resulted in a change to our 2026-2027 S3 structure; reducing pupil choice by one subject column – allowing pupils to have 3 periods per week rather than 2 in each of their chosen subjects. This allows for greater depth and challenge to be reached; creating stronger foundations to move into National Qualifications in S4.

Pupils will also experience through i-journey inputs from business partners. Aspects of our previous iamSkilled period will remain in session 2026-2027 as inputs across the year. iamSkilled focuses on personal development, employability skills and is supported by our business partners. Most pupils S1-6 surveyed in 2017-2018 felt the key focus in school is to develop skills for life, learning and work, which helped build the rationale for i-amSkilled. This programme also ensures the S3 Achievements Profile in My World of Work is robust with high quality comments, which supports each pupil's experience of a mock interview prior to their transition to the senior phase.

The PSE and PE programmes provide for many aspects of HWB as well as this being a focus within individual subject areas. Pupils have 2 periods in Modern Languages, which equates to 1 period of French

(L2) and 1 period of Spanish (L3) to ensure 1+2 Languages is embedded and pupils can progress successfully from both languages should they choose to do so in the senior phase.

In session 2018-2019 further opportunities for specialisation was created in both CDT and Business Education to allow for progression routes to National Qualifications – Design Manufacture, Graphic Communication, Administration & IT and Business Management to have greater coherence and time to allow for depth of learning. This adaptation was based on pupil feedback in 2017-2018 during Curriculum Pupil Focus Groups.

Most senior pupils in 2017-2018 were supportive of a wide choice in S3 to ensure pathways were not narrowed too early in terms of making NQ choices when career pathways were not clear.

Responsibilities of All

All teachers have a responsibility in The James Young High School to support the development of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing for our learners. Strategies for all 3 areas have developed to ensure a clear and consistent understanding of the practical application of these skills is evident.

Our Senior Phase Curriculum

Pathways in our senior phase are designed to meet the needs of all learners in progressing from their prior levels of achievement in BGE and from S4 to S6.

Guiding Principles

- Learners in S4, 5 & 6 learners are deemed as a single cohort for timetabling. This permits a wider range of options for pupils studying National 3-5 in S5 & S6 and increases flexibility for learners.
- There will be a full senior phase options process every year; the key principles of which are to build on the strongest qualification options for each learner as well as linking to future career pathways.
- Pupils are provided with a free choice model which has allowed 93-97% of pupil choices to be satisfied each year since implementation.

Learning Journey in S4

Learners study 6 subjects from the subjects studied in S3 to build on strong foundations. However, some pupils may choose to study a new subject at the start of S4 – no options are closed to pupils at the beginning of the senior phase. Pupils will continue to study Maths or Application of Maths & English as mandatory. Pupils have 2 periods of PE to ensure pupils maintain their physical wellbeing. This option is part of our i-journey; i-live. Each subject is studied 5 periods per week.

Additional support is offered through i-aspire for pupils who are not maintaining a full timetable.

PSE is delivered via a rotation from each column A-F one period per week. Part of the PSE curriculum is for pupils also to work towards achieving their Wellbeing Award to consider wider aspects of Wellbeing; Mental and Emotional.

Our decision to move from 8 subjects to 6 for our first cohort in 2015-16 is supported by strong attainment; Our Value Added in terms of QS has remained consistent and not been hindered by our S4 model; however our SCQF Value Added as grown exponentially.

Session	S1 Cohort	Number of N5s	CAT 5+SCQF prediction on S1 roll	Value Added on S1 Roll
2013-2014	S2 2010	8 subjects	32.7%	11.3%
2014-2015	S1 2011	8 subjects	32.3%	16.7%
2015-2016	S1 2012	6 subjects	27.5%	15.5%
2016-2017	S1 2013	6 subjects (and consequence of new S3 model)	29%	21% (16% SQA)
2017-2018	S1 2014	6 subjects	32%	32% (14% SQA)
2018-2019	S1 2015	6 subjects	25%	42% (16% SQA)
2019-2020	S1 2016	6 subjects	29%	35% (23% SQA)
2020-2021	S1 2017	6 subjects	31%	35% (13% SQA)
Session	**S1 Cohort**	Number of N5s	CAT 5+SCQF prediction on S1 roll	Value Added on **S4 Roll**
2021-2022	S1 2018	6 subjects	28%	35.12% (14.63% SQA)
2022-2023	S1 2019	6 subjects	36.06%	29.52% (12.77% SQA)
2023-2024	S1 2020	6 subjects	22.17%	46.02% (18.02% SQA)
2024-2025	S1 2021	6 subjects	25.65%	38.2% (13.79% SQA)
2025-2026	S1 2022	6 subjects	31.96%	43.04% (18.04% SQA)
2026-2027	S1 2023	6 subjects	30.52%	

In addition; most S5 & S6 pupils surveyed in 2017-2018 felt the number of subjects in the Senior Phase was positive; sighting mental wellbeing as a by-product of a reduced subject number.

