



# Curriculum Policy

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Policy Adopted by the Governing Body

09/04/2019

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Sean Pond  
Chair of Governors

Springwater School is a space of sanctuary, which recognises and values the diversity of our school community as a rich source which supports the learning of all. We are an inclusive setting and promote tolerance, understanding and equality for all regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity.



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## Introduction: Purpose and aims

### INTRODUCTION

The curriculum at Springwater is underpinned by our vision and key values:

#### 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

### OVERVIEW

At Springwater School, we recognise that our pupils have very specific, diverse and individual educational needs and our curriculum aims to meet these in a carefully considered, creative way. Our aim is that our pupils leave Springwater post-19, as independent and autonomous as possible with the skills to make their own choices in life, whether this is at home, in activities, for courses of further study, or employment. We want to enable our pupils to become active learners who can effectively communicate their needs and wants. The curriculum is built upon the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum (NC), but differentiated at a level to meet all our pupil’s very individual learning needs. All pupils’ access core and foundation subjects, but these are presented to pupils in different ways appropriate to their level and in a style suited to their individual abilities. These may be described differently within planning and timetables.

Our population consists of pupils with a wide range of learning needs from those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, to those with severe learning difficulties and those with more moderate learning difficulties (particularly present within our sixth form provision). Furthermore, many of our pupils have additional and life-long, multi layered challenges including autism, challenging behaviour, communication difficulties, multi-sensory impairments, complex medical needs and physical disabilities. Having such complex needs can sometimes make it difficult for our pupils to be in a ‘ready state’ for learning, therefore meeting pupil’s individual sensory needs is an integral part of our curriculum, too.



## **CURRICULUM AIMS**

The curriculum in all schools should be relevant, coherent, broad and balanced and aim to: -

- Provide opportunity for all pupils to learn and achieve
- Promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

In addition to these generic aims, the school community at Springwater have identified the following curriculum goals and we aim to: -

- Promote high expectations and challenge pupils to achieve their very best
- Provide a personalised approach linked to the pupil's individual needs and the development of key skills for life including the ability to communicate, socialise and be as independent as possible
- Enable pupils to become active learners, leading healthier lifestyles and enjoy physical activity
- Enrich the curriculum with a wide range of on and off-site learning experiences which promote fuller participation in community life
- Recognise achievement when appropriate, both within school and through external means.
- Provide a curriculum framework in which pupils are happy, confident and secure

These aims inform the development of our curriculum plans, provide focus for the work of the school and establish an essential reference point when reviewing curriculum provision.



## Policy detail

### **CURRICULUM PATHWAYS**

As identified earlier, our school population consists of pupils with a vast range of complex learning needs. We believe that each pupil is entitled to a personalised and appropriate curriculum for them and to achieve this, we group pupils into curriculum pathways. These are not necessarily static for the pupil's school career, i.e. a pupil may move from one pathway into another, should their progress deem this appropriate. In addition, pupils may straddle two pathways for some or all of their school career, particularly if their academic profile is uneven. However, on arrival at Springwater an appropriate curriculum pathway(s) is identified for each pupil, allowing them access to the most suitable curriculum offer.

#### ***Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) pathway***

The EYFS curriculum pathway is for all our learners aged 2-5 years. Once they reach the end of their Reception year, some may stay on within the EYFS setting until the end of KS1 (year two), whilst others may be placed in more appropriate curriculum pathway groups. All pupils move out of the EYFS class before they reach KS2.

Within this class, we work to the EYFS Curriculum which is currently organised into seven areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children's earliest experiences help to build a secure foundation for learning throughout their school years. Therefore, all our activities are planned to ensure maximum learning takes place throughout the day, whilst ongoing observations are completed to assess learning. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of activities throughout the week which are designed to help the children learn new skills, gain confidence and have the opportunity to form good relationships with staff and pupils alike.

Please see our separate EYFS Curriculum policy for more detailed information on this curriculum pathway.

#### ***Pre-formal pathway***

The pre-formal curriculum pathway is typically for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) who need a very special approach to their learning.



