

The Semi-Formal Learning Pathway

Intent – What are we trying to achieve through our Semi-Formal Curriculum?

Learners at Brookside Specialist Academy School follow one of the four learning pathways – Pre-Formal, EYFS, Semi-Formal or Formal. The Semi-Formal pathway is mainly for those who have Severe to moderate Learning Difficulties. These learners are developing emergent skills and may be able to access some aspects of the National Curriculum.

Semi-Formal learners require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and their care, and are likely to need some sensory support with their curriculum broken down into small steps. Some of our Semi-Formal pupils communicate by signing, eye-pointing, eye gaze, simple evolving language, communication with symbols, pictures, objects and PECS.

Our Semi-Formal learners' attainment is likely to stay within the engagement model or pre key stage standards. The school ensures that there is fluidity between pathways, allowing for a personalised approach, that enables pupils to benefit from approaches from other pathways and to move between pathways as appropriate to their development.

The Brookside Formal Curriculum pathway is underpinned by the characteristics of effective learning;

- Perseverance
- Resilience
- Independence
- Determination
- Engagement

All our Semi-formal learners follow timetables that include the following seven areas:

- Maths
- English
- Knowledge and Understanding of the world
- Communication and Language
- Myself, my body and others – including PE, Forest School and PSHE
- Imagination
- Learning for Life – including Cooking

Implement – What are we trying to achieve through our Semi-Formal Curriculum?

The Semi-Formal Learning Pathway aims to provide a curriculum that:

- provides explicit instructions and sufficient time for learners to repeat, practise, maintain and consolidate skills to develop independence;
- develops learners' levels of engagement by finding out what interests and motivates them;
- provides meaningful contexts for learning that use real-life materials and experiences, concrete resources and practical every day activities so that learners link experiences and make connections;
- supports learners to develop an awareness of, and interest in, themselves and their immediate surroundings and environment;
- recognises the importance of play and games as motivational curriculum activities that allow repetition and consolidation of skills;

- recognises that when using imagination and thinking of something that is not immediately present, children with SLD may need prompts to recall an experience;
- includes activities that move beyond memory building activities to take part in supported thinking and problem-solving activities;
- provides opportunities for generalising and applying skills and knowledge across curriculum areas;
- acknowledges that the physical well-being and development of our SLD learners is important;
- recognises that some of our learners may not be physically able to complete practical processes without full support, but that they should be involved in choice and decision making about the process;

Impact – What difference is our curriculum making?

Progress for learners following the Semi-Formal curriculum pathway is currently assessed using descriptors from The EARLY Developmental Journal, Pre-Key Stage Standards, Engagement Model and through formative assessment of progress towards individual EHCP outcomes. This progress is recorded on child's learning journey on the Evidence for learning app.

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_pupils_working_below_the_national_curriculum_assessment_standard.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1109303/2021_Pre-key_stage_1_-_pupils_working_below_the_national_curriculum_assessment_standard.pdf)

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