

Curriculum Scheme of Work

My Communication



Preview of first 3 pages from **My Communication** **Basic Principles**

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum Schemes of Work

My Communication

Basic Principles

The Equals Communication SoW centres around the basic premise that communication is, at its core, a fairly simple business, but that 'education' has made it unnecessarily complicated for those with severe learning difficulties. We have perhaps, been far too concerned with the notion of being literate rather than the notion of being a communicator. We contend that communication is at the heart of being a social human being, and being a social human being that is at the heart of this document.

Equals Communication SoW argues that we only need three essentials in order to communicate:

1. A motivation (a reason) for communicating
2. A means (a method) of communicating
3. Someone (a partner or partners) to communicate to.

Because these three are **SO** fundamental, we have set them out as the 3Ms - motivation, means and mate. And if you want a little rhyme it becomes

**Motivation, means and mate:
It's all you need to communicate**

If we can provide all three (and it is assumed that the communicative partner(s) have time to communicate otherwise they are not effective partners!) we can at least provide the basis for teaching communication effectively to all learners. All are equally important, but it may be that schools have in the past, concentrated too much on means without giving sufficient thought to motivation and communicative partners.

Communication is a holistic process; if we can constantly tap into motivation and consistently provide someone to communicate to, all learners will have many more opportunities to practice and perfect the means that are best suited to them.

This SoW is divided into ten basic sections within the overarching title of Communication. In all of these areas, staff must be mindful of the three communicative essentials (the 3 Ms) and we have tried to marry them together as far as we can. The ten areas of learning are not developmental or linear either in nature or the way they might be worked on. Imperative communications will generally come (developmentally) before declarative communications, but they will continue for all of our lives. We all seek to express our wants and needs to others in ways that will get them met no matter how old and sophisticated we are. This is not therefore a SoW which starts at the beginning, though there is an element of greater complexity as we go through the areas of learning.

The ten areas of communicative learning

1. **Imperative communications** are primarily based on meeting specific or general needs and wants. They are not likely to be pre-intentional when used by learners with SLD, though they may be when used by learners with PMLD. Imperative communications are centred around motivation and it is therefore absolutely key that we establish a bank of personalised and effective motivations for each individual learner.
2. **Following instructions** falls into the realm of receptive rather than expressive communications and is the exception to the rule that applies in every other area of learning about communication in this SoW. That is **ALL** other sections are about the learners' direct involvement in taking some control of the communication experience. Following instructions are however, a necessary part of communicative learning since it has conforming to normative expectations at its base. Since Theory of Mind (ToM) - the recognition that other people have different thoughts, feelings and understandings to ourselves, and a significant factor in the development of empathy - doesn't emerge until around four years old with neuro-typical learners, it seems reasonable to assume that many of those on the SLD spectrum may not naturally develop ToM. We might therefore need to consciously teach it, and recognising that following instructions is an essential part of learning may be one lead in.
3. **Declarative communications** are communications for the sake of themselves, as in for example *'Isn't it a lovely day'*. They are not meant to gain anything from the recipient other than joint attention and acting as a point of contact, but are essentially social communications, expressed for the sake of communicating. The ability to **instigate** communicatively through declarative communications is a key part of working at P4 and above and is one of the markers (along with for example, the ability to follow simple instructions) which indicate severe rather than profound learning difficulties.

Declarative communications indicate that the act of social communication is sufficient motivation for the learner and is an essential part of social communication for the vast majority of all human beings, including those with SLD. The exception to this rule often arises when working with learners who have an additional autistic spectrum disorder; not all learners with SLD/ASD dislike social interactions, but a significant number might. This does not mean that we shouldn't teach social communication or social interaction or declarative communications, just that we will have to differentiate the teaching.