The DfE's definition of pupils with PMLD is: "Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties have complex learning needs. In addition to very severe learning difficulties, pupils have other significant difficulties, such as physical disabilities, sensory impairment, or a severe medical condition. Pupils require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and also for their personal care. They are likely to need sensory stimulation and a curriculum broken down into very small steps. Some pupils communicate by gesture, eye pointing or symbols, others by very simple language. Their attainments are likely to remain in the early P scale range (P1-P4) throughout their school life."

The pre-formal curriculum is designed to meet the needs of pupils through a very personalised learning approach focusing on early communication, cognition, physical, personal, social and emotional skills that are the foundations of learning. It is based on an early year's approach to teaching and learning, recognising the importance of play and the need for multi-sensory resources enabling pupils to explore and make sense of the world around them. There will be a significant focus on specialist provision such as hydrotherapy, rebound therapy, physiotherapy, massage stories, intensive interaction, movement programmes e.t.c. The staffing ratios required to access this specialist provision are usually higher within pre-formal classes.

The pre-formal curriculum pathway is for learners largely working between P1 and P4.

Reporting for this pathway will be through the 7 aspects of engagement continuum and parents will also be provided with a copy of the final MAPP assessment judgements. Evidence is gathered for individual pupils through the online learning journal, Tapestry. Please see our assessment policy for further details around how we assess and measure pupil progress within this pathway.

Please see our pre-formal curriculum handbook for more detailed information on this pathway.

### ***Semi-formal pathway***

The semi-formal curriculum pathway is typically for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD) who need a highly differentiated approach to learning.

The DfE's definition of pupils with SLD is: "Pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD) are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and have associated difficulties with mobility and communication. These pupils have significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. They may also have difficulties in mobility and co-ordination, communication and perception and the acquisition of self-help skills. Some individuals with severe learning disabilities may also be diagnosed with another condition or syndrome."

The semi-formal curriculum recognises those pupils that have a range of complex learning difficulties and disabilities; it is the combination of two or more of these difficulties that the curriculum is designed to meet through a personalised learning approach. It is an approach based on the pupil becoming a literate communicator, a



mathematical thinker as well as acquiring early learning skills and is designed to be developmentally appropriate. It is a curriculum for pupils who learn best when learning is related to their own experiences. Some pupils may learn through structured play whilst others will learn more effectively through functional activities or topic-based approaches. Most learners in this pathway will continue to require concrete resources and support for their learning through scaffolded and adult directed support.

The semi-formal curriculum pathway is for learners largely working between P5 and P8.

Reporting for this pathway will be through subject areas and parents will also be provided with a copy of the final MAPP assessment judgements. Evidence is gathered for individual pupils through work books, folders and the online learning journal, Tapestry. Please see our assessment policy for further details around how we assess and measure pupil progress within this pathway.

Please see our semi-formal curriculum handbook for more detailed information on this pathway.

### ***Formal pathway***

The formal curriculum pathway is typically for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) who need a slightly differentiated approach to learning.

The DfE's definition of pupils with MLD is: "Pupils with moderate learning difficulties will have attainments significantly below expected levels in most areas of the curriculum, despite appropriate interventions. They have much greater difficulty than their peers in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills and in understanding concepts. They may also have associated speech and language delay, low self-esteem, low levels of concentration and under-developed social skills."

The formal curriculum is delivered through individual taught subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science in primary and secondary. It is taught through ASDAN Personal and Social Development (PSD) modules and OCR Life and Living Qualifications (Jan 2019) in sixth form. The formal curriculum recognises that many of the pupils have a range of needs and may still require access to specialist provision, for example, through the use of a communication aid, a writing slope, or an auditory aid.

The formal curriculum may look very different in primary and secondary to what is looks like in sixth form as the gap widens and needs begin to emerge as pupils get older. There are few (if any) formal learners within our primary and secondary departments due to the National Inclusion Agenda where more significant support may be provided for these young people in mainstream settings. The majority of our formal learners are within our sixth form provision as we are one of the only providers of education for these learners at this age within the local area.

