

## My Physical Well-Being

- ◆ Physical Activities
- ◆ PE, Sport, Games and Aquatics
- ◆ Mental Health and Well-Being
- ◆ Healthy Eating and Healthy Lifestyle



## Equals Semi-Formal (SLD) Curriculum Schemes of Work

### *My Physical Well-Being*

#### Basic Principles

**Equals' My Physical Well-Being scheme of work** focuses on what it considers to be the four main areas of

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Look at any mainstream primary or secondary playground or playing field area at break time and lunchtime and you will see children and young people (CYP) involved in vigorous activity, **none of which is organised by staff**. Young children rarely walk anywhere when placed in a big space; they run, jump, hop, skip and gambol their way around the space and older pupils organise their own throwing, catching, skipping, hopping, jumping, kicking and running games which all involve considerable expenditure of energy. Now look at the activity levels and spontaneity of pupils in the playgrounds and playing fields (if you're lucky enough to have one) of the average special school. Compare and contrast!!

Now look at 'mainstream' adult physical activity and see a welter of clubs, organisations and individual initiatives such as gyms, organised team and individual sports, clubbing, rambling, gardening, dog walking, etc., etc., that are available. Please also compare and contrast to the average adult with learning difficulties, who, unless s/he is extremely well supported is unlikely to have routine access to such physical activity.

This is not because CYP and adults with severe learning difficulties (SLD) are intrinsically lazy or too fragile or are sulking because we've denied them their iPads (though this latter point could be true!), it's because of the HUGE problems that learners with SLD have with co-operative and collaborative play. Play (with a capital P) is a subject that **MUST** be taught to SLD learners of all ages and as such *My Play and Leisure* takes a central position in the Equals' Semi-Formal Curriculum. Please do cross reference to it, since it will provide LOTS of ideas for getting all of your learners active.

**This *My Physical Well-Being* scheme of work recognises that the basic point of physical activity is to maximise opportunities for functional movement, whenever and wherever possible, continually throughout each day. It is however, HUGELY important that we see this as a lifestyle choice and that the emphasis must be on learners CHOOSING to be physically active and remaining so throughout the whole of their lives.**

**As such, the role of staff (and parents, relatives, friends, advocates, therapists) is not so much to instruct, as to lead learners into TRULY believing that the healthy options are the ones they WANT to adopt. There is only so much point to ensuring that learners are physically active in school if they are physically inactive when they leave school. All teaching must therefore have a key learning intention at its core – how can I ensure that the learner will want, and be able to, carry on with ..... outside of school?** Staff therefore need to concentrate on getting learners into good habits from an early age and keeping those good habits going so that there is a long-term acceptance, welcoming and enjoyment of the intrinsic benefits of physical activity. This will inevitably necessitate working closely with parents and carers.

**Success is imperative. Motivation is the key.** In order to achieve this we need to work on two key areas, which are:

1. What do your learners REALLY enjoy doing? And how do they know what they really enjoy if we haven't offered the opportunity to try EVERYTHING? The point here is that many learners won't know what they enjoy until they have experienced it, so we may need to 'strongly encourage' learners to try out activities, otherwise they may simply say "no" to everything.
2. Knowing how to communicate that they REALLY enjoy what they REALLY enjoy. Learners will need to have a means of expressing this in some way if the long-term process is to be meaningful.

Activities must have a focus on success and progress which are personalised to meet the needs of each of the individual learners, fostering the right attitude so that physical exercise is enjoyed for its own sake. **This means keeping an open mind about what might be described as physical activity, remembering that physical activity simply means any movement of the body that uses energy.** Walking, gardening, briskly pushing a baby buggy, climbing the stairs, playing football, or dancing the night away are all good examples of being active. For health benefits, physical activity should be of moderate or vigorous intensity.

**The main emphasis, including that element which is described as the formal PE, Games, Sport and Aquatic Curriculum, is not skills based but process based.** That is, the benefit is in the doing rather than in the acquisition of specific skills like holding a bat or passing a ball. These may be important, but perhaps not as important as improving self-confidence and self-esteem – I can swim, I can run, I can jump, I can dance and I am not afraid of.....

**Learners will need to be prepared for and recognise the physical changes that occur with physical activity.** Together we can reflect on how we feel before, during and after exercise with regards to heart rate, breathing, how hot we are and how sweaty we are. We can also discuss predictions for what we feel is going to change during and after exercise.

**Staff must recognise that learners WILL get tired, that some learners who struggle with physical movement (those affected by cerebral palsy for example) WILL get VERY tired** and their motivation may well dip. One of the editors was asked to come up with a solution to an adult with SLD and CP who was presenting with challenging behaviour. He could walk using a rollator but it was obviously a struggle and he often chose not to. This was especially problematic when, having walked the half mile to the supermarket and then all the way round the supermarket to buy his shopping, he regularly refused to walk back, and no amount of cajoling or threats would persuade him. The editor suggested that staff try walking to the supermarket with permanently bent legs and see if they were willing to walk back once they'd bought what they needed!

**Autism and SLD.** Just because a learner has autism does not mean that s/he cannot get involved with the process of physical exercise and healthy eating and we must not allow it to be seen as a reason for opting out. We must regard the learner's autism as an additional difficulty which may require some (and perhaps a lot of) adaptation and differentiation, but the key question will still be the learner's level of intellectual ability. As always with autism, it is probably always best to consult widely using the expertise that will be available in the school, especially the Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) for communication issues and the Occupational Therapist (OT) for sensory issues.

