



Springwell
Learning Community

Springwell Special Academy
Springwell Alternative Academy



WELLSPRING
ACADEMY TRUST

We Make A Difference

Curriculum Policy

Date Revised August 2019

Springwell Special Academy Curriculum Policy

Intent

The Intent of the curriculum at Springwell is to focus on both the academic and holistic development of each child and young person. The Springwell values of unconditional positive regard, kindness, compassion and connectivity are the foundation on which the curriculum is built.

Across the Springwell Learning Community and across all key stages the curriculum has been constructed in such a way that there is flexibility and personalisation in order to respond to the individual needs of each child. When constructing a holistic curriculum, consideration is given to the *development of the whole child*; their intellectual, spiritual, emotional, social and physical development. Before any child can begin to settle to learn they need to feel safe, secure and understood and so emphasis is placed on developing positive relationships with the children.

Our curriculum will enable the children to share ideas, express their opinions and apply knowledge and skills learned in a wide range of meaningful contexts. It will offer opportunities for all children to investigate, question, debate and challenge. It will enable all children to flourish and to be the very best they can be.

To support the implementation of our vision we will create:

- A stimulating environment for developing inquisitive, independent and resilient learners
- A culture of working both independently and collaboratively, where we see getting something wrong as part of learning how to get it right
- An ethos where all children are encouraged, supported, and challenge is fully embraced
- Exciting and challenging opportunities to promote our children's personal development and understanding of their own emotional and physical wellbeing.



Implementation

At the heart of our curriculum are the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science.

We also truly value our Elements curriculum, which brings together the Humanities National Curriculum subjects.

The aim of the bespoke 'Elements' curriculum is to create compelling learning experiences, using immersive approaches in order to deepen the children's understanding, responses and outcomes. An emphasis of the curriculum is to develop children's empathy and understanding of others, to engender tolerance and acceptance and over the long term develop positive pro-social behaviours and relationships. Improving confidence in literacy and in particular, writing, is a key purpose of the curriculum, so that the pupils can feel confident and articulate in this essential life skill.

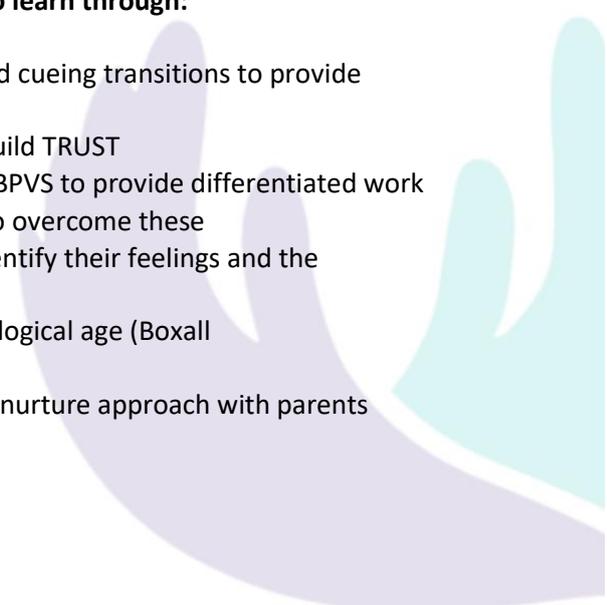
All of the learning will have a wow way in to excite and engage the children and a 'purpose' for study so that learning is meaningful and relevant for them. Where possible, learning will be supported and enriched by field study, visits, workshops, artefact boxes, role-play, immersive environments and practical resources. Progression of knowledge, skills and understanding is carefully planned, reviewed and adapted yearly to ensure that children's learning builds effectively over time to ensure children are ready to meet the expectations of both primary and secondary school. Our teaching practice is rooted in evidence-based research. Teachers will be self-reflective and will enhance their teaching skills and strategies to help raise standards across the full breadth of the curriculum.

At Springwell we are proud of how we use technology in engaging ways to help foster curiosity, creativity and critical thinking. Technology continues to provide our learners with the opportunity to connect, communicate, collaborate and create on a local, national and global scale with such ease and transparency. It teaches our pupils to be responsible digital citizens and allows our pupils to express themselves in different ways.

The learning community works to the six nurture principles as a foundation for learning. Developing literacy skills is a high priority as without these the children will struggle to access the curriculum and will become disempowered adults. Great emphasis is placed on pedagogic approaches as the curriculum needs to be delivered through engaging and creative teaching to engender curiosity, active participation and the development of the children's own unique creative responses.

Below details, how we will effectively implement our intent;

1. A whole school nurture approach securing a safe place to learn through:

- Microstructure, routines and rituals, visual timetables and cueing transitions to provide SECURITY
 - Positive relationships, unconditional positive regard to build TRUST
 - Accurate baseline testing of reading, writing, numeracy, BPVS to provide differentiated work
 - Identifying barriers to learning and work with the pupil to overcome these
 - Therapeutic language used consistently to help pupils identify their feelings and the connection between their feelings and their behaviours
 - Addressing pupils' developmental as well as their chronological age (Boxall profiling/Thrive/Motional/Springwell SEMH tracker)
 - Involving parents in their pupils' learning using the same nurture approach with parents
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- A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner of the page, featuring a large, stylized hand in shades of purple and blue, with a smaller, lighter blue hand reaching up towards it.

