

Moss Valley's Resource Provisions



The Orchard The Acorn

Introduction

This document is intended to support adults at all levels working with children with additional special educational needs including autism and global developmental delay.

The impact of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and global developmental delay on children's development and learning can be pervasive and complex. This document recognises these complexities and describes how the curriculum at Moss Valley Primary Academy supports all children's learning and understanding. This is not a 'standalone' document and should be viewed alongside all other policy documents produced by Moss Valley including our Teaching and Learning Policy and individual subject curricular.

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

ASD is a term used to describe a neurological difference in brain development that has a marked effect on how a person develops; it can be described as a spectrum of conditions because individual needs vary greatly. ASD can occur with other comorbid conditions; for example, up to a third of those on the spectrum also have epilepsy and a quarter have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

What is global developmental delay?

Global developmental delay describes the condition in which children are significantly delayed in all areas of development. Children usually develop certain skills and abilities at fairly predictable ages. While all children grow at different rates, the difference for children with global developmental delay is that they often don't develop these skills until a much later age than expected. Children's development can be grouped into four main areas:

- Motor skills – this includes both gross motor skills, such as sitting up or rolling over, and fine motor skills such as picking up small objects
- Speech and language – this includes babbling, imitating speech and identifying sounds. It also includes understanding what other people are trying to communicate to them
- Cognitive skills – the ability to learn new things, process information, organise their thoughts and remember things
- Social and emotional skills – interacting with others and developing personal traits and feelings. Starting to understand and respond to the needs and feelings of others

Each of these areas has milestones which children would be expected to reach. For example sitting up, walking, talking and toilet training. Children can be classed as having global developmental delay if they don't reach two or more milestones in all of the four areas of development.

In some children the delay is suspected soon after birth because of feeding difficulties or muscle-tone. In others it's suspected later when learning or behaviour difficulties occur at school.

Global developmental delay is believed to affect about 1-3% of the population.

Resource Provisions at Moss Valley

Pupils attending the resource provisions at Moss Valley have a range of complex needs that impact their learning and participation in the classroom and wider community. These needs include difficulties with communication, cognition, mental health, relationships, behavior, physical abilities, medical conditions, and sensory processing.

To support these pupils effectively, they require informed and specific strategies that may involve input from various disciplines. This transdisciplinary approach ensures that they can engage in the learning process and actively participate in classroom activities and the wider community.

Due to the diverse needs of these pupils, their achievements may be inconsistent, resulting in an atypical or uneven profile. It is essential to have an understanding of these unique development patterns to conduct appropriate assessments and provide personalised learning experiences aligned with the curriculum for excellence.

At Moss Valley, pupils work at various educational levels, including the pre-formal (engagement model), semi-formal curriculum, and the formal (national) curriculum.

Supporting the Curriculum

Moss Valley is proud to be known as an inclusive school which values children as individuals. We are a place which provides children with the care and nurture they need to achieve. We work to create a community where enjoyment and achievement thrive. Our vision in school is to create world class learning opportunities for all of the children we serve.

We believe a cycle of support, accountability, trust and challenge can provide better opportunities for all children and help to ensure we provide an education that will empower the children with the skills needed to ensure that they can achieve anything they want to achieve. We want to work as a community to encourage parents, carers, volunteers, students and other agencies to 'learn with us' to provide a positive role model demonstrating the rewards that cooperation and collaboration can bring. Our learning environment is reflective of our high expectations and engaging curriculum and is a place that helps to develop children's love of learning. We believe that a child who develops a love of learning is more likely to make good progress and a child who makes good progress is more likely to carry these skills forward through life.

Teaching and Learning

We recognise learning as the process through which pupils can develop their knowledge, skills, and understanding, to the point where they have retained and generalised what has been taught. This achievement is made possible by providing a relevant and meaningful context for all pupils, including those with additional complex needs.

Our pupils with additional complex needs have a diverse range of requirements, which necessitates the adoption and development of a variety of suitable teaching and learning strategies. Our dedicated staff strive to create a calm and consistent learning environment that is visually structured and communicates clear expectations to pupils, both as individuals and in small groups. This approach ensures maximum information processing throughout each day, enabling all pupils to realise their full potential.