**The adoption of a process-based ideology** for the curriculum heralds a significant change in emphasis for many schools. We are now concerned with the specific process of the physical activity; the by product is now the specific skill attained (or for that matter the Maths or English or Science). Curriculum design can concentrate on what is important to the child and so we can fit the curriculum into the child rather than the child into the curriculum.

## My Physical Well-Being

- ◆ PE, Sport, Games and Aquatics



## PE, Sports, Games and Aquatics

The Teaching and Learning Activities listed below are designed to encourage and facilitate physical activity through a more formalised curriculum designed for those with severe learning difficulties, whilst keeping the emphasis strongly on fun.

<b>Learning Intention</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning Activities</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p><b>To prepare for the activity as a regular routine.</b></p>	<p>As with all discretely taught sessions such as Art, Music, Narrative (probably the only discrete session in the My Communication scheme of work), The World About Me topics etc, it is fundamental to the principles of teaching children, young people and adults with severe learning disabilities that we build up an understanding of the sequence through fairly strictly adhered to routines. These should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating what is about to happen next through the presentation of objects of reference, pictures, symbols, signed reminders, verbal reminders, visual timetables, now/next and/or start/finish boxes. What you use depends on the individual learner, but the more and wider the opportunity for the learner to understand what is about to happen, the better.</li> <li>• Having an expectation that the learner will change his/her clothes as a matter of course, in the same way that the learner will always wash their hands and put on an apron before cooking. This represents a great opportunity for teaching and re-enforcing the acquisition and maintenance of dressing and undressing skills.</li> <li>• Using separate changing rooms/areas according to gender. Although this is probably not strictly necessary in school, it is an excellent opportunity to talk about gender differences. It's probably not necessary to change in a different room, but the simple use of room dividers with male and female symbols pinned on should suffice.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing personal hygiene skills and an understanding that physical exertion will cause body heat, sweat and possibly odour which will involve washing and changing clothes back again. It is recognised that this latter point won't be too much of a problem for pre-pubescent pupils, but it is good to get into good habits as early as possible, even if it's only a wipe over with a wet-one.</li> <li>• All of these activities will help to cue into the session. Do this through a repeated physical activity. This can include music, a specific activity such as running or parachute games.</li> </ul>	
<b>Learning Intention</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning Activities</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p><b>To warm-up and become familiar, comfortable and ready to engage in the main body of the session.</b></p>	<p>Engaging in fun, play-based games and activities are an excellent way to lead into a session.</p> <p>During the warm up there can be brief pauses to notice our bodies and how they change during exercise, discuss how we now feel, who feels different, how do they feel different, why do they feel different.</p> <p>Ideally some of the skills that will be used later in the session can be practiced in the warm up. Examples of these are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musical chairs/bumps/statues</li> <li>• Dodge-ball</li> <li>• Copying simple physical skills like running, jumping, waving etc., through Follow the Leader.</li> <li>• Parachute cat and mouse. Ask for two volunteers to play the cat and the mouse, the other players forming a circle holding the parachute. The mouse stands under the parachute whilst it is wafted aloft, whilst the cat stands outside the circle. The aim of the game is for the mouse to get outside the circle and avoid being caught by the cat. This can be varied by having two cats or two mice if there is an obvious mismatch in speed between them.</li> <li>• Running to 'stations' which might be colours, mats, bases.</li> </ul>	<p>We would suggest keeping to the same introductory format – that is, one of these listed opposite – for at least a term.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action/dance songs with individual learners demonstrating a move in turn which everyone has to copy. Over a period of a half term or a term, a short dance sequence can be built up by adding one more move each week. This has the added advantage of aiding the improvement of sequential and long term memory.</li> <li>• Tig or tag games, as in for example, ‘Duck, Duck, Goose’ or Tail. In this game each learner tucks a tail into the back of their shorts and on the whistle, run around the space trying to capture the tails of the other players whilst keeping their own tail safe. If a learner's tail is captured, they perform a pre-agreed fitness activity, such as 5 jumps or hops on the spot.</li> <li>• Stretches (possibly led by the learners once they know some) can then lead into the next part of the lesson, as well as calming and preparing the learners for the change of activity.</li> </ul>	
Learning Intention	Teaching and Learning Activities	Notes
<p><b>To participate in and enjoy different forms of skill based physical activity.</b></p>	<p><b>The basis for all motivating activities is having fun.</b> Get to know learners and tap into the interests that motivate them. This doesn't mean that individual learners will <b>ONLY</b> be expected to participate in activities which motivate them personally, but knowing which do can allow you to stretch other learners too. Last week we played Jack's favourite, this week it's Zara's turn.</p> <p>These simple games are a tool to promote physical activity which is also fun to engage in, they are not to be taken too seriously unless that is what motivates your learners!</p> <p><b>THERE IS NO POINT in doing any of these activities once. Learning takes time and repetition is the key to learning. You may do several of these activities in a session, but keep them going as a block for AT LEAST half a term.</b></p>	<p>TOP Sports ability-  <a href="http://www.youthsporttrust.org/top-sportsability">www.youthsporttrust.org/top-sportsability</a>                      login YSTINCLUSION20  <a href="http://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/motor-activities-training-programme">www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/motor-activities-training-programme</a></p> <p>MATP Special Olympics</p>