

Linwood School

Belong. Believe. Achieve.

EYFS Curriculum Handbook



A curriculum to meet the diverse learning needs of our student, to ensure that each individual has access to a relevant and meaningful curriculum pathway that effectively prepares them for a fulfilling and purposeful adult life.

“Our vision is to create a community where everyone achieves and thrives so that all our students succeed through their education years and beyond. Everyone is valued within a safe and nurturing environment. All our students have full and equal access to an ambitious curriculum, rich learning experiences and high-quality personalised support. “

This handbook shows how the Early Years pathway aligns with the Linwood School Vision.

Our Curriculum Vision

We take into consideration the diverse learning needs of students. From their earliest days with us, we work collaboratively to uphold high aspirations and ensure that each individual has access to a relevant and meaningful curriculum pathway that effectively prepares them for a fulfilling and purposeful adult life.

We strive to ensure that the input to each student's learning is the very best it can be so that the progress made, whatever that is, is the very best that the student could have made.

We aspire to meet the continually evolving challenges in education, ensuring that our practice is based on current developments in research and sound pedagogy.

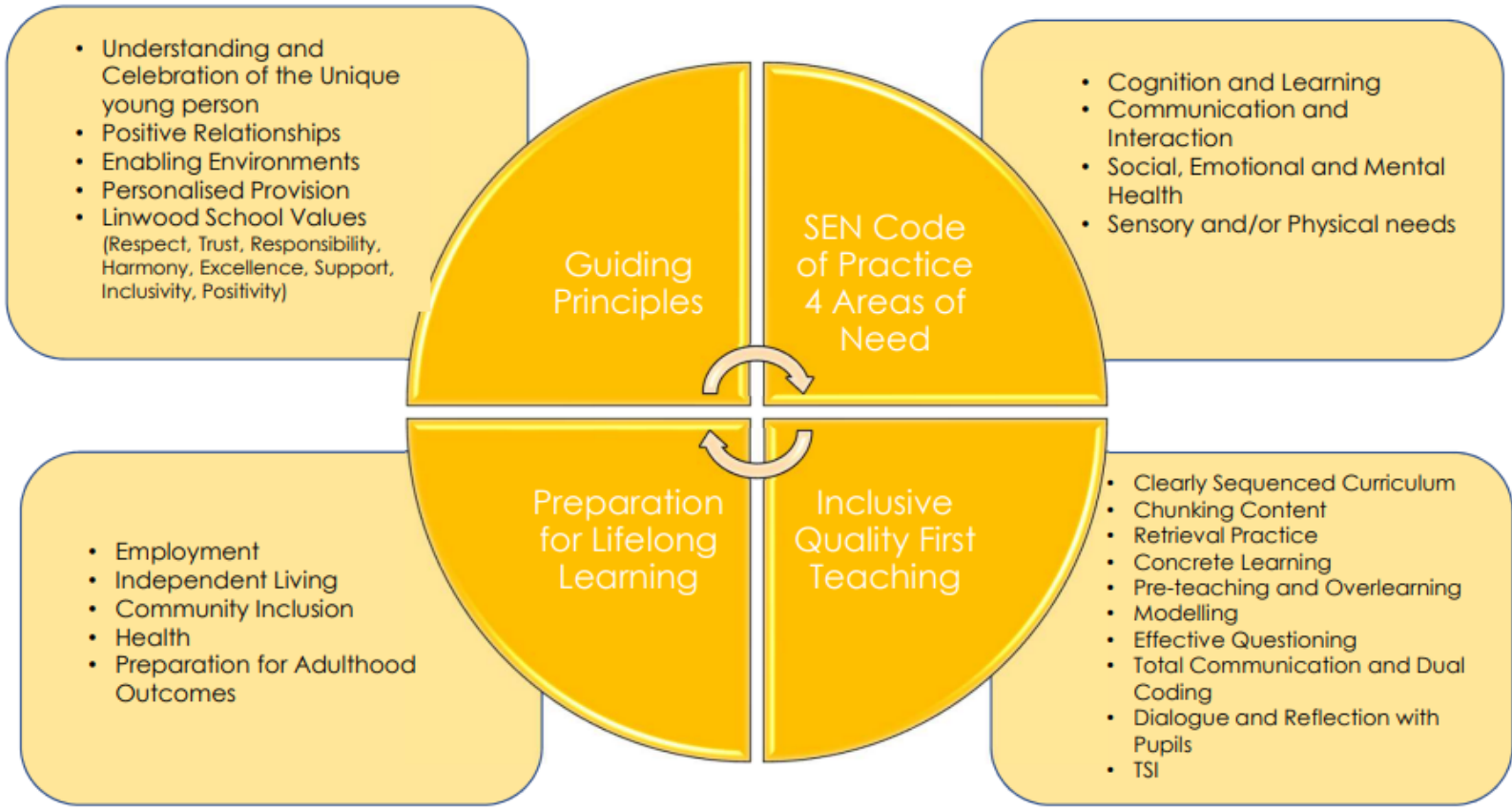
In order to meet our vision, we:

