Parkside Academy
Key Stage 4 ICT Policy

Origins of the Curriculum

Our Key Stage 4 ICT programme of study is derived from the Department for Education's Guidance on Digital Functional Skills curriculum content. It underpins Parkside Haven's commitment to providing a high-quality, inclusive education within an Alternative Provision setting. The curriculum is designed to ensure that every pupil — regardless of the duration of their placement — has access to a broad and challenging ICT curriculum that reflects the standards of mainstream education while remaining responsive to their individual contexts.

Our pupils arrive from a diverse range of home schools, with entries for examinations across multiple exam boards. To accommodate this, our curriculum is designed around the Department for Education's content guidance rather than any single specification. This ensures a robust and balanced programme which focuses on developing key knowledge and transferable digital skills necessary for success in any exam context. The curriculum is intentionally designed to identify and address gaps in learning, ensuring students develop the foundations needed to secure the best possible outcomes in their Functional Skills examinations.

In addition to the ICT learning delivered by their home schools, Parkside Haven equips students with the knowledge and skills to be entered for a Digital Functional Skills qualification at Entry Level 3 or Level 1, in agreement with their home school. Our Alternative Provision context gives our teachers the flexibility to tailor the curriculum, adapting delivery to support individual student progression and engagement.

Content and Sequencing

The fundamental areas of our ICT curriculum include:

- Using devices and handling information
- Creating and editing digital content
- Communicating digitally
- Transacting online
- Being safe and responsible online

The ICT curriculum at Parkside Haven aims to enable students to participate confidently and safely in digital and online activities both in the workplace and wider life. Students develop confidence and fluency with digital skills and grow an appreciation for their importance in modern life and work. They demonstrate their understanding by applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks and scenarios, laying the foundation for further study, employment, and independent life.

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Learning objectives are carefully sequenced to build progressively, with regular opportunities to revisit and consolidate prior learning. This approach secures knowledge over time and helps to close gaps. *While our intention is to deliver full coverage of Digital Functional Skills qualification at Entry Level 3 or Level 1, adaptations are made where needed to meet the unique needs of pupils* — especially those accessing fractional or short-term placements. Teaching is scaffolded and modelled effectively, drawing on cognitive science principles (such as Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and Fiorella & Mayer's research on learning transfer) to ensure all lessons remain engaging, accessible, and challenging for all learners.

This policy outlines the full-time curriculum offer; however, further refinements and adaptations may be made for pupils accessing the provision through fractional or short-term placements, so that the curriculum remains relevant, manageable, and purposeful. * *Where pupils curriculum is co-constructed or provided by their home schools or ICT may be omitted from their fractional offer entirely.*

Pathways	**Roll Status (full time/fractional)**
KS4 Haven Plus Double PEX (up to 2 years)	Single Roll
KS4 Haven Plus CiC (up to 2 years)	Dual Roll – fractional placement
Haven Highly Complex KS4 (up to 2 years)	Dual Roll – fractional placement

Overview of units of study:

Term	**Autumn**	**Spring**	**Summer**
Year 1	TBC	TBC	TBC
Year 2	TBC	TBC	TBC

Assessment and Outcomes

Formative assessment is embedded throughout the ICT curriculum. Teachers continually check pupils' understanding through questioning, classroom tasks, and observation. These ongoing checks provide timely feedback to students and inform adaptive teaching. In addition, termly summative assessments are used through bespoke tasks directly aligned with the curriculum's learning objectives. These allow teachers to monitor progress, identify areas needing support or stretch, and adapt future learning plans.

Assessment outcomes feed into personalised learning plans and help inform reintegration decisions, target-setting, and next-step planning. The curriculum's intended outcomes extend beyond measurable ICT attainment; students gain confidence, creativity, cultural awareness, and the ability to express themselves digitally. Progress data is used diagnostically to evaluate individual achievement and refine wider curriculum design and delivery.

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The Parkside Haven ICT curriculum ensures that all learners leave with the essential digital skills for work and daily life, giving them an advantage in an increasingly digital world.

ICT and the Wider Curriculum

Cultural Capital

At Parkside Haven, we believe that every learner should develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours that enable them to participate fully in modern society and the workplace. Our ICT curriculum is structured to build cultural capital through the teaching of real-world, practical digital skills, designed to reduce disadvantage and broaden horizons. Pupils have opportunities to use up-to-date technologies, explore how these are applied across industries, and develop their understanding of STEM's role in everyday life.

SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development)
Through ICT, students gain an understanding of how digital technology impacts the world around them. Learning tasks are grounded in real-life contexts and encourage students to think critically about the audience and purpose of digital solutions. This promotes thoughtful decision-making and supports the development of reading, comprehension, and functional literacy skills within purposeful contexts.

British Values
The ICT curriculum actively promotes British values, particularly resilience, teamwork, and respect. Pupils learn to problem-solve, persevere through challenges, reflect on their work, and collaborate with others. They are taught to value the importance of listening, respecting different perspectives, and working as part of a team to reach shared goals.

Careers
ICT unlocks a wide range of career pathways. Our curriculum makes clear links between digital skills and real-world opportunities, so that students understand the practical relevance of what they learn and the pathways open to them in further education, training, and employment.

Reading
Reading is embedded throughout ICT learning. Pupils are encouraged to read, interpret, and respond to digital instructions and content. Key vocabulary is explicitly taught and reinforced through classroom displays, glossaries, and digital tools such as e-readers. High standards of literacy, correct use of standard English, and clear articulation are consistently promoted.

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Wider School Life

Pupils also practise and apply ICT skills informally during break and lunchtime activities, which reinforce digital confidence, collaboration, and social skills vital for success in wider life.