

Pre-Formal Pathway

Learner Profile

The learners following the pre-formal curriculum have profound and multiple learning difficulties and complex needs, usually working within the Engagement Model (P Levels P1-P4). Each of our learners is unique, requiring staff to take a holistic approach centred in a multi-sensory environment around the physical needs, strengths and interests of each learner whilst acknowledging how they best learn. The focus is upon enabling the learners to establish positive interactive relationships with others and to proactively explore the world around them, gaining environmental control skills. All learners are given maximum opportunity to achieve the highest level of independence possible.



We provide a personalised curriculum that:

- Ensures learning is holistic, with all parts of the curriculum interconnected
- Builds in sufficient time for learners to repeat, practise and consolidate skills
- Recognises learners' need for consistency
- Develops learners' levels of engagement by finding out what interests and motivates them
- Places learners' targets at the centre of the curriculum with their interests as the teaching vehicle. Some learners in this group are working beyond the Engagement Model in specific areas, and are supported to access a semi-formal curriculum in those areas
- Recognises learners' need for different levels of sensory stimulation

Whole School Approach

We have common themes in place across the curriculum, which aim to be interesting, engaging and appropriate for our learners and that provide relevant learning contexts for them to grow. The topics we teach are the vehicle for new learning to take place and to enable learners to make progress. The pre-formal curriculum is, at its heart, a personalised learning journey for each learner.

Lessons

We aim to build the early communication, social and emotional, and cognitive skills that are the foundation of learning. The curriculum acknowledges the importance of movement and play in a child's development, and the need our learners have for sensory and multi-sensory approach to learning. To help achieve a learner's full potential, our lessons are:

- Multi-Sensory
- Tactile
- Experiential
- Exploratory
- Stimulating
- Relevant
- Individualised

To aid communication in lessons, we use a wide range of communication methods. On the pre-formal curriculum you might see use of:

- Body movements/Makaton/Canaan Barrie Sign System
- Facial expression
- Eye movements/tracking
- Mouthing
- Tobii eyegaze
- Vocalisations
- Increased processing time
- Intensive Interaction – reactive to proactive (reaching out) to interactive
- Sensory cues – smells, music of reference
- Objects of reference with single word use
- Photograph symbols
- Big Mack interactive buttons



Curriculum

Our classes follow termly topics from the relevant Key Stage Long Term Plan. The subject areas and lesson objectives are largely taken from the EQUALS curriculum, building to provide learners the opportunity to make progress against their EHCP, learner-specific targets. The EQUALS curriculum areas are:

- My Communication and Social Relationships
- My Cognition, Challenge and Sensory
- My Physical and Well-being
- My Creativity
- My Independence
- Enrichment

Assessment

Learner progress is assessed on an ongoing basis, with staff capturing evidence regularly using an interactive recording tool called Evidence for Learning (EFL) and the Engagement Model. The Engagement Model is used as a national assessment tool to help support learners who are working below the level of the National Curriculum and are not engaged in subject-specific study. The learners focus on developing the engagements skills of exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence, and initiation. These skills are monitored throughout the year to moderate the level of engagement on the pre- formal curriculum. Evidence collected includes observations, photographs, videos and learners' work. Parents and carers can access EFL to see the progress of their child and are able to add supportive comments.

Progress is assessed against learner-specific set targets taken from a bespoke framework consisting of '*I will*' statements suitable for the pathway. Progress towards personal targets is reviewed at key points through the year, with new targets being set as appropriate in a cycle of '*assess, plan, review, do*'. Targets are set to support the learners work towards their long-term goals, as set in the EHCP SEND profiles. As a short-term target is met, a new target that will further them towards their overall, long term goal will be set.

At Key Stages 4 and 5 there are opportunities for learners to complete sensory-based accreditations.

Beyond Dorin Park

Typically, our pre-formal pathway learners continue to develop their life skills through accessing a bespoke package of activities. There are a range of care providers in the local area that can provide day services for young people.

For some learners a specialist college may be appropriate, so that they can continue to develop communication, independence and life skills.