4. **Dynamic communications** are declaratives that are specific to a person, or group of persons, and work like a catchphrase or an 'in joke'. They are generally funny or dramatic and are a short hand 'bonding' reference point, as for example, nicknames. Dynamic communications are particularly open to being non-verbal, such as a special handshake or a thumbs up.
5. **Narratives** are the telling by learners of both factual or fictional stories. These are not scripted (as in a book) but are derived from memory and repetitive practice. They are usually quite short – a minute or two in the telling - and describe events or relate interests, biographical information, jokes, stories etc. Narratives are the way we all communicate about our lives – good, bad, funny, sad – to those who matter to us. They are the essential glue of social humanity.
6. **Formal social interactions with familiar and unfamiliar people** require a particular way of behaving that take in a society's understandings of what constitutes appropriate language, familiarity, attention, time, proximity and touch. They are generally rule bound and will be societal bound.
7. **Personalised reading and writing** for those with SLD is usually confined to single familiar and often used words. These are usually learned through whole word recognition and it is not necessary to explore the mysteries of phonics. There will probably be a number of words that apply to all learners, especially social sight words such as Toilet, TOILET, Gents, GENTS, Gentlemen, Ladies, LADIES, Lavatory, plus the innumerable symbols which indicate Gents and Ladies. There will be a number of other, less complicated, social sight words such as 'exit' and 'pull' etc. In addition to these, there will also be a bank of very personalised motivating words that will very much depend on the individual learners' interests.
8. **Non-verbal, behavioural communications** can form a considerable part of a learner's communicative repertoire, especially if that learner has what are considered severe challenging behaviours. If it is a cliché that all behaviours are communications, it is a cliché that is true, and we ignore them at our peril. There is however, sometimes a tendency to stop these communications because they are associated with challenging behaviour, rather than turning them into contextualised and appropriate communications.

Preview of first 3 pages from My Communication

Imperative communications are primarily based on meeting specific or general needs and wants. They are not likely to be pre-intentional when used by learners with SLD, though they may be when used by learners with PMLD. Imperative communications are centred around motivation and it is therefore absolutely key that we establish a bank of motivations for each individual learner.

Learning Intention	Teaching and Learning Activities	Notes
<p>To work on I want..... communications</p>	<p>Although imperative communications are built around wants and needs, <i>'I want'</i> is different to <i>'I need'</i> and probably comes first. One may for example need to go to the toilet, but might not want to. Needs and wants can of course coincide in essence but be different in detail. One may need to eat (a calorie controlled) lunch but want to eat a double jam doughnut.</p> <p><i>'I want'</i> is centred around motivation and is therefore naturally more powerful than <i>'I need'</i> which will probably have to be learned over time.</p> <p><i>'I need'</i> communications will be discussed in Non-verbal, behavioural communications in this SoW.</p>	
<p>To build up a bank of clear and unambiguous likes and dislikes</p>	<p>See ISE (Individualised Sensory Environment) in the Basic Principles.</p> <p>It may not be necessary at this stage for the learner to be using a formal communication system such as sign, symbol or speech. You are looking for the learner to make a clear choice which may be positive (I want) or negative (I don't want) but that could easily be by vocalising, eye-gazing, pointing to, taking, holding, turning away from, pushing away etc.</p>	<p>The purpose of spending a considerable amount of time with all learners in building a bank of likes and dislikes is to establish a motivation to communicate.</p>

	There may however be a third option which appears as a negative, but strictly speaking is not, and is indicated by indifference (I don't care).	
To make a supported positive choice from two given options	<p>Working from the learner's known likes and dislikes (see ISE in Basic Principles) offer two clear and obvious opposing choices to the learner, for example orange juice or vinegar/fresh lemon juice; a crisp or a lettuce leaf; raisin or dry pasta.</p> <p>It may not be necessary at this stage for the learner to be using a formal communication system such as sign, symbol or speech. Choosing is enough.</p>	It may of course be the case that the learner really likes vinegar or fresh lemon juice, in which case these get added to the list of likes and you have to search harder for the dislikes.
To make a supported negative choice from one given option	<p>Working from the learner's known dislikes, offer one clear and obvious dislike to the learner, for example vinegar, fresh lemon juice, lettuce leaf, dry pasta. It is not enough that the learner has previously shown indifference to this object. The learner must actively dislike it.</p> <p>It may not be necessary at this stage for the learner to be using a formal communication system such as sign, symbol or speech. Rejecting is enough.</p> <p>You are looking for a specific (and acceptable) means of rejection such as pushing away, turning away.</p> <p>It is difficult to over-emphasise how important learning to make an appropriate negative choice is. So many challenging behaviours derive from those in control of learning (staff, parents, therapists for example) insisting that learners do something, be with someone, be in a certain place, that the learner does not want to do, be with, be in. Because the learner has severe (or indeed, profound) communication difficulties she may not be able to eloquently and appropriately express this dissatisfaction.</p>	<p>Remember that effective communication is about making one's meaning clear. You are looking for a clear and socially acceptable indication that the learner does not want</p> <p>This whole issue is discussed in detail in <i>Non-verbal Behavioural Communications</i></p>

