



September 2017

# **Semi-Formal Curriculum Pathway Handbook**

## **Vision**

Aspire, Challenge and Empower (ACE)

Our vision is that “all learners access outstanding teaching and facilities personalised to their individual learning needs, within a happy, confident and proud school”.

## **Values**

**Achieve**

**Self Esteem**

**Positive**

**Inclusive and friendly**

**Respect (dignity)**

**Enjoyment**

**What is the Semi - Formal Curriculum Pathway?**

Learners consistently working below the level of National Curriculum attainment targets for Year 1 access our 'semi - formal curriculum' and receive an adaptation of the National Curriculum alongside broader areas of learning which are likely to offered in the context of repetition, over learning and generalisation. The semi - formal curriculum at Springwater School continues to emphasise **communication, choice making, problem solving** and **life skills** and build upon the foundations of learning on which the pre-formal curriculum pathways are based. Learners may have strength or abilities in certain curriculum areas – such as number, and where appropriate such strength may be taught formally in order to ensure linear progress.

Pupils following our semi-formal curriculum access the range of National Curriculum subjects for their Key Stage, modified in the light of their developmental level and special educational needs. Where a pupil is working within the National Curriculum attainment targets for a specific subject, they will access a formal pathway for that subject and a semi-formal pathway for other areas of the curriculum.

The structure of the National Curriculum, in terms of which subjects are compulsory at each key stage and what we therefore aim to adapt and plan for our formal learners, is set out in the table below:

**Figure 1** – Structure of the National Curriculum

	Key stage 1	Key stage 2	Key stage 3	Key stage 4
Age	5-7	7-11	11-14	14-16
Year groups	1-2	3-6	7-9	10-11
<b>Core subjects</b>				
English	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓
Science	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Foundation subjects</b>				
Art and design	✓	✓	✓	
Citizenship			✓	✓
Computing	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Key stage 1	Key stage 2	Key stage 3	Key stage 4
Design and technology	✓	✓	✓	
Languages		✓	✓	
Geography	✓	✓	✓	
History	✓	✓	✓	
Music	✓	✓	✓	
Physical education	✓	✓	✓	✓

Department for Education Statutory Guidance  
National curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4 (Updated 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014)

The ‘curriculum’ at Springwater School comprises all the learning and other experiences that we plan and deliver for our pupils. The National Curriculum forms one part of our school curriculum. In accordance with DfE guidance, we strive to “offer a school curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which: **promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.**”

Most pupils accessing the semi-formal pathway continue to have specialist provision such as hydrotherapy, rebound therapy, physiotherapy, intensive interaction and physical development programmes in addition to accessing classroom based learning.

As the term ‘semi - formal’ implies, there is structure at times with a strong emphasis on a grounded curriculum relevant to the age, stage, and needs of the pupil. For example in Sixth Form, the emphasis on a preparing for adulthood, is essential and relevant to the age and stage of the young person in preparing them for leaving school. Teachers ensure that learning is linked to practical activities and consolidated and applied in practical sessions.

Pupils experience the appropriate semi-formal subject areas in both a discrete and theme based way in the Primary and Secondary departments. Pupils working at the formal level in Key Stage 4 and in the Springforest Sixth Form pursue accreditation pathways (e.g. ASDAN and Entry Level exams) and follow the appropriate syllabus in each accredited subject.

## **Planning in the Semi-Formal Curriculum**

Each department has a long-term plan, which is a three-year rolling programme based on a variety of creative themes or topics. The theme or topic changes each term. In the long-term plan there are suggested Equals units. Equals units are differentiated schemes of work based on the National Curriculum.

For our semi - formal learners, teachers use and adapt these Equals schemes of work to develop medium-term plans. The medium-term plans identify personalised priorities for each pupil and allows teachers to plan for progression. Teachers may also produce their own short-term, weekly or daily plans. There is no requirement to do this and therefore no agreed format. Teachers who wish to do so devise their own ways of presenting a weekly or daily plan.

In medium and short-term plans, learning outcomes for pupils on the semi - formal curriculum pathway are taken from the relevant subject's Equals scheme of work. In addition to these subject specific outcomes, individual and personalised MAPP targets are set to measure pupil's progress in key areas. These MAPP targets are also referred to on medium and short-term plans.

Please refer to the 6<sup>th</sup> form Curriculum Handbook for more information regarding planning for semi-formal learners using the ASDAN personal progress curriculum.

## **Assessment in the Semi-Formal Curriculum**

Ongoing and rigorous assessment is at the heart of the curriculum at Springwater School as it:

- Enables us to be certain about the appropriateness of the personalised curriculum we aim to provide for each learner.
- Informs teaching.
- Drives progress.

Teachers assess pupils termly against P Scales and National Curriculum descriptors using Lancashire County Council's Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting (PIVATS). These assessments are also used to compare against national data statistics and school practice.

Ongoing assessment of key skills is structured using the Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress (MAPP) approach. Within or alongside MAPP there may be other, more specific targets such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy goals, SaLT targets, visual and/or hearing impairment goals and music therapy targets. Teachers also use a phonics tracking document where this appropriate for the stage of development of the pupil (Key Stage one, two, three and four)

For pupils accessing the semi-formal curriculum, a range of alternative assessments may also be used, in accordance with the identified needs of pupils, in order to capture a full picture of pupil progress. These measures include the reception baseline

assessment, phonics screening checks, measures of reading age or attention and engagement levels.

All Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form learners also follow ASDAN accredited modules to underpin their curriculum studies.

A multi-faceted approach to assessment is necessary, because a single type of assessment may not give a full picture of the pupil's needs. Choosing a personalised combination of assessments for each child allows the school to establish an accurate picture of a pupil's attainment and progress. Having a range of options allows staff to adapt their approach according to each pupil's specific needs, and means that the school has a variety of ways to demonstrate the progress pupils are making.

### **Evidence Gathering and recording pupil progress**

Pupil work should be recorded through a range of methods, including those which might be regarded as formal and usual – pupil exercise books or work files. Evidence of pupil progress should be gathered in other forms if more appropriate such as photographic. It is essential that no single method is used as gathering evidence of progress over time is essential. All work (including photo evidence) should be held in a file, or in an exercise book, dated and annotated.

Pupil work should be marked, and annotated as a matter of course. This can be done during the course of supporting a pupil. A least one piece of pupil work should be marked and levelled weekly. This work may be taken to be moderated on a termly basis. It is not expected that separate pieces of work will be produced for moderation purposes. A short format for recording a level is provided to all teachers of semi-formal pupils.

### **Moderation of judgements and the annual cycle of assessment**

When moderating for the semi-formal pathway there are three main components of effective moderation:

- Consistency – making sure the same teacher makes the same judgements now and in six months, and that different teachers make the same assessments of the same pupil
- Comparability – making sure different assessments are comparable
- Fairness – that the context and character of assessment has given pupils the chance to demonstrate what they know. This will be facilitated by effective evidence gathering.

Moderation is a balance between accountability and improvement, and effective moderation creates a feedback loop between assessment and planning. It should not be the case that

teachers plan, assess and then moderate, but rather moderation informs planning and assessment, and vice versa.

Teachers in the semi-formal pathway are encouraged to regularly share their methods of gathering pupil evidence – work scrutiny.

They are encouraged to set up working pairs to compare assessment judgements

## **Training**

All new and existing members of staff will receive in-house training (delivered in partnership with The Red Kite Alliance) around the formal curriculum.

*Handbook to be read in conjunction with the Curriculum Policy and Assessment Policy.*