

Springside School

Area of Learning -
My Play and Leisure



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Intent

We believe in teaching our learners how to play, to play with others, as well as ensuring their lives are enriched through experiencing a range of leisure activities to widen their interests. Functional mathematical and English skills are taught through this area.

This area of learning is taught as a discrete, timetabled lesson in both the Exploratory and Investigative phases.

In 2021-2022 an adapted but linked area 'My sensory play' will also be taught as an Area of Learning in our 'Bridge class' known as Wallabies, - these learners are based in the Experiential phase.

My Play and Leisure - to learn to understand how to play with others, experience a range of leisure activities and widen my interests. Functional mathematics and English skills and concepts are taught through this area of learning.

Coverage

This guidance document provides an overview of how we teach our learners to how to play and to have a broad range of interests and hobbies that enrich their lives, it should be read in conjunction with the 'Curriculum', 'EYFS', 'PSHE', 'RSE'; 'SMSC and Learner Voice' and 'Behaviour' policies. Whilst this provides an overview of how we teach the Area of Learning relating to independence, due to the nature of independence skills, these are also reinforced and taught within every aspect of school life.

Further information can be found within the brochures specific to each phase. This document is written to provide an overview of the overarching aims of the My Play and Leisure Area of Learning. It should be read in conjunction with the phase brochures and policies for EYFS and each individual area of learning.

Context

Learners at Springside School have a diverse range of learning difficulties and associated special educational needs. The scheme of work utilised 'My Play and Leisure' covers the different areas of play, as well as exposing learners to a range of leisure activities to encourage a broadening of their interests and world as a whole. The scheme is utilised as appropriate to the age, developmental stage, approach to learning required, the individual's prior knowledge and specific areas required as per the Learner's EHC Plan.

It is very difficult to over-emphasise how important Play is to the development of both the child and the adult that the child will become. All animals play; it is one of the crucial ways of learning within a safe and secure environment, but it must be given time. So often, within a conventional curriculum model, play is only allowed to develop up to the age of six, and from then on is assumed to be secondary to the serious business of formal education. For those with learning difficulties however, whose learning takes so much longer to develop, Play, with a capital P and as a key area of learning needs to be expanded at the rate and speed which each individual learner can make sense of. Play **MUST** take a central part in any Curriculum discussions, must be given time to develop and will probably continue to be central for the whole of the learners' school career. (My Play and Leisure - Equals, 2016; pg 1).

Our curriculum is set in the context of Equals multi-tiered curriculum approach, recognising that differentiation from England's (or indeed any) National Curriculum, including the EYFS framework, is not sufficient to meet the needs of learners with profound, complex, severe or global learning

difficulties. For these learners, who are all working consistently and over time below or very near the start of their national curriculum, curricula need to be different rather than differentiated, because the way such learners learn is different, and often very, very different from neuro-typical, conventional developing learners for whom the national curriculum was designed.

The overarching aims are to support the holistic development of all learners in a manner, which is appropriate to their individual needs and abilities and provide a sensitive response to the challenges they face. At its core it is designed to ensure all learners are happy, healthy and safe whilst ensuring they reach their full potential having access to a broad and balanced curriculum promoting independence throughout.

Springside School is a non-denominational school that aims to celebrate festivals and religious events from many cultures. Whole school and phase worship, beliefs and celebrations (e.g. Birthdays, Achievements, Eid, Christmas) reflect this. Learners are taught to embrace all celebrations, cultures as well as respect each other, their beliefs and differences; these are detailed on our curriculum theme mapping.

Implementation

The My Play and Leisure Area of Learning is divided into sections. These are detailed within the Equals scheme of work (differentiated for each phase). Whilst there are Learning Intentions and suggested activities, by the nature of the Area of Learning and the Learners at Springside, it may be required to set individualised activities and learning intentions.

- **Structured Play (games)** – product based, structured, rule bound, adult led and adult modelled. The vast majority of structured games playing is automatically social and co-operative in nature, the exceptions being computer games.

