

Section 9 – Post-16

Post-16 provision is transformational where it changes the opportunities available to young people after Cleaswell, increasing their independence, qualifications, confidence and capacity to participate successfully in adult life. Personalised programmes across the main site and Appleby connect academic and functional learning with Preparation for Adulthood, meaningful accreditation, work-related learning, community participation and intended destinations. In 2026, 100% of GCSE entries achieved a qualification across English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Statistics and PE; school destination tracking records 100% of 2024/25 leavers entering positive onward destinations, while individual independence outcomes include students progressing to travel to school independently by public transport. Leaders are also removing wider progression barriers through collaboration with FE partners and by co-developing SEND-specific horticulture accreditation with the Royal Horticultural Society. The impact therefore extends beyond successful qualifications: students leave with greater autonomy, employability, community access and realistic routes into education, training, employment or supported adult life.

What is going well: Evidence to support this judgement

Strategic Leadership of the Post-16 Provision

Post-16 at Cleaswell Hill is built around what each young person is working towards after school. Across the main school site and Appleby Centre, individual 16 to 19 study programmes combine appropriate Entry Level to GCSE qualifications, English and mathematics where needed, work-related learning, RSHE, Preparation for Adulthood and wider non-qualification activity. Starting points, EHCP/PLIM outcomes, aspirations and intended destinations determine the balance of each programme so that Engagement, Core and Extended students follow different but equally ambitious routes towards further education, training, employment, supported provision or adult life.

Leaders design provision around individual need and destination rather than diagnosis, age or site. Engagement, Core and Extended pathways maintain equally high expectations while appropriately differing in subject and functional learning, accreditation, therapy, independence and community participation; assessment, therapy, student and family voice and destination evidence are used to adapt pathways and timetables as needs and aspirations change. Four recent external QA sessions with Post-16 leaders, including observation at the Appleby Centre, have confirmed that Appleby provides a strong, well-sequenced curriculum for Extended learners and a defined cohort of Core learners, with accreditation, independence, employability and community participation at its centre. Leaders are equally clear about where Appleby is not appropriate: Engagement pupils and some pupils with more complex Core profiles remain on the main site because they require the more intensive therapeutic, sensory and communication-rich environment available there. This distinction is based on assessed need, curriculum access and safeguarding rather than pathway status or age alone.

Leaders have a comprehensive and accurate understanding of curriculum and teaching across both sites. Curriculum conversations, observations, work/response scrutiny, assessment, moderation, qualification outcomes, pupil voice and SIP/governor scrutiny identify variation; leaders respond through coaching, professional development, curriculum refinement and stronger cross-site alignment, then review whether action has improved students' learning and participation.

Leadership is informed by a detailed understanding of deprivation and the additional barriers within the Post-16 cohort, including social-care involvement, attendance, medical and physical

needs, communication, regulation, safeguarding vulnerability and family circumstances. Leaders triangulate these factors with achievement and participation evidence, coordinate closely with families, therapy, health, social care, FE/adult services and Northumberland County Council, and use external challenge to refine provision and local progression routes over time.

Achievement in the Post-16 Provision

Post-16 achievement is consistently strong across Engagement, Core and Extended pathways. From precise starting points, students develop increasingly detailed academic, functional, communication, vocational and independence knowledge and skills; Earwig, EHCP/PLIM and PfA tracking, work/response scrutiny, practical outcomes, AAC/alternative recording, moderation and case review show high-quality responses and increasing retention, application and generalisation, including preparation for more advanced study where relevant.

Students achieve meaningful and increasingly ambitious qualifications where accreditation is appropriate, without qualification routes placing an artificial ceiling on achievement. Across successive cohorts students have achieved GCSEs, including grades 4 and 5, alongside Entry Level, Functional Skills and vocational awards; 2026 results show 100% achievement across all GCSE subjects entered, including English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Statistics and PE, alongside 100% achievement in AQA Entry Level Mathematics and key vocational routes. Leaders use the school's complete qualification profile alongside published information because the September 2026 IDSR does not contain complete 16–18 qualification, retention or destination datasets for this specialist provision.