Targeted Pathway – i-work (See Appendice 2)

Some pupils may choose our i-work pathway, which focuses on a blend of opportunities including 4 National Qualifications (including Maths & English), the West Lothian Employability Award, college opportunities and an extended work placement in May. The key features of our i-work Pathway were designed in conjunction with pupil feedback in March 2016.

Learning Journey in S5 & S6

We have an option structure which supports many opportunities for study at Advanced Higher, Higher and Nationals. In addition we utilise the West Lothian Campus which allows pupils to access subjects in other the Virtual Campus and West Lothian College. Partnerships have also been established with Edinburgh College to support Higher and Advanced Higher Language learners.

We have a 6 period allocation for Higher and for Advanced Higher subjects (2 allocated for independent learning) as well as 5 periods for National courses. Various arrangement are made for pupils sitting a range of 3-6 subjects in S5 & S6.

In S5; pupils who study between 1-4 Highers will have periods named idevelop. These periods were repurposed in 2025-2026 to support attainment at 1+ and 3+ Highers.

All pupils in S5 will have the opportunity to undertake 2 additional SCQF qualifications as an integral part to their induction to S5 at the beginning of the year and their induction to S6 at the end of the year: **2025-01 S5 SCQF Strategy.docx**

All pupils have one period of PE (ilive), one period of PSE and RMPS (i-Respect) on a rotational basis. Pupils have the opportunity to achieve SCQF Level 6 Religion, Values and Beliefs during i-Respect across S5 & S6.

Targeted Pathway – i-work (See Appendice 2)

Some pupils may choose our i-work pathway in S5 or S6 – this option is specifically targeted at pupils undertaking 0 Highers.