	<p>Learning how to communicate a negative choice positively is one of the most important communication skills we can give to any learner.</p>	
<p>To establish a bank of each learner's favourite imperative words</p>	<p>Such words, usually nouns, MUST be established favourites. That is, they must be motivating to the learner.</p> <p>It is not necessary at this stage to consider sentence structure or sentence strips (if using symbols). There is also no necessity to start with <i>'I want...'</i> or to put in <i>'Please'</i> or <i>'Thank you'</i></p> <p>ALL staff who are in any way in daily contact with the learner must ensure that they are competent at signing the individual's favourite words. Class staff must ensure that several symbols are prepared for each word so that there's always a spare if necessary.</p> <p>BEWARE that the bank of words is accurate since preferences can and probably will change over time. It will be good practice to check the continued validity of the preferences at the beginning of every academic year at least.</p>	<p>The key elements here are that learners are both confident and able to communicate using single words for highly motivating objects.</p> <p>We need to be aware that some choices, preferences, refusals are specific to time and place, for example, 'yes' at school but 'no' at home or vice versa.</p>
<p>To gain the attention of another person</p>	<p>In order to be confident in communicating, the learner needs to know that they have the ability to gain the attention of another person (means) AND that they will be listened to (mate).</p> <p>This is a theme that will run through a number of the learning avenues in this SoW.</p>	

Curriculum Scheme of Work

My Independence

- ◆ My Dressing & Undressing
- ◆ My Shopping
- ◆ My Cooking/Food Technology
- ◆ My Travel Training



My Independence

- ◆ My Dressing & Undressing



Preview of first 2 pages from *My Independence - My Dressing and Undressing - Basic Principles*

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum Scheme of Work (SoW)

My Independence

Sub SoW: My Dressing and Undressing

Basic Principles

Age related. It will be generally assumed that dressing and undressing will be an early years, or at least a key stage 1 teaching area, and generally this might well be true. There may however, be a significant number of learners who arrive at these skills later on, and a number who might still need to refine skills well into key stage three and beyond. As such, the continued opportunity to physically practice dressing and undressing is key, and regular opportunities for repetition should continue to be looked for if needed.

Autism and SLD. Simply because a learner has autism does not mean that s/he cannot dress as independently as he or she can, 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.

Physical disabilities and SLD. Similarly, physical disabilities and/or communication difficulties DO NOT RULE OUT learners from dressing as independently as they can, but adaptations and differentiation will undoubtedly be needed. Consult widely with the expertise that will be available in your school, especially with the SaLT, OT and Physiotherapists.

Process and product. Dressing and undressing is a combination of skills and process. The act of putting on a shoe or a vest or a pair of trousers is a skill but there is an element of process in remembering the order, underwear first etc. Also, the refining of dressing and undressing, which enters into choosing what to buy and what to wear for particular occasions is probably much more of a process than a skill. That is, learners are likely to understand the sequencing process by doing it many, many times.

Physical difficulties. The importance of dressing and undressing will almost entirely depend on the physical ability and dexterity of the learner, and there may be a number for whom dressing and undressing is just too physically demanding, or it may be the case that

specific physical disabilities make all or most of the process impossible without the full support of another person. We may therefore need to concentrate on reducing the level of dependence as far as possible whilst increasing the opportunities for choice and decision making. In this way we are involving the learner in the process so that it is something done with the learner rather than just to him/her. It may also be that physical difficulties will allow us the opportunity to work more on choices of clothing at an earlier stage.

Approximate accuracy. It may be that with certain items of clothing the learner is able to put them on, but not entirely accurately. Tops or pants may be put on back to front or inside out for example. On the whole and especially in the early stages, it is really important that we accept these approximations as success and praise accordingly. It is rather like a young child attempting to say a word but not getting it right. Instilling confidence in the learner, especially for making the attempt, is vitally important for future success.