The designation of a formal curriculum pathway will be dependent on the age and stage of the learner.



Reporting for this pathway will be through subject or ASDAN areas and parents will also be provided with a copy of the final MAPP assessment judgements. Evidence is gathered for individual pupils through work books, folders and the online learning journal, Tapestry. Please see our assessment policy for further details around how we assess and measure pupil progress within this pathway.

Please see our formal curriculum handbook for more detailed information on this pathway.

## **CURRICULUM PLANNING**

The content of our curriculum is largely developed from the National Curriculum programmes of study and the subsequent differentiated EQUALS units. The leadership team work alongside subject coordinators and department heads to agree a breadth of coverage.

Primary and secondary have developed long term plans (three year rolling programmes) based on a variety of creative themes or topics. These topics change, termly.

Sixth form run a life skills-based curriculum with many opportunities to work within and around the local community. Their curriculum is underpinned by ASDAN modules and subjects taught include: identity and cultural diversity, healthy lifestyles, community participation, enterprise, global dimensions, technology and the media, creativity and critical thinking.

From the long term rolling programmes, individual class teachers then develop medium term plans which differentiate the schemes into personalised objectives for each pupil. Medium term plans include learning outcomes and pupil targets, they describe the main teaching activities and organisation, they may suggest the equipment/resources/key words to be used and they will identify expected outcomes.

Short term (daily/weekly) plans set out the content of a single lesson or sequence of lessons and provide greater detail about the teaching activities, support strategies and the intended outcomes for pupils. These are **not** compulsory for teachers at Springwater, however teachers are clear that planning is critical and underpins effective teaching, playing an important role in shaping students' understanding and progression. In order to ensure maximum progress through effective planning the senior leadership team and governing body will complete regular lesson observations, learning walks and quality assurances.

Long, medium and short term planning will look different within each curriculum pathway.

## **EXTENDED CURRICULUM OPPORTUNITIES**



Springwater recognises the potential enhancement to the educational development that extra curricula activities offer. We are committed to providing our pupils with a wide range of experiences outside of the normal school timetable.

Within each class's weekly timetable there is an opportunity for an educational visit – this may be within the local community or slightly further afield. Lunchtime leisure opportunities are promoted. Rebound therapy, music therapy, swimming and horse riding are offered within each department, dependent on pupil needs. Currently, we offer a youth club once a week for pupils in year 10 and upwards, who would benefit from extended social opportunities. Sixth form pupils undertake various work experience placements throughout their three year study with us, both within school and out in the community. They also run additional events throughout the year including discos, pizza and film nights, trips to restaurants and theme parks. Year 11 and Year 14 students are also offered a residential in the summer term before they leave, or move up to the next key stage.

## **PLANNING FOR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS**

At Springwater, the learning needs of the individual are paramount. In order to ensure that these are addressed within the whole curriculum plan we utilise the following approaches and systems:

### **1. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

Every pupil within Springwater has an EHCP. This clearly identifies need and provision, including educational objectives and means of monitoring progress. When planning an educational programme, these criteria are given important consideration. Every year as part of the review process, new annual targets are set within the pupil report to parents. These targets are then reflected within medium term planning, pupil MAPP targets and their expected accreditation outcomes.

### **2. Formal Assessment**

Formal assessment occurs on a cyclical basis. All pupils have a baseline assessment, end of year teacher assessment and where appropriate, statutory assessment tests. In order to identify the small steps of progress that many of our pupils make, we also regularly assess using PIVATS\* and CASPA\*. This information assists in planning for individual pupils and links into both EHCP and MAPP targets.

\*PIVATS: Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting

\*CASPA: Comparison and Analysis of Special Pupil Attainment

### **3. Pupils views and priorities**

At Springwater, we recognise the valuable contribution that the pupils and their families make in the learning process. We aim wherever possible, to include and inform them in our curriculum planning strategies, especially through the development of target setting at annual review, parents evenings and pupils having a voice at their EHCP meetings.