We believe pupils learn best when they:

- Are happy
- Feel safe
- Are interested and motivated
- Achieve success and gain recognition
- Are given tasks which match their abilities and experiences
- Clearly understand the task and what is expected from them
- Are confident, feel secure and aware of boundaries

The Enrichment Curriculum

At our school, we understand that education goes beyond simply gaining knowledge and skills. We believe in nurturing the development of the whole child, ensuring that our pupils have a positive self-image and the confidence to thrive in their environment and as citizens within their own communities. With this in mind, we have implemented an enrichment curriculum that provides a supportive structure for our students to develop their individual resources and capabilities.

Our enrichment curriculum not only allows our pupils to apply their knowledge, understanding, and skills but also enables them to succeed in society and become active citizens who engage in lifelong learning. Through a range of activities, our students are encouraged to broaden their horizons and explore their potential.

Some examples of the enrichment activities we offer include:

- Life skills programs: We equip our students with essential skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, and communication, empowering them to navigate the challenges of everyday life.
- Work-related learning: We expose students to real-world work environments and provide them with opportunities to develop employability skills, preparing them for future careers.
- School council: Our pupils have a voice in decision-making processes, cultivating a sense of responsibility and active involvement in the school community.
- Participation in the local community: We encourage our students to engage with their local community through volunteering, promoting empathy and fostering a spirit of service.
- Links with high schools: We establish connections with high schools to ensure smooth transitions and provide our students with a broader network of support and resources.
- Enterprise programs: We foster entrepreneurial thinking and creativity, enabling our pupils to develop innovative ideas and solutions.

- Healthy eating programs: We educate our students about the importance of a balanced diet and encourage healthy lifestyle choices.
- SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, and cultural) focused activities: We provide opportunities for personal and spiritual growth, promoting inclusivity, respect, and cultural awareness.
- Citizenship programs: We help our students understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens, encouraging them to actively participate in shaping society.
- Through our enrichment curriculum, we strive to empower our students to reach their full potential and become confident, well-rounded individuals who contribute positively to their communities.

Professional Support

Professional colleagues have a significant role to play in the curriculum of our pupils and may include:

- speech and language therapists
- occupational therapists
- physiotherapists
- educational psychologists
- medical and health professionals
- respite services
- local authority professionals
- social services and key workers

The Semi-Formal Curriculum

Moss Valley's Semi-Formal Curriculum recognizes that some children have a range of complex learning difficulties and disabilities. At our school, we support children to access the National Curriculum within their year groups through a personalized learning approach which is matched to each pupil's learning and developmental needs. Our lessons are designed to be fun, engaging, practical, and meaningful. We understand that regardless of the physical, emotional, and learning challenges faced by our pupils due to their special educational needs and disabilities, teaching through our semi-formal curriculum captures their interest and imagination.

Semi-Formal learners require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and their care. They are likely to benefit from sensory support, and their curriculum is broken down into small steps to aid their understanding. Some of our pupils communicate using signing, eye-pointing, simple evolving language, or with symbols, pictures, objects, and PECS.

Approaches for Personalised Learning

There are various approaches that we use and adapt to provide personalised learning opportunities for children at Moss Valley. These include:

- Speech and language therapy: Our pupils receive support from qualified speech and language therapists to aid their communication skills.

- Occupational therapy: We provide occupational therapy to assist our pupils in developing their motor and sensory skills.
- Sensory processing assessments: We conduct assessments to understand our pupils' sensory processing needs and provide appropriate support.
- Total communication: We encourage various means of communication, such as signing, eye-pointing, and the use of symbols and pictures.
- Individual education plans (IEP's): Each pupil has an individual education plan tailored to their specific needs and targets.
- Individual behaviour support plans: We develop personalised plans to support our pupils' behavioural needs.
- Social stories: We use social stories to help our pupils navigate social situations and understand appropriate behaviour.
- Low visual and auditory environments: Our classrooms provide a calm and focused environment by minimising visual and auditory distractions.
- Access to sensory and movement rooms: Pupils have access to specially designed spaces where they can either withdraw or engage with sensory activities based on their individual needs.
- The Semi-Formal Curriculum at Moss Valley School ensures that all our pupils, regardless of their special educational needs and disabilities, have the opportunity to learn and develop in a supportive and inclusive environment.

Intent - What we want to achieve through our Semi-Formal Curriculum

The Semi-Formal Learning Pathway aims to provide a curriculum that meets the specific needs of learners. It focuses on developing independence and engagement, using meaningful contexts for learning, and recognising the importance of play and games. The pathway also emphasises the development of awareness and interest in oneself and the immediate surroundings, as well as the generalisation and application of skills and knowledge across curriculum areas.

