



The Booker Park Curriculum

Curriculum Intent

The purpose of our curriculum is to inspire and enable children, in order that they can achieve and play an active role in their own lives, being able to self-advocate and to engage in the world around them.

The curriculum takes a whole-child, holistic view and is designed to address the cognition, learning, communication, sensory, physical, social, emotional and mental health barriers that the children have to their learning as detailed in their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP).

Through the following areas: 'My Knowledge' (Cognition and Learning), 'My Communication' (Communication and Interaction), 'My Body' (Sensory and Physical), 'My Well-Being' and 'My Behaviour' (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) and also 'My Skills for Life' (Independence and Community Involvement) teachers target next step/individualised learning for pupils using developmental curriculum frameworks which have been devised by the multi-disciplinary team that work at the school, supplemented and informed by published curriculum documents such as the Barrs Court Curriculum, Q Skills and Equals. None of our subject areas exist in isolation and are all linked to each other.

The curriculum is further informed by each child's individual targets as detailed in their EHCPs, with teachers ensuring that activities are planned in order to facilitate the achievement of these targets. Most children will have at least one target in each area of need, with many children having several targets in communication, sensory and physical, social, emotional and mental health, and independence and community involvement.

A termly topic is used to provide a context for the learning experiences. These are planned in order to prepare children for experiences they may experience outside the school setting, both now, and in the future. We acknowledge that our children have a number of barriers to access the rich and varied life experiences and opportunities that there are in the world, and through our topics, and the learning and experiences they facilitate, we aim to open up the world to our children.

Curriculum Pathways

At Booker Park, we have 'pre-formal', 'semi-formal' and 'formal' pathways within our curriculum. The 'formal' curriculum in this country is the National Curriculum. All pupils here have learning difficulties, and are not able to access the National Curriculum at age appropriate levels. Many children's needs are significant and complex, which means they are still acquiring the pre-requisites of learning, and therefore require a different approach to the curriculum which focusses on developing the skills needed to learn – communication, attention and focus, play and thinking skills. It is clear that pupils at Booker Park need a different curriculum to that which is provided in a mainstream setting.

We use the terminology 'pathway' to indicate that the children are on a journey while at Booker Park, and as they make progress, they move further along the pathway, and possibly onto another pathway altogether. The 'pathway' refers to the structure and sessions the children experience rather than the learning, which for all pathways, is individualised and developmental.

Inspire - Enable - Achieve

Pre-Formal Pathway

Our pre-formal pathway is designed for children who have complex or profound and multiple learning difficulties and rely on adults to support them to be able to access their environment. The aim of the pre-formal pathway is to have the learner at the centre of a holistic approach designed to support the children in the very early stages of their development. It uses a multi-sensory approach that supports the pupils in learning to experience and enjoy the routine of a school day. It aims to provide experiences to engage the pupils in the world around them. In most cases, there is a high level of multi-professional input for pupils following this pathway.

Semi-Formal Pathway

Our semi-formal pathway is designed for children who are not yet able to access the National Curriculum but have the ability to participate in some adult directed activities with a level of independence. It aims to personalise the learning to each individual child, using a multi-sensory (often play and practical) approach that is appropriate for the child's age and developmental level. The semi-formal curriculum provides opportunities for independence and aims to create independent learners with skills for life through play, exploration and investigation. Core skills of reading, writing and maths are incorporated throughout the day.

Formal Pathway

Our formal pathway is designed for children who are able to access the National Curriculum but need a personalised approach to their learning. These children will learn skills through the process of activities rather than learning a procedure. Instead of 'knowing' that $3+2=5$ through a process of repetition, the child will be provided with concrete resources and learn through experiences that give them the skills that they can then transfer to their life outside of school.

It is important to remember that pupils following our formal pathway are not accessing the National Curriculum at age appropriate levels, with the significant majority of them accessing the Y1 National Curriculum, with a small minority accessing beyond this – children accessing a formal curriculum are still also likely to have needs wider than just cognition and learning and still require multi-disciplinary input and have targets in other areas of need. Formal learners are almost always in our older classes.

What the day-to-day looks like

Each class has a timetable which sets out the sessions that are taking place over the course of the day. Most sessions last 30min-45min. Universal names have been assigned to sessions currently, in order to support consistency across the school, to provide a familiar experience as children move classes and to support staff who may work in different classes in understanding what may happen in those classes. By providing consistent sessions names, we have ensured that all elements that we want to be included within our curriculum are planned for, yet we also acknowledge that these things aren't solely going to be addressed in a session with that name, but at all points during the day.

Classes in the school are largely structured so that children with similar needs/in similar pathways are together. However, there will be cross overs, most likely in the non ASD/PMLD classes, where there may be one or two pupils on a different pathway than the others. Our developmental frameworks will allow teachers to plan learning regardless of which pathway a child may be on.

Learning Intentions

We use the term learning intentions, rather than learning outcome or learning objective for two reasons.

The first is that we know that repetition, practice, over-learning, revisiting is key for our children making progress, and they may need the opportunity to access similar activities on many occasions before a skill is fully understood and generalised. With all our children, we would not expect them to properly achieve a learning objective/outcome within a single session.

The second is that we want to ensure that children are able to lead their own learning, and therefore, teachers will plan a session with clear learning intentions, but if the child goes down a different route, we want the staff to be able to 'follow' the child and not inhibit their learning by insisting they carry out a prescribed activity in order to achieve the planned learning.