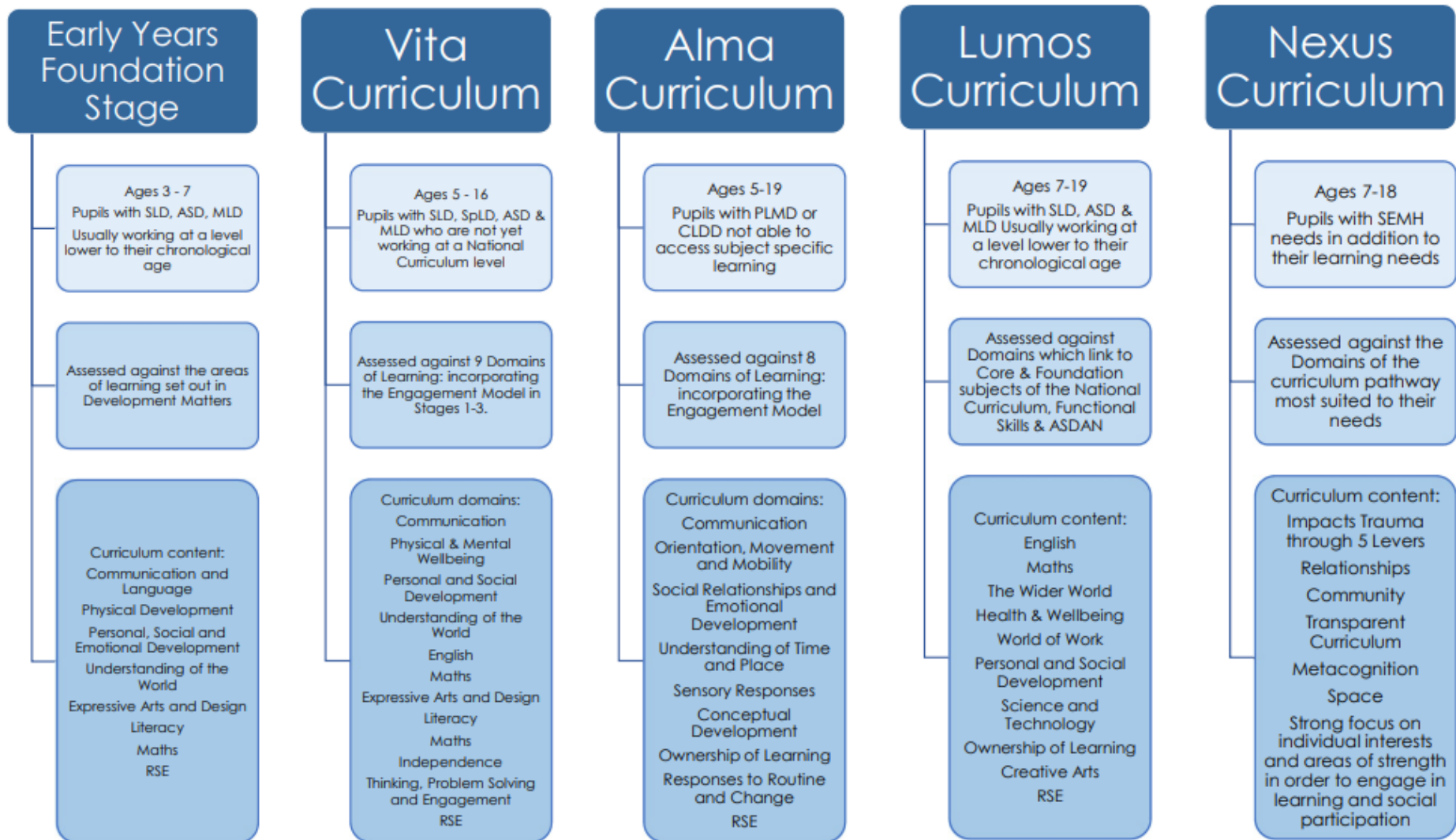
- Promote a happy, caring, respectful community in which all students feel valued, and successes are celebrated.
- Aim for all learning opportunities to be motivating, engaging and inclusive.
- Facilitate dynamic, challenging and personalised learning pathways that build on prior learning and prepare student for their lifelong learning journey.
- Build the attributes of effective learners and emphasise the importance of developing metacognition to equip our student with the skills they need to be life-long learners.
- Provide an environment and resources that encourage curiosity and responsiveness, and opportunities for active learning through investigation and exploration.
- Equip our students to be independent, responsible, respectful, active citizens who have a place in their community.
- Collaborate with education, health, social care and the voluntary sector to work within a culture of high expectations and a proactive drive to narrow the gaps in outcomes, attainment and progress.
- Promote values of inclusive education by ensuring that all learners have access to appropriate curriculum pathways to learning (Alma, Early Years, Vita, Lumos, P16, Nurture).
- Embrace equality of opportunity and promote positive attitudes towards sexual, cultural, ethnic, religious and social diversity.
- Provide relevant, meaningful and purposeful learning opportunities, including through regular access to the local community.
- Deliver a strong commitment to developing skills of Literacy, Language, Number and ICT within a consistent Total Communication environment.
- Explore young people's ambitions, aspirations and goals with them, their families and carers; set young people on a learning pathway toward achieving their goals; and review their goals with them.
- Promote aspiration by setting ambitious, challenging and achievable targets and learning objectives that enable learners to make progress.
- Promote strong links with learners' families and carers, communicating with them regularly about our curriculum and their student's learning.
- Refer to national models of expectation and progression, ensuring we deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Keep abreast of new research, understanding and developments in educational practice and keep our practice under review.

