

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Policy

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2028

Introduction

Our curriculum intent, alongside our highly specialised approach and the content within each Key Stage of the curriculum does not only supports the development of subject knowledge, but also acts as a medium within which cross-curricular skills are taught, practiced and mastered. Our curriculum also captures within 'a moment in time' as it is an organic document that can change in response to pupils' needs and any opportunities that may present themselves.

Our curriculum at Springhead School is skill and context-based and encourages active engagement in learning. The curriculum focuses on developing the key skills of communication, cognition, independence, physical development and self-care, all transferrable skills that equip children and young people for life beyond school. The pupils' learning difficulties at Springhead School cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Our curriculum strives to be responsive to each learner, is broad and ambitious and builds on individual strengths and interests. Throughout the school, a rolling plan is in place, which supports a balance of stimulating contexts for learning through different learning experiences, themes and subjects.

Our Moral Purpose represents a commitment to our pupils that can be expressed as a promise in each case.

- **Respect** – we undertake to listen to you, to enable you to speak for yourself as far as possible, and to speak up for you when you want us to
- **Self-determination** – we will enable you to make choices about your life
- **Inclusion** – we will enable you to take your place in the community
- **Relationships** – we will enable you to be with different groups of people and to choose your friends
- **Learning** – we will enable you to learn by allowing you to explore, experiment, rehearse and do things by yourself even though you will make mistakes

Our three core curricula

We implement our curriculum by following 3 strands within Primary and Secondary and then leading to our Post 16 curriculum at Sixth Form. Our Early Years follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) benefit from an **informal sensory curriculum** which is specifically designed to meet their needs in encountering, discovering, connecting and responding.

Pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) benefit from a **semi-formal curriculum** which is highly stimulating and promotes independence and develops life-skills through a thematic curriculum.

Pupils with Complex Moderate Learning Difficulties (CMLD) receive a skills and context-based **adapted curriculum** of the National Curriculum which emphasises mastery and deeper learning.

Post 16 – A highly personalised curriculum with individualised pathways (underpinned by informal, semi-formal and adapted curricula) to support Preparation of Adulthood and transition beyond Sixth Form at Springhead.

We are committed to offering our children and young people the best opportunities. We aim to provide curricula opportunities which are meaningful, accessible, motivating, contextualised and appropriately challenging to maximise progress for each child and take the learning opportunities across every aspect of

the pupil's day. This may not always be in the classroom. It could be outdoors, in the local community or further afield.

At Springhead School we ensure that the emphasis on Communication and Literacy across the curriculum is informed and effective. We use a range of augmentative or alternative strategies to promote the ability of some learners to communicate successfully, enabling them to respond and interact to their full capacity

The school will follow the National statutory requirements. It will also have regard to other national and local guidance on Teaching and Learning.

Reading and Mathematics

Reading at Springhead

At Springhead, we recognise the need for a varied and personalised approach to the teaching of reading. Some pupils will need to develop early 'readiness for reading' skills and all pupils are assessed to identify any gaps in their readiness for reading skills before moving onto more formal reading learning. Some pupils will continue with developing these skills throughout their time at school. Some will be able to progress to decoding, and/or language comprehension and reading comprehension. Some will be able to become independent readers.

All pupils at Springhead are exposed to a wide and rich variety of stories, rhymes, songs and books, to embed a love of reading and to build communication skills whether through sign, symbols, gesture, tone of voice, facial expression, participation etc. Stories and books are selected to reflect whatever is developmentally appropriate for them, whilst still recognising age appropriateness and interests. There is considerable evidence that reading to children promotes brain development and reading skills and that it is highly beneficial for children to listen to stories read at a level which is beyond their own reading ability. For some of our pupils, tracking a light or object from left to right is developing early reading skills.

The phonics programme the school uses is 'All Aboard Phonics', a systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme, validated by the DfE. No single reading method will be effective for all students with learning disabilities. Most individuals with learning disabilities will benefit from the application of a variety of methods and teachers will assess what will work best for each pupil/student.

Mathematics at Springhead

The Springhead School Curriculum for Mathematics ensures that all pupils develop skills in both mathematical cognition as well as the content of mathematics. Pupils will learn to use mathematics as a vehicle to develop communication and interaction. This can range from the sharing of objects during a sensory story, to the involved discussion of mathematical problems. Progression in mathematics, involves deepening understanding of pattern, order and causality, and is structured to be of benefit to the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of all pupils. Pupils develop physical manipulation skills in mathematics as they use apparatus to solve and model problems.

Pupils following an informal curriculum in mathematics will develop sensory and attentional learning, including sensory play, a sense of time, emergent schematic play, gross and fine motor skills.

Pupils following a semi-formal curriculum in mathematics will focus on attentional and perceptual learning. This will include the principles of how to count, developing schematic play, enactive qualities of shape, space and measurement. Additionally, pupils will develop their numerical skills using apparatus, pictures and number symbols.

Pupils following an adapted curriculum will make progress with perception and concept-based mathematics. This will lead to outcomes including the formal manipulation of number, together with the ability to attempt worded questions.

All areas of the mathematics curriculum at Springhead School develop focus on the practical aspects of mathematics, in a way which are both useful and empathic to the individual.

Teaching and Learning

Aims

- to improve the quality of learning experiences offered to the pupils
- to establish an agreed practice in respect of teaching and learning
- to enable staff to identify aspects of practice which they wish to develop and in which they would welcome support
- to provide an agreed focus for monitoring teaching and learning

In order to achieve these aims we need to:

- meet the need to retain the best features of educational practice when seeking to implement the school curriculum
- meet the needs of the pupils more effectively by offering different approaches to teaching and learning and use of resources which are consistent across the school
- meet the needs of staff by offering developmental opportunities aimed at the extension of teaching repertoires

The following qualities need to be referred to when planning all teaching activities.

A The learning environment should:

1. use available space and resources to their full potential
2. have the necessary resources for learning readily accessible
3. have stimulating displays – interactive if appropriate to the needs of the children
4. be self servicing if appropriate to the needs of the pupils
5. have displays of the work of the pupils throughout the year to celebrate success
6. be cared for by the pupils themselves wherever possible
7. foster co-operative and collaborative learning and good working relationships
8. provide every opportunity for the pupils to develop their ideas through independent inquiry including extension and or consolidation activities
9. set a standard of quality which provides pupils with high expectations and positive attitudes
10. have a built in flexibility to adapt to whole class, group or individual learning
11. enable all pupils to use ICT as an aid to communication and therefore learning

B Pupil's learning should, when appropriate

1. involve quality interaction with all professionals in the room
2. enable them to have first hand experience in all subject areas and experiences
3. offer practice and application of knowledge/skills/concepts/experiences gained
4. enable them to play an increasing role in planning and organising their learning
5. involve the selection of appropriate materials and tools
6. use technology as an aid to learning
7. include therapy sessions and programs as an integral part of the curriculum

C The teacher should:

1. value and have high expectations of all pupils in the school
2. maintain good discipline with mutual respect
3. be flexible by using different teaching styles based on the needs of the pupils
4. be aware of the model of learning which they present
5. deploy support staff effectively
6. have good curriculum knowledge and be clear on the skills, concepts and attitudes which are the goals of the learning process
7. have clear lesson objectives based on the individual pupil's EHCP
8. be able to assess the pupil's learning within a lesson and devise assessment strategies related to agreed policies, maintaining effective records of their plans and outcomes design stimulating and differentiated learning tasks using stimulating resources both for individual and group work
9. distribute time equally and effectively between pupils
10. value and promote partnership between home and school
11. form positive professional relationships as part of a team