High expectations apply equally where conventional examinations or written work are not appropriate measures of achievement. For students with the most complex SEND, leaders evaluate progress through EHCP/PLIM and PfA outcomes, communication, regulation, engagement, independence, OCR/accreditation evidence and reduced reliance on adult prompting; wider longitudinal evidence shows disadvantaged pupils achieving at least as strongly as their peers, while Post-16 case sampling tests that students known or previously known to social care and those facing additional barriers achieve well and develop detailed knowledge and skills.

Achievement translates into readiness for adult life and the next stage rather than ending at qualification outcomes. Academic, vocational, PfA and independence outcomes give students the knowledge, skills and, where relevant, qualifications needed for intended destinations; school destination tracking records 100% of 2024/25 leavers entering positive onward destinations, providing evidence that students are very well prepared for highly appropriate further education, training, employment, supported provision or adult social care.

Curriculum and Teaching

Post-16 curriculum and teaching are consistently strong: the three pathways provide appropriately different but equally ambitious routes from individual starting points towards qualifications, further learning and adulthood. Curriculum sequencing from 14+ connects subject and functional knowledge, English and mathematics, relevant work-related learning, accreditation and PfA; subject-specific rigour is maintained through progression frameworks, specialist teaching, subject vocabulary and qualification criteria so students build knowledge sequentially and cumulatively rather than completing disconnected activities.

English and mathematics remain integral to study programmes and are taught at the level most likely to improve future independence and progression, from functional communication, literacy



and numeracy through Entry Level and Functional Skills to GCSE. Final 2026 results show that all nine GCSE English Language entries and all five GCSE Mathematics entries achieved a graded qualification, while observation and community-learning evidence shows increasingly confident application of mathematics to budgeting, measurement and everyday life.

Teaching is consistently strong and highly responsive to individual need. Teachers combine secure subject and SEND expertise with explicit instruction, modelling, scaffolding, retrieval, repetition, accessible communication and carefully faded support, making highly effective choices about what to teach and when and how to teach it; formative assessment adjusts language, pace, challenge, prompting and recording demands in real time, and external SIP scrutiny across 2025/26 confirms highly effective teaching, strong differentiation and embedded therapeutic practice.

Teachers increasingly make the relevance of curriculum learning to future careers explicit, supported by subject-specific careers materials across 13 curriculum areas and progression information covering further education, technical routes, apprenticeships, supported internships and employment. Curriculum review and pupil voice are used to test whether students can explain how subject knowledge and transferable skills connect to future routes.

Assessment is used to improve teaching rather than simply record progress, and leaders make astute adaptations where evidence identifies a barrier or gap. Scrutiny of written output for Entry Level Post-16 students led teachers and OT to refine teaching and recording approaches, with measurable improvement evident within two weeks. The same responsive approach has led to the development of a horticulture accreditation co-created with the Royal Horticultural Society specifically for learners with SEND, broadening Entry 3/Level 1 progression routes towards further learning, vocational experience and employment. Summer 2026 external evaluation identified this as curriculum innovation with national relevance and as a model of sector-leading inclusive curriculum design. Leaders are also working with FE partners to broaden Entry Level routes and refining the Core PfA curriculum, with impact reviewed through 2026/27 qualification, PfA and destination evidence.

Preparation for Next Steps

Preparation for next steps is consistently strong and begins well before students leave school. Person-centred transition planning links EHCP/PfA outcomes, qualifications, careers guidance, family aspirations and intended destinations, including continued participation in education or training to at least age 18; school tracking records 100% of 2024/25 leavers entering positive onward destinations and, with consent, leaders maintain annual contact for three years to evaluate placement stability and refine future provision.

PfA is securely embedded across all pathways and deliberately matched to what successful adult life will mean for each student. Independent living, health, employment and community inclusion are developed through increasingly authentic contexts; summer 2026 evidence shows 91% of Core, 88% of Extended and 91% of Appleby PfA PLIM targets were met, while governor monitoring records two students progressing to travel to school independently by public transport.