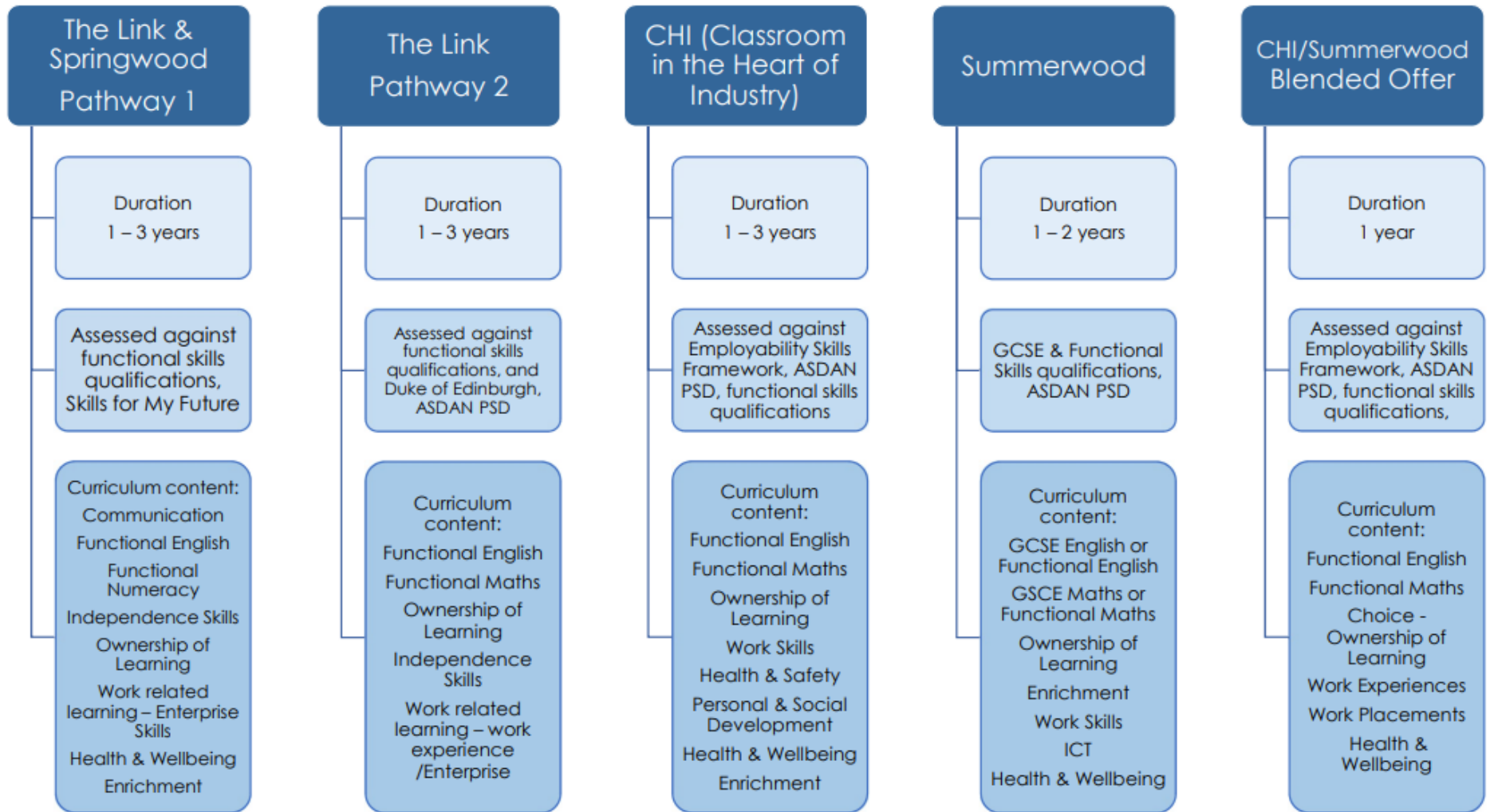
Central to every curriculum pathway are the Golden Threads. They are fundamental to our practice across the school, in every campus, in every classroom and in every learning opportunity.