The curriculum provides explicit instructions and sufficient time for learners to repeat, practice, maintain, and consolidate skills. This repetition and consolidation are essential for developing independence. By repeating tasks and activities, learners gain confidence and become more proficient in specific skills.

To ensure high levels of engagement, the curriculum takes into account learners' interests and motivators. By finding out what captures their attention, educators can tailor learning experiences accordingly. When learners are engaged, they are more likely to actively participate and take ownership of their learning.

Meaningful contexts for learning are created by using real-life materials and experiences, concrete resources, and practical everyday activities. This approach enables learners to make connections between their experiences and the skills they are acquiring. By relating learning to their lives, learners can better understand the purpose and relevance of what they are learning.

The curriculum also supports learners in developing an awareness of themselves and their immediate surroundings and environments. This self-awareness helps learners develop a sense of identity and understand their place in the world. By recognizing and valuing their own experiences, learners can better relate to the concepts they are learning.

Our pathway acknowledges that play and games are not only enjoyable, but also important curriculum activities. Play and games allow for repetition and consolidation of skills in a motivating and enjoyable way. They provide opportunities for learners to practice and apply what they have learned in different contexts.

Furthermore, the curriculum recognises that imagination plays a significant role in learning. When children imagine something that is not immediately present, they may need prompts to recall an experience. This prompts their thinking and stimulates their imaginations, enabling them to engage with concepts that go beyond the here and now.

The pathway includes activities that move beyond memory building to take part in supported thinking and problem-solving activities. By encouraging learners to think critically, it allows them to develop problem-solving skills and apply their knowledge in different situations. This helps learners become active and independent thinkers.

The curriculum also provides opportunities for generalizing and applying skills and knowledge across different curriculum areas. By making connections between subjects, learners can see the relevance and interconnections of their learning. This holistic approach supports learners in developing a deeper understanding of the concepts they encounter.

Finally, the pathway acknowledges the importance of physical well-being and development. It recognises that some learners may require full support to complete practical processes, but it still ensures their involvement in choice and decision-making about the process. By considering physical well-being, the curriculum promotes the overall development of learners.

In summary, the Semi-Formal Learning Pathway aims to provide a curriculum that promotes independence, engagement, meaningful learning contexts, self-awareness, play, imagination, critical thinking, generalization of skills, and physical well-being. By incorporating these elements, the pathway ensures learners receive a comprehensive and inclusive education.

Impact - The difference is our curriculum making

Progress for learners following the semi-formal curriculum pathway is currently assessed using descriptors from Wilson Stuart Progress Steps (WS P Steps) and through formative assessment of progress towards individual EHCP outcomes.

Children are initially baselined to ascertain which P step they are secure in and typically make approximately 1-2 steps progress across an academic year. For those children participating in

subject-specific learning, their progress is recorded within their corresponding P Step for their year group as well as their developmental P step. This progress is recorded on Solar. The Engagement Model was introduced into Moss Valley during 2022-23 and may be used to assess some Semi-Formal learners alongside existing planning, assessment, and recording systems.

The developmental profile of pupils with additional needs can be mixed or spiky. All children with spiky learning profiles show significant developmental inconsistencies between different areas of learning. For example, they might be working at the national curriculum level 4–5 for literacy, yet at P6 for numeracy; or at level 3 for science but at P5–6 for PSHE. Children may also have strengths and abilities in keeping with or beyond their developmental age. For pupils with additional complex needs, it is therefore essential to establish an accurate pupil profile on which to base educational targets. Assessment for pupils with additional needs is bespoke to each pupil and is carried out in a range of environments. Pupils may perform well in a given situation but may not transfer or use the skill in another; such inconsistencies may be attributed to changes and variations in the environment, personnel, or resources used.

The assessment process is based upon careful observation and the identification of concepts or skills which require further exploration as well as a combination of information from different sources. Information from home and parental perspectives is vital to form a holistic profile. Parents have a great deal to contribute to both the informal and formal assessment process and may face quite different challenges to the adults in the education setting. A range of professions may be involved to supplement the knowledge and information gathered by classroom staff.

The Formal Curriculum (The National Curriculum)

At Moss Valley, we prioritise the seamless integration of our Semi-Formal and Formal Curricula, allowing our students to transition between the two as their development calls for. This personalised approach ensures that our pupils can thrive in an environment that is best suited to their individual needs. For those students who primarily follow the formal curriculum, we provide assessments that align with their chronological age year group, enabling them to progress and achieve their full potential.