## **CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT**

The responsibility of overall co-ordination of the curriculum lies with the leadership team. Kim Ayrton (Assistant Head) holds responsibility for curriculum oversight within the primary and secondary departments, whilst Melissa Sparks mirrors this role within sixth form. On a practical level this involves, monitoring quality and developing consistency across the whole curriculum, advising and asking the advice of subject co-ordinators, reviewing developments within school considering ongoing changes, instigating and leading new developments as necessary and keeping this policy up to date.

Department heads have a responsibility for overseeing the curriculum planning and delivery within their department.

All teachers (except for NQTs or trainees) have a subject responsibility. This requires that they advise and lead the school in relation to their subject, support colleagues where necessary, audit and advise on purchases of equipment, monitor the teaching of their subject throughout school and track pupil progress, advise the leadership team regarding any necessary developments or concerns, produce an end of year report to governors.

Class teachers and teaching assistants are responsible for delivering the personalised curriculum for pupils in their charge and for ensuring continuity, pace and progression.

### ***Time allocation and timetabling***

When planning time allocation, a variety of factors were taken into account:-

- School aims
- Needs of the individual pupils, class groups and key stages
- Requirement to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum
- DfE requirements

Class timetables are produced at least annually, although some may be updated termly. This process is co-ordinated by the leadership team in order to allow fair access to resource areas and ensure appropriate balance. Timetables map the pattern of lessons or activities across a week and give an overview of the breadth of subjects covered. Many pupils follow individual timetables which incorporate specific therapies, inclusion sessions, work related learning experiences, e.t.c. It is school policy that where relevant, pupils are provided with a timetable which they can follow – for example, one adapted and showing simple symbols. They may require even more finely graded ‘chunks’ of a visual timetable and this will also be made accessible to them. Parents will be provided with a timetable each term.

### ***Resourcing***

Each subject area has a series of centrally held resources, which the subject coordinator is responsible for maintaining and developing. In addition, individual classrooms have



their own basic resources, which are appropriate to the needs of the pastoral group. The budget for resourcing is set on an annual basis and relates directly to the School Improvement Plan.

### ***Pupil groupings***

The pupils are grouped as far as possible according to age, need and appropriate curriculum pathway. In addition to these factors, it is occasionally necessary to consider resourcing, staffing and the social dynamics of a class group when placing a pupil.

### ***Teaching and learning***

A range of teaching and learning styles are employed within each curriculum pathway. The purpose is to ensure the needs of each pupil are met. Within the teaching environment, we aim to impart concepts, attitudes, skills and knowledge and wherever possible, emphasis is placed on active learning through practical and real life approaches. Teachers are supported in the delivery of the curriculum by teaching assistants. As a result, teaching can occur as a whole class group, in small groups or on an individual basis.

## **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

### ***School improvement plan***

The School Improvement Plan guides events and activities in the school. In order to secure the vision, a plan has been devised covering the areas of school life – curriculum is one of these key areas. From this plan, annual operational plans are implemented alongside a system of monitoring and evaluation.

### ***Planning for curriculum development and the raising of standards***

The curriculum is continually evolving and developing to improve its effectiveness in raising the achievements of our pupils. Curriculum developments are planned and evaluated within the School Improvement Plan. The setting of standards and working to ensure progress is central to our philosophy in relation to challenging learning outcomes.

### ***Bench marking and target setting***

Effective use of bench marking and target setting information based on national standards, is achieved through the use of CASPA and PIVATS. These are used to monitor progress in core subjects. This data is used to indicate suitable targets for individual pupils and institutional targets for the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. All pupils within the 15-19 age range will undertake accreditation routes through awards or examinations, usually ASDAN.



## Additional information to support the policy

Sources used in the writing of this policy:-

<http://www.fountaindale.notts.sch.uk/>

<http://www.willowdene.greenwich.sch.uk/>



## Policy definitions

Springwater, We, Us - Refers to Springwater School staff; the policy author

Colleague(s) - Refers to colleagues directly in the employ of Springwater School

Policy reviewer - The Governing Body of Springwater School

## Policy review schedule

Review Schedule (years)	Two
Next Review Date	22/03/2021