GOLDEN THREADS







Early Years Curriculum - Rationale

Within Early Years the four overarching principles of EYFS underpin and shape our practice. These are:

A Unique child:

*'Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.'* Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023.

Within Early Years at Linwood school we deliver a personalised curriculum to meet the diverse learning needs of our students and ensure that each individual has access to relevant and meaningful learning which is shaped around the needs and interests of the individual. Staff are experienced in a wide range of approaches and support techniques for children with SEND. Individual support plans such as physiotherapy, sensory diets and speech & language are skilfully incorporated into the children's every day play. This ensures children are motivated and showing high levels of energy and interest when learning and practicing these skills. Communication and social skills are taught, supported and developed throughout the day. Our staff to child ratio ensures we can meet the child 'where they are' and support them to access all areas of our curriculum and participate fully in all our routines.

Positive Relationships:

*'Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.'* Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023.

Relationships are formed through shared interests led by the child, staff utilise moments for interactions; copying, sharing and teaching when children are ready to engage. We become experts in the child's favourite things so we show that we value what they value. The children feel safe, secure and cared for by the adults in their class. Our relationships with parents and carers are of equal importance, staff create warm relationships which supports the child's development and learning both at school and at home. Parents are welcomed to 'chat' to the staff, seek guidance and share experiences. Staff are ready to support parents when needed and guide towards other professionals if relevant.

Enabling Environments:

*'Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and learning support from adults**, who respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and carers.'* Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023.

The environment reflects the class values and ethos, staff create a calm and positive atmosphere where they are present and ready to respond in the moment. There is a strong sense of togetherness where all staff and children are valued equally. The physical environment both indoor and outdoor is carefully considered and adapted to the needs of each cohort. Stimulating resources and learning opportunities are presented to children to encourage exploration, motivation and independence when practicing and developing new skills.
in leading their own learning.

Learning and Development:

'Children develop and learn at different rates. Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development' Development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Document.

We know that our children learn best when there are high levels of interest, energy, enthusiasm and motivation. This comes from the child following their own interests and the adults joining them; building relationships, teaching new skills, sharing resources and having fun at each child's own level.

Within Early Years we understand children learn best through play. Staff are skilled in supporting the children to engage with activities, resources and materials to achieve their Next Steps, meaning children's learning can take off in any direction which is meaningful and engaging to them. We plan themes around both the children's interests, the seasons and celebrations, always allowing these to be flexible and open ended.







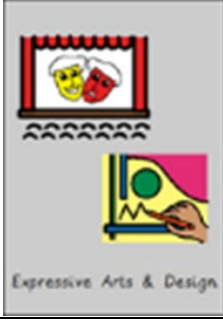
Our day involves a careful balance of playful learning; the adults plan exciting and fun sessions to entice the children to join others in group time and learn new skills in all areas of the curriculum. Stories, songs, rhymes, art, number fun, letters and sounds, messy play, music and dance are just some of the activities we share.

Early Years Curriculum Overview and aims:

Each child within our Early Years cohort is unique and will have an individual way of learning and developing. Children join us at different stages in their learning journey and will access their learning at different rates. Below outlines the overall curriculum overview and aims at Springwood and Linwood campus for Early Years. As professional's we recognise that children will access this at a level appropriate for them and adults will provide opportunities to develop their next steps in the way which supports them best. Practitioners determine next steps through careful observations, progress reviews, EHCP and PLP reviews. Specialist advice is shared and incorporated into daily provision by Occupational therapists, Speech and Language therapists, physiotherapists, Doctors, School nurse, Dieticians, idCAMHS amongst others when a need is identified.

This personalised approach informs our pedagogy. We use a range of approaches to support teaching and learning including play, planning in the moment, modelling, scaffolding, repetition and total communication. We promote independence for lifelong learning through a back-chaining approach. Our enabling environment indoor/ outdoor and emotional plays an integral role in children's learning and contributes to the class pedagogy. We support children to co and self-regulate through embedding the principles of the zones of regulation and supporting sensory regulation needs. At Linwood campus inspiration has been taken from the Hygge approach and at Springwood the classrooms are set up to support an Autism specific approach with reduced visual stimulus ensuring that total communication materials are the focus.

Early Years Domains of Learning

Prime areas of learning			
 <p style="font-size: small;">Communication & Language</p>	 <p style="font-size: small;">Physical Development</p>	 <p style="font-size: small;">Personal, Social & Emotional Development</p>	
Specific areas of learning			
 <p style="font-size: small;">Literacy</p>	 <p style="font-size: small;">Mathematics</p>	 <p style="font-size: small;">Understanding the World</p>	 <p style="font-size: small;">Expressive Arts & Design</p>

Early Years Curriculum overview and aims



Communication and language

Within this area we help learners to develop the skills they need for effective communication. This includes the development of receptive and expressive communication, language skills (speaking and understanding), listening and attention. Through a Total Communication approach, we support children and young people to communicate in different contexts. Our children and young people may communicate using speech, signing, picture exchange or through technology. This domain is the foundation upon which all other learning is built, and therefore it is essential that incidental opportunities to

develop communication skills are capitalised.