Work-related learning is purposeful, graduated and matched to students' interests, readiness and intended pathways. All Post-16 students access meaningful work-related learning through in-school roles, enterprise, volunteering, community learning and, where appropriate, external workplace experience; WRLE registers, Compass+, employer feedback and pupil-level review are used to evaluate participation, responsibility, employability and increasing independence over time.

Students have multiple opportunities to learn from employers and providers about work, employment and the skills valued in the workplace. The Years 8-13 Provider Access entitlement includes at least six encounters with local providers and is supplemented by employer, college, training-provider and community partnerships; Compass+ and encounter records enable leaders to check breadth and equity.

Effective partnerships with Northumberland County Council, social care, local employers, FE providers and, where relevant, higher-education partners make transition planning practical and expose students to academic, technical, vocational, supported-internship and employment routes. Personalised careers guidance supports students to identify strengths, support needs and realistic but ambitious goals.

Careers and PfA teaching include local, regional and national labour-market information so that students can consider how employment needs and trends, qualifications and pathway choices relate to their aspirations. Leaders have correctly identified this as an area to deepen through the 2026/27 Strategic Careers Plan and will evaluate impact through accessible learner voice and assessment.

Wider opportunities

Wider opportunities in Post-16 are consistently strong and deliberately extend learning beyond qualifications. PSHE/RSHE, Duke of Edinburgh, volunteering, enterprise, horticulture, catering, performing arts, community learning and wider enrichment develop confidence, communication, independence, social and emotional understanding, leadership and employability, enabling students to apply learning increasingly successfully in adult-life contexts.

Citizenship, contribution and student agency are developed through community participation, volunteering, pupil voice and, where developmentally appropriate, leadership and democratic experiences. Enrichment Passports, pathway planning, reasonable adjustments and personalised communication support students from all backgrounds to take part and benefit rather than simply be offered opportunities.

Leaders regularly evaluate the breadth, participation and impact of wider opportunities through Enrichment Passports, PfA/EHCP and PLIM evidence, participation records, pupil voice, family feedback, governor monitoring and SIP review. Findings have informed sustained refinement and expansion of the offer, including community and enterprise activity, catering and horticulture. During summer 2026, the catering initiative progressed from planning into implementation, with an outdoor café operating as a community café within the Post-16 grounds; families welcomed its contribution to pupils' independent-living skills. A more permanent off-site café facility has been identified, with local businesses supporting development, while an off-site commercial kitchen and accredited training offer are planned for autumn 2026. These authentic environments increasingly enable pupils to apply communication, numeracy, independence and employability skills in contexts directly connected to adult life.

Inclusive Practices in the Post-16 Provision

Inclusive practice in Post-16 is consistently strong because provision is designed around individual barriers rather than diagnosis or pathway labels. Responsive timetables, curriculum choices and teaching are shaped by EHCP/PLIM evidence, communication and sensory profiles, therapy assessment, family insight and destination planning so that complexity of need does not lower ambition or restrict access to an appropriate study programme.



Reasonable adjustments are embedded within everyday teaching rather than added retrospectively. Total Communication, AAC, assistive technology, adapted recording, sensory and regulation strategies, positioning, access arrangements and integrated SaLT/OT enable students to participate and demonstrate what they know with increasing independence; leaders evaluate sustained impact through curriculum/EHCP progress, therapy evidence, observations and longitudinal case sampling.

Because all Cleaswell Hill students have SEND, leaders scrutinise the additional barriers within this population rather than treating SEND as a single group. Disadvantage, social-care involvement, attendance, medical need, communication, regulation and family circumstances are triangulated with achievement and participation evidence; flexible main-site/Appleby arrangements, pathway planning and personalised support are adjusted promptly so students facing the greatest barriers access, participate in and benefit from curriculum and personal-development opportunities.

Careers and transition support are similarly personalised so communication, cognition, disadvantage or dependency do not prevent students from influencing decisions about adult life. Accessible careers education, person-centred planning, provider encounters and individual guidance support students to express preferences and make increasingly informed decisions about appropriate further education, training, employment, supported provision or adult-social-care routes; destination tracking and transition follow-up test whether this support results in suitable next steps.