2. Literacy underpinning the curriculum

Developing pupils' literacy skills is essential to enable pupils to access the curriculum:

- Accurate testing of reading, spelling and writing
- Accurately differentiated literacy work
- Targeted reading and literacy intervention to rapidly close the gap
- Frequent opportunities for inspiring motivated reading, speaking and listening and creative writing across curriculum areas
- Frequent opportunities to celebrate original writing

3. Differentiation, personalisation and interventions to meet pupils' special needs

- All staff have knowledge and understanding of Attachment, Trauma-Informed Practice, ASD, ADHD, Dyslexia, (along with other special needs when they arise)
- How lesson content is delivered and the content itself is differentiated to suit the learning needs of the pupil
- Differentiation with an understanding of the child's social and emotional stage includes, opportunities for bridging developmental gaps with use of Boxall profiling/Thrive/Motional
- The learning environment and teaching strategies used support all pupils to engage, including visual timetables (personal where relevant), timers, coloured overlays, low arousal areas, safe spaces, music for learning
- Feedback and marking is frequent with specific steps for progress

4. Engaging ways of working to inspire curiosity, engagement and investment in learning

- Lures into learning – 'Wow ways in' to a new project and little lures to hook pupils in lessons (For example: Film clips, mysteries, a letter/email/videoed message, sound recording, newspaper headline, image/images linked to the topic that prompt questioning)
'Wow ways out' where learning is shared with an external audience/for a real external purpose, e.g. living museum, documentary, publication of a book for a specific audience
- Firsthand experiences – use of visits, visitors, artefacts, costume, images, film clips enable pupils with little imagination or any previous childhood experiences to relate to a topic
- Immersive environments – bringing 'out there' into the 'here and now' to stimulate pupils' imaginations through the use of stimulus such as a role play area/displays as a scenic backdrop
- Narrative approach – using stories at the heart of learning
- Contextual learning – putting learning into a context that gives meaning to the learning
- Mantle of the Expert as a contextual learning approach to give pupils a purpose for learning and more control as experts
- Use of character and role – focusing on a character can help pupils to make an emotional connection with their learning and safely project feelings rather than talk about themselves
- Creative and interactive use of IT – to inspire writing, storytelling, film making, group work
- Project based, 'Hands on' learning opportunities e.g. for a real-life purpose, organisation
- Co-operative learning – pupils with behavioural difficulties have difficulties working in groups and need to learn how to work alongside, in pairs and in groups

5. Equality and Diversity

- All staff understand and implement the Equality Act 2010
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural learning enables pupils to appreciate diversity
- All pupils are taught to understand why discrimination and prejudice cannot be tolerated as part of British Values (The Prevent Duty 2015)
- All pupils have equal opportunities to thrive regardless of their abilities or starting points (Children and Families Act 2014)

6. Aspiration and achievement

- Celebration of achievement and frequent positive learning experiences build up positive pathways in the brain thus building self-belief leading to aspiration
- Positive futures are encouraged through constant aspirational language, positive role models and frequent opportunities to work with external partners

Impact

The students at Springwell clearly enjoy their learning while achieving high outcomes. Many children arrive at the school with a variety of complex needs and barriers to learning. The Elements curriculum is designed to ignite the curiosity of each child and help them to overcome these barriers.

By emphasising literacy within the Elements curriculum, pupils become confident readers, writers, speakers and listeners. Literacy outcomes are high and the quality of work produced exceptional.

The focus on Wellbeing means the curriculum encourages pupils to develop as rounded individuals who have empathy, reflect on their learning, and have a more resilient outlook.

Allowing planning to be flexible enough to follow the direction pupils are interested in promotes engagement and can help the teachers to learn new things as well.

“Unconditional positive regard” gives the pupils and staff the safety net of being valued. Successes and triumphs are celebrated and fresh starts are given.

The impact of the curriculum will be measured through the following key performance indicators:

- Attendance
- Positive Post 16 progression
- SEMH progress
- Reductions in behavioural incidents
- Academic progress
- Creative progress

Attendance:

The increase in attendance will indicate that pupils feel safe, are engaged, there is improved parental involvement, and pupils feel more positive about school and the staff than in previous settings.

Positive Post-16 progression:

Positive post 16 destinations will indicate that pupils are aspirational; this is evidenced through attendance at interview and a planned college placement or apprenticeship.

SEMH Progress:

SEMH progress will not be linear in an SEMH setting due to the factors that may undermine pupils' social and emotional wellbeing. However, the focus on supporting pupils to develop their wellbeing has a positive impact over time on the ability of pupils to form positive relationships with staff and pupils, develop resilience when faced with challenges and their ability to express feelings positively and self-regulate. This may be measured through reduction in behavioural incidents, time in lessons, positive engagement e.g. in taking roles or responsibilities.

Reductions in behavioural incidents:

Reductions in behavioural incidents over time reflect pupils' ability to regulate socially and emotionally to return to learning, positive engagement with the curriculum, ability to trust and relate to adults and or peers and suitability of provision, personalisation and assessment priorities.