APPENDICE I – CURRICULUM MAP

THE JAMES YOUNG HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM MAP

BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION S1-S3

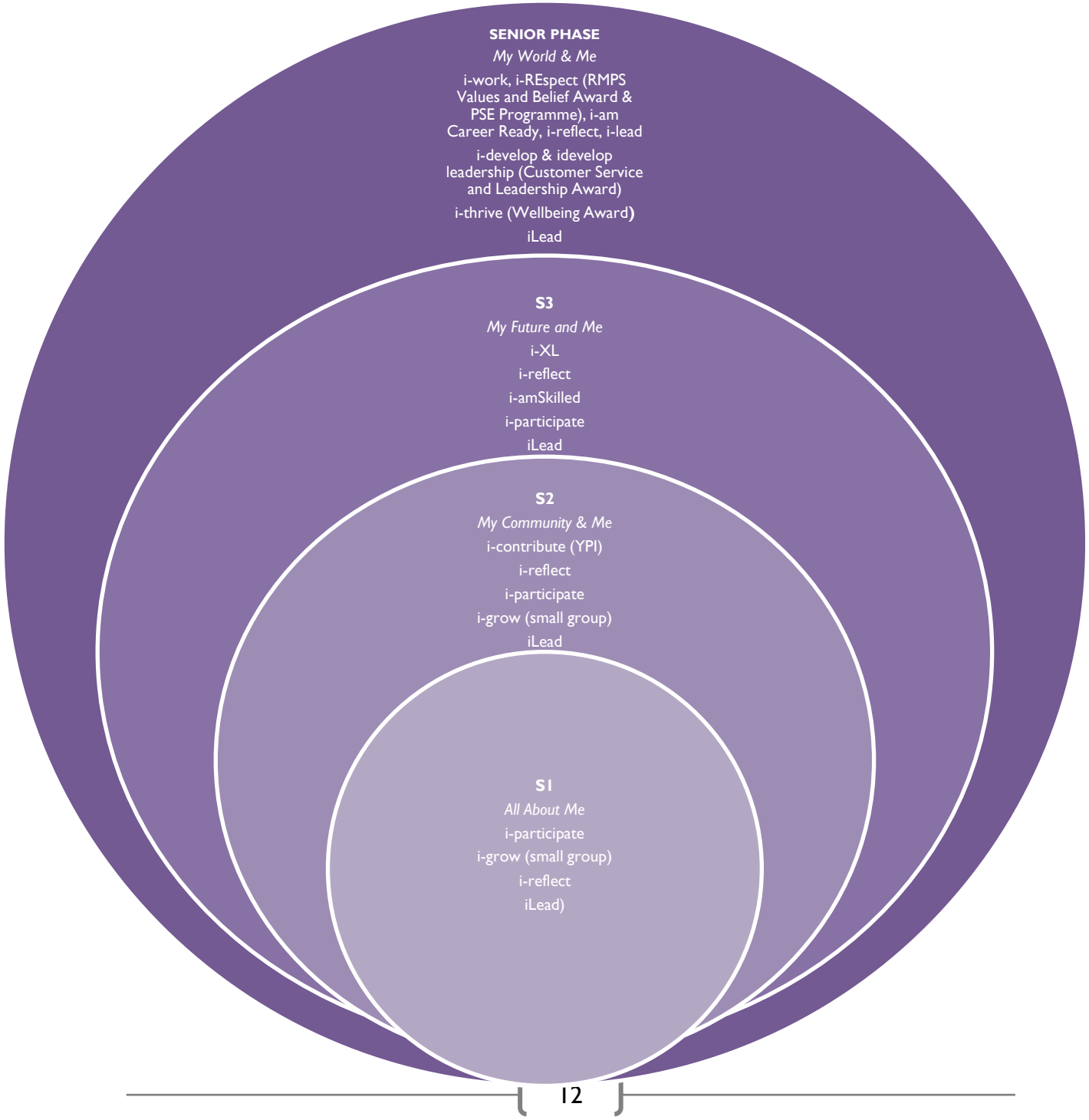
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
S1	LANGUAGES & LITERACY									MATHS & NUMERACY					SOCIAL STUDIES					SCIENCE				TECHNOLOGIES			EA		RME	HWB		
CORE	ENGLISH					MOD LANGS				MATHS & NUMERACY			GEO			HIS			BE	SCIENCE				CDT		COM	ART	MU	RME	PE		PSE
INT															IGROW - LIT & NUM			SS														
S2	LANGUAGES & LITERACY									MATHS & NUMERACY			SOCIAL STUDIES			SCIENCE				TECHNOLOGIES			EXPRESSIVE ARTS				RME		HWB			I-J
CORE	ENGLISH					MOD LANGS				MATHS & NUMERACY			GEO	HIS	BE	SCIENCE				CDT	CDT	COM	ART	ART	MU	MU	RME		PE		PSE	I-CO
INT													IGROW	SS																		
S3	LANGUAGES & LITERACY						MATHS & NUMERACY				SOCIAL STUDIES			SCIENCE			TECH			EA			MC1			MC2			RME	HWB		
CORE	ENGLISH				MOD LANGS		MATHS & NUMERACY				BUS MAN			BIOLOGY			COMPUTING			ART			ART			MUSIC			RME	PE	PE	PSE
											GEOGRAPHY			CHEMISTRY			DESIGN & MAN			MUSIC			PHYSICS			CHEMISTRY						
											HISTORY			PHYSICS			GRAPHICS			DRAMA			GEOGRAPHY			HISTORY						
																	ADMIN & IT			MEDIA			PRACTICAL COOKERY			COMPUTING						
																							GRAPHICS			ENGINEERING						
																							RMPS			IXL						
																							BIOLOGY			BUSINESS MANAGEMENT						
																							FRENCH			GERMAN						
																							ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE			SPANISH						