Supporting Documentation	Quality Assurance Activities
• Post-16 Rationale; Post-16 at a Glance; Post-16 Implementation Plans (long and concise). • Preparation for Adulthood Rationale and Senior Engagement, Core and Extended PfA schemes of work; EHCP/PLIM and PfA tracking. • Qualification Report/IDSR; three-year examination and accreditation records; qualification pathways/flightpath; moderation and verification evidence. • Work Related Learning Experience Rationale and Register; vocational, enterprise, community and work-experience records. • Careers & IAG Policy; Provider Access Policy; Careers Subject Framework; curriculum-to-careers resources; Compass+ Careers Impact Review and Strategic Careers Plan. • Destination tracking and leaver records; three-year destination follow-up; Post-School Pathways Staff Guide and Possible Destinations for Pupils. • Earwig and curriculum progress information; Enrichment Passports;	• Termly Post-16 progress and pathway review, triangulating Earwig, EHCP/PLIM, PfA, qualification, attendance and destination evidence. • Curriculum conversations, learning walks, lesson observations and work/response scrutiny across the main site and Appleby Centre, including scrutiny of alternative methods of recording and practical outcomes. • Internal moderation and comparative judgement, with external moderation/verification of accredited work where applicable. • Pupil-level and vulnerable-student case sampling, including disadvantaged students, those known to social care, students with attendance/medical barriers and those at risk of an insecure destination. • Termly careers/Compass+ review; scrutiny of the WRLE register, provider and employer encounters, careers guidance and student participation. • Multi-disciplinary review involving teaching, SaLT and OT to evaluate communication, regulation, physical/sensory access,

pupil/student and family voice; annual review and transition documentation. • Integrated Therapy Team assessments/evidence, access arrangements, assistive technology and communication/sensory adaptations. • Governor monitoring of Careers and 14–19 provision (2024 and 2025); SIP reports 2025/26; Appleby and other external QA evidence.	independence and the impact of reasonable adjustments. • Student and family voice, annual reviews and transition case reviews used to test whether programmes remain appropriate to aspirations, needs and intended destinations. • Annual destination follow-up for three years, evaluating sustained participation and placement stability and feeding findings back into curriculum and transition planning. • Governor link monitoring and FGB scrutiny of curriculum, qualifications, PfA, careers, work-related learning, destinations and vulnerable groups. • External challenge and validation through the SIP, local authority, FE/community partners and other external QA, with findings incorporated into the SEF and Post-16 implementation plan. • Annual 16–19 study-programme audit against DfE requirements, alongside termly pathway review, to test the coherence and individual suitability of qualifications/accreditation, English and mathematics, work-related learning, RSHE/PfA, wider non-qualification activity and intended destination.
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Next Steps (Including targets taken from 5-year plan)

Further strengthen the breadth and progression of work-related learning and vocational experiences, particularly for students entering the Appleby Centre, through sustained employer/community partnerships and authentic environments such as the community café, enterprise and horticulture. Evaluate impact on employability, independence, aspiration and readiness for intended destinations.

Embed and refine a coherent, pathway-specific Preparation for Adulthood curriculum across Engagement, Core and Extended provision, ensuring functional daily living, communication, health, employment, community participation and independence are increasingly applied in authentic contexts and matched closely to individual EHCP outcomes and future pathways.

Strengthen longitudinal assessment and evaluation of PfA, careers and work-related learning, aligning PfA/WRLE tracking, EHCP/PLIM evidence and Compass+ so that leaders can demonstrate progress from individual starting points, equity across pathways and the sustained impact of provision over time.

Further sharpen transition and destination planning from Year 9 onwards, evaluating transitions between pathways, the main site and Appleby, and into FE, employment, supported provision or adult social care. Strengthen cross-pathway staff communication, family partnership and multi-agency planning so that positive destinations remain secure and sustainable beyond school.