Aims:

- Reacts to stimulus such as sounds or visual cues.
- To take part in classroom daily routines and transition between activities and areas leading onto to following more complex instructions.
- To make a choice between two or more options.
- To demonstrate joint attention with an adult or peer.
- Communicate to make a request, comment, ask or answer questions using total communication, using gesture, vocalisations and body language, speech, PECS/ALS/PODD or colourful semantics/shape coding.
- Link together words and phrases to add detail.
- To understand or make links between an increasing number of words and objects, and use new vocabulary.
- To respond to adults and peers during a range of turn taking interactions including intensive interaction, PEIC-D, asking or answering questions.
- Show interest in books, enjoy reading and listening to a range of stories and songs and identifying key aspects.

Provision and interventions that contribute to the coverage of the domain

- EYFS statutory guidance.
- Development matters
- Birth to 5 matters
- Speech and Language plans
- Communication groups
- Play and leisure
- Circle times
- Total Communication approach
- Daily routines
- Attention Autism
- PECS
- PEIC-D
- Story Massage

- Colourful semantics
- Music therapy
- Intensive interaction
- TEACCH
- Shape coding
- Signalong
- Pre-phonics activities
- NELI
- Assisted language sheets (ALS)
- PODD



Physical development

Physical development incorporates the skills needed for movement, awareness of the body, gaining a sense of space and understanding the components of a healthy lifestyle.

We aim to establish good habits from an early age so that there is a long-term positive attitude towards healthy lifestyle choices and enjoyment of the intrinsic benefits of physical activity.

Children and young people are supported to develop the skills they need to be as independent as possible in their adulthood. They are equipped to become more self-directed, make choices, organize and plan tasks. They develop skills to manage their own self-care through overlearning of daily routines. Children and young people develop the skills they need to access their communities through regular opportunities to learn and rehearse these in the contexts they will be used.

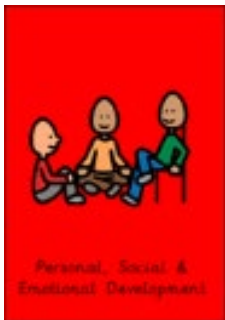
Aims:

- Develop control of their whole body through continual practice of gross motor skills. Planning their movements effectively, developing co-ordination, balance, strength and agility. (OT/ Physio)
- Develop manipulation and control of their fine motor skills.
- Encourage good eating habits and behaviours: Tolerate and try a range of foods and develop as independent eaters.
- Develop the skills needed to independently manage their toileting needs.
- Be increasingly independent in dressing and undressing.
- Be increasingly independent in meeting their own care needs.

Provision and interventions that contribute to the coverage of the domain

- EYFS statutory guidance.
- Development matters
- Birth to 5 matters

- Educational/ community visits
- Routines throughout the day (i.e. unpacking bags, snack, lunch)
- Food technology
- Dance
- Yoga
- PE
- Mindfulness sessions
- Fun with Foods groups
- Sensory circuits
- Play
- Health week
- Sensory diets and occupational therapy plans.
- Care plans
- Toileting assessments
- Physio
- Messy Play



Personal, social and emotional development

PSED is possibly the most important area of learning within the EYFS as this is where the children learn how to become actively involved in the world around them.

Personal development is about how children learn about who they are and what they can do.

Social development is all about the children engaging with others, making friends, understanding rules.

Emotional development starts with children understanding their own emotions and then understanding others emotions and developing empathy.

Relationships lie at the heart of everything we do both at school and into adulthood. We provide a wealth of opportunities and encouragement for children to develop skills in sharing, tolerating, cooperating to support future friendships and wellbeing.

Aims:

- Show fleeting attention to others around them
- Notice the play of other children.
- To begin to play alongside others, copy actions, join others play, initiate interaction, share equipment, take turns and co-operating with others.
- To be able to demonstrate likes, preferences and interests.
- To develop in confidence to try new things and take risks, showing resilience.
- To demonstrate a range of emotions when supported by familiar adults, safely and appropriately, and consider the feelings of others.

- Accept support to co-regulate, developing strategies to self-regulate independently and moderate their own feelings socially and emotionally.