SENIOR PHASE S4-S6

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
	COLUMN A						COLUMN B				COLUMN C					COLUMN D					COLUMN E					COLUMN F					HWB	
S4, 5, 6	NATIONAL 3-5, SCQF 3-5						NATIONAL 3-5, SCQF 3-5				NATIONAL 3-5, SCQF 3-5					NATIONAL 3-5, SCQF 3-5					NATIONAL 3-5, SCQF 3-5					NATIONAL 3-5, SCQF 3-5					PE	
	COLUMN A										COLUMN B					COLUMN C					COLUMN D					COLUMN E					HWB	
S5 & S6	HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7										HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					PE	PSE/RMPS
ENH						IDEVELOP						IDEVELOP							IDEVELOP					IDEVELOP						IDEVELOP			
	COLUMN A										COLUMN B					COLUMN C					COLUMN D					COLUMN E					HWB	
S6	ADVANCED HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7										ADVANCED HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					ADVANCED HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					ADVANCED HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					ADVANCED HIGHERS, SCQF 3-7					PE	PSE/RMPS
ENH	I-JOURNEY ENHANCED CURRICULUM																															

APPENDICE 2

i-JOURNEY OVERVIEW



APPENDICE 3 – DESIGN PRINCIPLES IN FOCUS

	BGE	SENIOR PHASE
Breadth	• Pupils S1-S3 study all curriculum areas	• Senior Phase options are expanding in some subject areas to offer a greater depth of learner pathways
Depth	• S1 & S2 allows departments to construct their curriculum using the Experiences and Outcomes and Benchmarks to engage with increasingly demanding concepts, skills and knowledge. S1 Social Subjects integrated their curriculum in 2025-2026 to allow for opportunities for greater depth of learning. • S3 allows pupils to specialise but achieve greater depth of learning across all curriculum areas. In 2026-2027 this has expanded further to all choice periods having 3 periods allocated to allow for greater depth.	• Pupils have opportunities to choose a range of pathways and levels through all curriculum areas using the National Qualification framework
Challenge & Enjoyment	• We continue to have the highest possible expectations for all pupils in all classrooms • Pupils challenged to cover most Level 3 Outcomes by end of S3 • Increased levels of choice, varied teaching methodologies and a focus on pupil success help foster enjoyment	• Increasing pathways for pupils through curriculum areas will support enjoyment as pupils tailor their choices to their post school aspirations • Pupil will be challenged to study their strongest options as success breeds enjoyment
Personalisation & Choice	• All pupils experience a common curriculum structure in S1 & S2 – personalisation & choice is addressed in subject areas where there are opportunities for pupils to make decisions on their learning • In S3 pupils have the opportunity to personalise their curriculum within curriculum areas and in 2 further masterclasses	• S4-6 curricular options operate within a free choice model • Expanding internal and external pathways such as partnerships within the West Lothian Campus, Edinburgh College
Progression	• Increased curricular transition focus to ensure a clearer transition between JYHS and cluster schools • Courses clearly planned to allow progression from Level 3 predominately in S1 & S2 to Level 4 in S3	• S3 Pathways ensuring pupils are advised to proceed with learning in their strongest options • S4-6 cohort allows all pupils to progress with the majority of subjects during their Senior Phase – National 3 – Advanced Higher
Coherence	• Achieved through collegiate planning within curriculum areas and increasingly working with partners	• Through effective course choice discussions pupils choosing a package of qualifications that meet their post school aspirations

Relevance	• Through Profiling learners should be reflecting on their learning and its relevance to their future • Use of MetaSkills Framework to build post school relevance for learners where appropriate • Careers paths should be clearly signposted within curriculum areas through our approaches to DYW	• Use of MetaSkills Framework to build post school relevance for learners where appropriate • Career paths should be clearly signposted within curriculum areas through our approaches to DYW

APPENDICE 4 – CROSS CUTTING THEMES IN FOCUS

	OPPORTUNITIES IN EXISTANCE EXEMPLARS
Enterprise	• i-work themes; pupil led topics • Problem solving activities across all subject areas • S3 Business Management Challenges • Mitsubishi Challenge • S2 entrepreneurial event • S1 Navy transition event
Equality	• Equaliteas Group • PSE Themes • Ethical topics in RMPS and Business Education • JY High Street • PEF interventions including Participatory Budgeting
Sustainable Development	• Topics within Geography including use of plastics • Science topics including use of materials and Ellen McArthur materials • Business Education topic on ethics • Poverty proofing activities including JY High Street • Eco Schools
Leadership	• Opportunities to lead learning across subjects ivoice Pathway Leadership Pathway
Creativity	• Opportunities to be creative across all subject areas
Global Citizenship	• Trips abroad • YPI S2 i-contribute • 1+2 Language Learning

[i] Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025 SDS & Scottish Government