With regard to the **social dimensions of play**, Sherratt and Peter (2002) regard them as being

- **Solitary** – as it implies, this is play which involves only one person. Much play falls within this category and is perfectly reasonable and usual for this to be the case. However, for those with learning difficulties, and especially for those with learning difficulties and autism, this may be the only play engaged with. As such, there can be a tendency, particularly for those with autism, towards such play being limited, repetitive, stereotypical and obsessive.
- **Parallel** – not necessarily playing with but playing alongside, and there may be no acknowledgment or even recognition of the others' presence.
- **Shared** – in the sense that the resources or group of objects are shared, and through there may be an acknowledgment of the others' presence it is fleeting rather than sustained.
- **Turn-taking** – the first stirrings of co-operative play in the clear acknowledgment of the others' involvement in the activity.
- **Co-operative** – where the learner(s) directly engages with others in the direction the play might take.

Class timetables will detail: Area of learning -> Vehicle to teach the area (Location)

Within classes, this will look different, however the area of learning may be the same, examples of this are:

EXAMPLE 1 - My Play and Leisure -> Structured Play (Playground)

Learning intention - to initiate the game by taking the lead e.g. "Row, Row, Row your boat".

EXAMPLE 2 - My Play and Leisure -> Free Play (Role play area in Classroom)

Learning intention - to use a specific toy for the specified purpose e.g. play picnic with a tea set.

EXAMPLE 3 - My Play and Leisure -> Solitary Play (Outdoor Area)

Learning intention - to accept different offerings of opportunities to play e.g. allowing staff to model using different items to create an art picture and continuing to use this alone.

EXAMPLE 4 - My Play and Leisure -> Parallel Play (Classroom)

Learning intention - to tolerate another next to me playing with a different toy e.g. Child playing with Lego, allows another child to sit near them and play with something else.

EXAMPLE 5 - My Play and Leisure -> Shared Play (Outdoor Area)

Learning intention - to tolerate another next to me playing in the water tray e.g. Child playing in the water tray, allows another child to be in reach of them and play with the water tray.

EXAMPLE 6 - My Play and Leisure -> Turn-taking Play (Classroom)

Learning intention - to turn take with familiar peer in a large group e.g. Child enjoys playing 'pass the parcel', understands the rules of the game and accepts not 'winning'.

EXAMPLE 7 - My Play and Leisure -> Co-operative Play (Classroom)

Learning intention - to share resources with a peer e.g. Child and a friend build a Lego model together.

EXAMPLE 8 - My Play and Leisure -> Leisure (Sensory Room)

Learning intention - to express if they like or dislike a genre of music e.g. week 1 Pop; week 2 Reggae; week 3 classical...

EXAMPLE 8 - My Play and Leisure -> Leisure (Golf Driving Range)

Learning intention - to tolerate a new activity and express if it is liked or disliked e.g. Golf

Learning Intentions for the lesson are taken from the scheme of work used, these include equals, the Northern Ireland Curriculum and Birth to 5 Matters - *Beyond this, each individual learner will then have an individual target/ sequence of learning to achieve.*

Objectives

Within all phases EHC Outcomes, through the Personal Learning Plan, annual objectives and termly targets will be considered, referenced and evidenced as appropriate throughout.

Impact

EHC Plans are reviewed at least once annually. These outcomes are broken into smaller, manageable steps on the Personal Learning Plans, these are assessed on an ongoing basis but formally reviewed at least once a term with parents. The progress of learners is also reviewed at least once a term in progress meetings with the Deputy Headteacher (Assessment lead). There are a vast number of skills, concepts and knowledge covered within this area of learning, these include functional Mathematics and functional English skills, these are assessed using Springside Steps on our Solar platform.

Progression

Progression within each area focuses on developing the thinking and problem-solving skills of our learners. This is supported through a reducing level of support in a 5-tiered system (further information on this can be found under 'Progression Principles).

The 5-tiered system of progression is:

- 1) Memory building
- 2) Sabotage and recognition of a problem;
- 3) Independent solutions
- 4) Generalisations;
- 5) Self-belief and confidence

These are referred to as sequences of learning on a PLP and in planning. Successfully achieving these will ensure learners meet their EHC Outcome and the learning intention for the lesson/ medium term plan.

Parents

Parents are involved in the designing of the curriculum and outcomes for their child at EHC Reviews and at least termly during progress meetings.