Provision and interventions that contribute to the coverage of the domain

- EYFS statutory guidance.
- Development matters
- Birth to 5 matters
- Social skills groups
- Play and leisure
- Circle times
- Snack and lunch times
- Relationships and Sex Education
- E-Safety
- Anti- bullying, keeping safe, Prevent strategy
- Attention Autism
- PECS
- ALS
- PODD
- PEIC-D
- SALT Support
- Story Massage
- Music therapy
- Intensive interaction
- Sensory diets
- Zones of regulation

Specific areas of learning:

Children will access all areas of learning with an initial focus on the prime areas of learning. Children will access specific areas of learning through child-initiated learning, following their interests, and whole class or small class input related to class themes. During small group or whole class sessions possible learning opportunities will be identified on class planning.

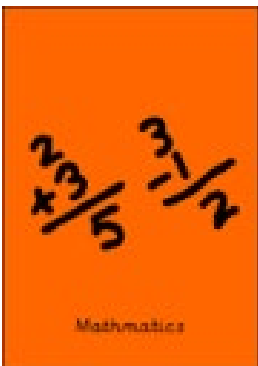


Literacy

Through language- rich classroom environments where staff engage and communicate with students, children and young people acquire and build on early language skills and comprehension. A love of reading and books is prioritised and immersive story- telling experiences are a part of the classroom culture. Enjoyment of literature is encouraged through stories, rhymes, poetry, drama and songs. Early reading and writing skills are developed throughout the curriculum but also where appropriate, through discrete and systematic teaching of phonics and spelling, which are delivered through personalised multi-sensory experiences. We ensure that children and young people are provided with meaningful contexts in which to mark make and write. It is important that learners have a purpose for writing and therefore we ensure they have rich first- hand experiences from which to draw.

Provision and interventions that contribute to the coverage of the domain

- EYFS statutory guidance.
- Development matters
- Birth to 5 matters
- SaLT groups
- Library
- Read Write Inc
- Sensory stories
- Colourful semantics
- Shape coding
- PECs
- Signalong
- Book week
- Attention Autism
- Sound therapy
- Music therapy



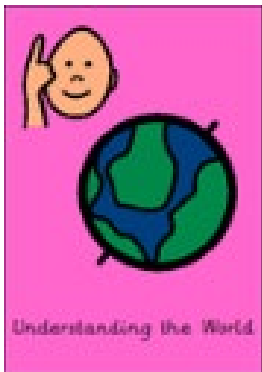
Maths

Learning opportunities ensure that a concrete understanding of number concepts is consolidated and generalised in different contexts. This forms the foundation for future learning, moving from concrete to abstract. Overlearning secures mathematical knowledge and it is deeply embedded across the curriculum. The teaching of Numeracy should incorporate the use of a wide range of multi-sensory practical resources ensuring that learning is meaningful.

Problem solving and reasoning are vital skills that are developed in learners through hands-on practical experiences. Where pupils are actively engaged, they begin to make connections. This supports their generalisation of mathematical skills in real life contexts, for example working with money and cooking.

Provision and interventions that contribute to the coverage of the domain

- EYFS statutory guidance.
 - Development matters
 - Birth to 5 matters
 - Food technology
 - Shopping on education visits
 - Play and leisure
 - Daily routines, i.e. snack time
 - Attention Autism
- White Rose Maths
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Understanding of the world

This area is focused on developing a holistic understanding of everyday events, activities and experiences. Learning opportunities support students to make connections between events, activities and experiences, and extend their understanding beyond that which is immediately apparent. Topics are relevant, current and local with extensive opportunities to get out and about in the community so that learners directly encounter and engage with the topic.

The out-of-classroom learning opportunities within the local community support and enrich the development of cultural capital, ensuring that children and young people participate in common shared experiences.

Provision and interventions that contribute to the coverage of the domain

- EYFS statutory guidance.
- Development matters
- Birth to 5 matters
- Educational visits
- Assemblies
- Topic
- Themed days/ weeks
- Science week



Expressive Arts and Design

This area knits together the expressive and creative aspects of learning. When we are fully engaged in a creative process our ability to play, have fun, and further explore is increased, thus boosting positivity and well-being.

Expressive Arts stimulates creativity and imagination. It provides multi-sensory experiences and an outlet for individual expression and realisation. Students use different medium and processes to communicate what they see, feel and think. Expressive Art offers opportunities for children and young people to explore, take risks, inquire, persevere and learn to make practical decisions. Expressive Arts is a vehicle to explore the world around us.

Provision and interventions that contribute to the coverage of the domain

- EYFS statutory guidance.
- Development matters
- Birth to 5 matters
- Art and Design
- Music
- Dance
- Music therapy
- Sound therapy
- Messy play

Long term curriculum plans

Rolling themes	EYFS - Open ended themes		
Year 1	My favourite things	The world around us	Growing and changing
Year 2	Our World	Adventure and fairytales	The great outdoors

The themes are purposefully broad to allow for professionals to follow children's interests whilst also ensuring a breadth of opportunities and exposing them to a range of experiences and new language.

Books, stories, rhymes, poems and rich language development will run through the themes as a focus throughout the year.