Contextualised learning. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER that dressing and undressing needs to be contextualised as early as possible if we are to aid understanding of appropriate contextual based clothing. Appropriateness has to be considered– but also individual choice and this will certainly need to be explored, considered, negotiated and compromises reached especially as the child gets older. Parent and carer views on this also need to be taken into account. Every single time we are preparing to leave the confines of the building we must talk about the weather so that choices of appropriate clothing can be made. That is, talking about the weather becomes a contextualized conversation rather than just a social conversation. Talking about the weather has meaning! There is a very good case for arguing that there should be no such thing as ‘wet play’ (a school euphemism for dry play indoors!) which now becomes the perfect opportunity to practice, maintain, consolidate dressing and undressing skills and making appropriate clothing choices, rather than simply remaining indoors.

Thinking and Problem Solving. There are huge opportunities in dressing and undressing for teaching thinking and problem solving skills, especially when it comes to exercising choices. Schools will need to think very carefully about the desirability of providing opportunities for helping learners assess and manage risks. Learners will probably not understand that they need to put on waterproof clothing in the rain or warm clothing in the snow if we never allow them out in such conditions for fear of them getting wet or cold. Such risks will need to be discussed with parents, but we need to consider the consequences of a learner never being allowed out in the rain because s/he refuses to wear a waterproof hat. In this situation modeling and a very early introduction as soon as s/he starts school is imperative. Learning the correct sequence for putting on clothing the learner is wearing should be an opportunity for discussion with the learner rather than simply correcting any mistakes. Making mistakes (for instance putting underwear on over trousers) provides opportunities for more effective thinking and problem solving to take place.

Preview of 2 pages from My Independence - My Dressing and Undressing

LEARNING INTENTION	TEACHING ACTIVITIES	POINTS TO NOTE
<p>Knowing body parts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree key vocabulary to be used to describe body parts, actions, directions, etc. Also agree key signs and symbols to support. • Songs about body parts- e.g. Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes; If You're Happy and You Know It; Clap your Hands and Stamp your feet, Now We've Made a Pattern (to the tune of "Skip to My Lou"); Stevie Nicks-'Hold Your Head'; One Finger One Thumb; Hokey Cokey. • Games e.g. Simon Says, Twister, • Matching activities- Put labels onto body, label own body parts with post it notes. • Sort pictures of arms, legs etc. Body puzzles • Art work e.g. painting hand and foot prints, portraits, collage • PE and dance activities/games that highlight body parts/body awareness • It may be helpful to carry out many of these activities in front of large mirrors so that learners can actually see the body parts they are touching, labeling or moving around. • Action and directional games eg. obstacle courses and games involving small apparatus to support understanding of actions and direction instructions involved in dressing and undressing eg. pull, push, step, up, down, under, over, through, side, in, on, under, over, left, right, front, back, forwards, backwards, in front, behind, etc. • Sherborne Developmental Movement activities 	<p>Some crossover between knowing body parts and linking to items of clothing.</p> <p>Many other publications available with songs about body parts, dressing etc, for example, Musical Steps, Music Express</p>
<p>Identifying items of clothing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree key vocabulary, signs and symbols to be used. • Games- Hunt the clothing- treasure hunt around the classroom/outside areas; Pass the Parcel-have items of clothing in each layer in correct order- children to put on 	<p>Note the importance of vocabulary - take care when using name variations of the same</p>

	<p>as they open the layer, discuss what might come next, what's left etc?; Fruit salad with items of clothing; How many t-shirts etc can you put on in one minute? And then take off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role play through stories which involve dressing up in uniforms, as characters, as sportsmen and women etc. • Exploration of items of clothing from feely bag. • Matching activities- e.g. match the hat to the head, shoe to foot. • Bring in items favourite clothing- show me your favourite hat etc. • Sorting 'washing' into categories e.g. jumpers, socks. • Make a clothes collage. • Shopping trip to identify, choose, try on and possibly buy clothes, socks, jumper etc. 	<p>item e.g. jacket, coat, Mac. although a wider vocabulary should be used with more able learners.</p> <p>Encourage and praise the use of proper vocabulary throughout this scheme of work.</p>
<p>Identifying and utilising appropriate clothing and accessories with regards to; weather, occasion etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match the clothes to the <u>item</u> or activity e.g. Football boots to football, party dress to balloons. • Symbols/sequence/rules for different areas of school- e.g. door=coat on, soft play=shoes and socks off. • Weather- use opportunities on day to day basis to experience different weather and allow children to choose what they need to wear e.g. sunhat, coat, scarf, wellington boots. Initial and reinforcement activities can be done lots of times within the classroom, especially when stories are involved, but in order to embed learning staff must remember that THIS MUST BE DONE OUTDOORS!! • Games- use items e.g. water spray, light (sun) children to choose correct/appropriate clothing from pile in middle and put on. • Role play areas. • 'Performance' costumes eg. for a well-known story, poem, school play or panto. Learners can have great fun exploring and selecting costume clothing for different characters 	<p>Cultural differences- e.g. Saris.</p>