Overview of Intent, Implementation and Impact in the Early Years Phase

Intent

- **Curriculum vision, overview and aims**
- **SEN code of practice**
- **Educational Health and Care Plans – personalised provision**
- **Rich curriculum offer**
- **Effective Learning Attributes**
- **Preparation for Adulthood**

Implementation

- **Characteristics of effective learning**
- **Prime and specific areas of development**
- **Components:**
 - **Planned lessons:** a range of approaches, teaching styles, differentiation, personalisation
 - **Planning in the moment:** Responding to children's play, ensuring time to build relationships, share in joint attention, following their interests and adding to the environment to further develop learning.
 - **Learning beyond the classroom:** accessing the community, generalising learning in real life contexts
 - **Child-initiated learning opportunities:** An environment that enables the child to control the direction and narrative of their play. play and meaningful leisure opportunities
 - **Therapies:** Speech and Language therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physio, care plans
 - **Total communication:** Sign-along, PECS, ALS, PODD, tablets, intensive interaction, PEIC-D, Attention Autism
 - **Personalised learning:** EHCPs, PLPs, Learning Journals – Evidence for learning.
 - **Positive approaches to behaviour:** Personalised Regulation and Engagement Plans support students who require additional support and measures to self-regulate. Zones of Regulation are used widely. Sensory diet plans and provision support students to be regulated and ready for their learning
 - **Enabling environments:** fostering independence, invitation to engage, reflects classroom practice, sensory circuits
 - **Structures and routines:** Visual timetables and supports, clear timetabling and daily routines Opportunities for SMSC (Social, moral, spiritual, cultural), TEACCH approaches (Springwood).

Measuring Impact

- **Basket approach to Assessment:** Evidence for Learning observations and assessments, Birth to five matters ranges with Differentiated Early Years outcomes incorporated, EHCP outcomes, PLP short term outcomes, Arbor records, SaLT reviews, Attendance, physio programmes, sensory profiles, evaluations of interventions e.g Fun with Foods
- **Learning and Achievement reviews** (dialogue between class teams and phase leaders)

- **Pupil outcomes and future pathways**
- **Engagement with parents, professionals and other stakeholders**
- **Wellbeing**
- **Data analysis used to identify learners' achievements and inform next steps. Identifies areas for support/ development** Termly progress reviews with phase leaders
- **Peer to peer mentoring and moderation, internally and externally.**

Evidencing Learning: Early Years approach to assessment.

“Basket” of Indicators that evidence progress:

'Within Early Years, practitioners' assessments should be based on observing a child's daily activities and events, in particular learning demonstrated spontaneously, independently and consistently in a range of contexts.' **Early Years foundation stage profile 2020**

The following indicators contribute to the assessment process and support our judgement about an area of best fit whilst ensuring a holistic view of the learner.

- Learning journals – Evidence for Learning observations
- Practitioners knowledge of the child
- Practitioners commentary on Characteristics of effective learning.
- EHCP outcomes met or reflected on at Annual Review
- Personalised Learning Plan (PLPs) targets achieved
- Speech and Language plans
- Dialogue with teachers following Learning and Achievement Reviews (LARS)
- Attendance
- Personal Regulation and Engagement Plans and incident recording could reflect progress made in developing self-regulation
- Evaluations of specific interventions, for example Fun with Foods

At Linwood and Springwood all children are baselined in the 7 areas of learning within their first term at school. This information is recorded on Evidence for Learning. We assess our children and young people's learning by recording a range of best fit for each area of learning using Birth to 5 matters and the Differentiated Early Years Outcomes. Our children and young people benefit from opportunities for overlearning and rehearsing their skills; moving from a willingness to engage to working with scaffolded support, towards greater independence and mastery of skills. Alongside Birth to 5 matters ranges we evidence learning through our online learning journal (on Evidence for Learning) of experiences and achievements reflecting on all 7 areas of learning, PLP outcomes and the characteristics of effective learning. The statutory requirement requests a judgement is made at the end of the EYFS pathway against the Early Learning Goal.

Enabling Environments in Early Years

*“Children feel your energy before they even hear your words” **The Curiosity Approach.***

Within Early Years we embrace an approach which reflects our vision and our purpose. From the moment you walk into our classrooms you should feel our curriculum.

The environment reflects the school values and vision. There is a calm and positive atmosphere where staff are present and ready to respond in the moment. There is a strong sense of togetherness where all staff and children are valued equally. Relationships in the classroom are built on mutual respect, trust, and support. We value parents and carers and work together to establish a successful partnership in order to facilitate their child's learning and development.

We know that children and young people learn best when they are actively engaged; demonstrating high levels of interest, energy, enthusiasm and motivation. This comes from the individual following their own interests and the staff joining them; building relationships, teaching new skills, sharing resources and having fun at each learner's own level. Having opportunities to initiate their own pathway enables learning to take off with purpose in a meaningful direction. Staff are skilled in supporting the children and young people to achieve their personal targets through observations, careful guidance and scaffolding of skills. Incidental opportunities are built upon and the environment supports this by providing rich and varied resources and activities.

Our young people, following the Early Years curriculum...

*“are experiencing and learning in the **here and now**, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the **‘teachable moment’** – that the skilful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (**observation**), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (**assessment**), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (**planning for the next moment**)”*
Learning playing and interacting, Good practice in the Early Years Foundation stage.

The indoor environment contains resources which are meaningful, well maintained and appropriately accessible for children and young people. Indoor spaces are planned so that they can be used flexibly and a carefully considered range of activities is provided. Colours are carefully chosen to complement the calm, rather than over stimulate, helping the children to focus on the relevant sensory stimuli.

The outdoor environment encourages children and young people to be active and supports learning in different ways. Similar to an indoor learning environment, the outdoor space should be safe, organised and include planned activities as well as a wealth of opportunities for making choices. Outdoor learning lends itself towards appropriate risk-taking and problem solving, and to opportunities to develop social communication skills. Learning and playing outdoors can enhance physical health and mental well-being.

We provide a physical routine for the children and young people so they understand where they need to be and the related expectations for that part of the day. The activities and resources used within these sessions will change but the learners feel safe and secure knowing where they need to be. The children and young people who access the Early Years curriculum benefit from the security provided by the structures and routines in the setting.

'Teaching should not be taken to imply a 'top down' or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, understand and can do, as well as taking account of their interests and dispositions to learn (characteristics of effective learning), and how practitioners use this information to plan children's next steps in learning and monitor their progress.' **Early years inspection handbook. January 2019, No. 180040. pg 32.**

Early Years at Springwood; an autism specific approach

All students at Springwood and Littlewood have autism and moderate or severe learning difficulties. They also have significant sensory and communication needs. As such, they benefit from specialist approaches and a low arousal environment, which are provided at Springwood and Littlewood and can be different to provision at other campuses. Autism-specific approaches such as those recommended by the Autism Education Trust and TEACCH are commonplace at Springwood; Total Communication strategies are deployed, including use of *SignAlong*, PECS, PODD, objects of reference and other visual support. Small classes in which organisation with access to sensory spaces and equipment support students' regulation and engagement.

Springwood and Littlewood offers a highly structured environment within a secure setting. The physical environment supports the behaviour of students, some of whom lack a sense of danger and have a history of absconding. At Springwood, the maglock doors placed intermittently along the corridors enable students to move freely in secure sections of the campus, ensuring their safety while allowing them space from other people.

Due to difficulties with flexible thinking, many of the children and young people at Springwood and Littlewood find unstructured environments and activities stressful. They find it challenging to consider how they could meaningfully access equipment or activities that are 'open ended', often resorting to repetitive behaviours. For this reason, 'child-initiated learning' is particularly challenging for them. They may find it difficult to explore and make choices. Child/ Student-initiated learning looks different at Springwood and Littlewood campuses: options of resources may be limited to prevent overwhelming them, and presented in a way that supports students to make sense of how they may be used. Staff carefully model appropriate use of equipment, scaffolding the way in which a learner moves from noticing, engaging, exploring to meaningfully using it for an intended purpose. Similar activities and resources are used in a range of contexts to support learners in generalising their skills.

Factors that make our environments enabling for students may be different from what is in place at Linwood main campus. A low arousal environment reduces distraction and sensory input, supporting children and young people to feel calm. The typical "busy" classroom environment that is traditionally considered to be stimulating for learners is overwhelming for our learners and adds to their anxiety. They experience overload and are unable to focus on and process relevant information in such settings. Therefore, our classrooms are free from clutter and resources are kept in trays or cupboards until they are required for use. Visual information is intended to support the learners' independence and displays are kept to a minimum. The transition spaces (corridors) at Springwood and Littlewood are free from distraction; the wide corridors have consistent flooring throughout and the walls are painted a calm light blue.

In order to facilitate and promote independence, principles of structured teaching approaches are embedded into the provision at Springwood and Littlewood. This includes the way in which tasks are presented, daily routines are supported with visual instructions and explicit teaching of independent working through personalised work systems or activities. Children and young people follow individualised visual timetables which are presented with

photos, objects of reference, symbols or words. These enable the child/ young person to understand the expectations of the day and support them through transitions, reducing anxiety. Ironically, it is these structured approaches which enable our learners to develop flexibility and learn to cope with change, as these can be communicated to them through the systems they have learnt to rely on, instead of rigidly relying on internal routines.

It is within these evidence-based autism specific approaches that the Early Years curriculum is personalised and delivered to the children and young people at Springwood and Littlewood Campuses. They access their learning through whole class, 1:1 and small group interventions and teaching. Within these structures, our learners are able to engage with the curriculum and develop the life skills they need for their future pathways.