My Independence

- ◆ My Shopping



Preview of first page from *My Independence* - *My Shopping - Basic Principles*

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum SoW: *My Independence* Sub SoW: *My Shopping*

Basic Principles

Shopping is almost entirely process based; that is, learners will learn the process of shopping by *doing* the act of shopping itself, in real shops using real money and in real time. The more opportunities they have of *doing* the more secure their learning will be. Learners should be introduced to shopping by KS1 at the very latest; leaving the teaching of shopping until the secondary phase runs the real risk of diminishing real learning opportunities and thereby reducing the likelihood of maximising independence potential. This does not mean that shopping cannot be started at KS3, but it will be more difficult to maximise independence potential for all learners.

There will however need to be *many opportunities for practising shopping in the classroom* particularly in order to establish and consolidate a wide range of skills in a safe environment (eg. putting items into a bag, carrying items on a tray, queuing, assessing the size and quantity of items etc). This is especially the case in the early stages of teaching, and when learning and practising more complicated transactions with money. So for example working on the concept of money as a means of exchange in the class or snack shop, coin recognition, value of coins, practising using a shop, cafe, canteen, choosing coins to take out, using wallets/purses/pockets as safe places to keep coins. By using the classroom experience, all of these can be practised over and over again rather than just once in an actual shop.

The class shop, cafe, snack bar should replicate the real world as much as possible, especially in the use of real products that are of interest to the learners at real prices. These may initially be very small items such as boxes of raisins or relatively cheap soft drinks so that learners can practise handling the correct or approximate amount of money, using purses, pockets to keep the money in, working out what they can afford with the money they have, experiencing having picked up the wrong coins (for instance 1p for £1) and then not being able to get anything for that. At EYFS and KS1 lots of items should be in the pretend shops but marked with approximately the right priced coins so that learners can explore the full range of coins that might be used. More able learners will, in this way, have an opportunity at an early stage to maximise their mathematical abilities, and teachers can continually assess how far they might be able to go.

Preview of 2 pages from My Independence - My Shopping

LEARNING INTENTIONS	TEACHING ACTIVITIES MONEY	POINTS TO NOTE
	Please make sure you've read the <i>Introduction to My Shopping</i>	
<p>Understanding that money is a means of exchange</p>	<p>Using money to exchange for desired items in the class shop.</p> <p>These should be items the learners' desire, and will probably centre around food and snack items so that snack time becomes a perfect shopping experience.</p> <p>The class shop must sell real items at real prices. In a mainstream setting teachers might well set up a 'pretend' shop which sells tins of baked beans, washing up powder, boxes of cornflakes etc; that is, empty containers which children have brought in from home. Here you are using 'pretend' goods and might also use 'pretend' money (such as plastic money at 'pretend' prices, since the purpose will be to get children to count, and it doesn't really matter what they're counting. For those with SLD, we need to be working within the concrete rather than the abstract and therefore real money at real prices buying real goods is an essential right from the start. There seems little point in teaching one thing (you can buy this tin of beans with a plastic penny) only to have to teach later, that this is wrong.</p> <p>Build on existing knowledge of picture exchange.</p> <p>Extend the role-play to include baskets and perhaps trollies, and even packing items into different sized and shaped bags.</p> <p>Role-play tills.</p> <p>Trips to shops outside of school (see Travel Training)</p>	<p>It is probably best NOT to use standard/mainstream maths reception and year 1 video/teacher materials of money and coin recognition.</p> <p>These generally start at 1p, 2p 5p etc, are too complex even at the very earliest of levels and are likely only to confuse.</p> <p>Link to <i>My Communication</i> with symbol communication – exchanging a symbol for an object</p>

<p>Recognising a £1 coin</p>	<p>Posting £1 coins; matching/sorting/selecting from a choice of two obvious coins such as a £1 and £2 (or possibly a 50p) because these are the coins they are most likely to be using in the early stages. This needs to be practised very frequently and repeatedly to establish the skill. From there learners may select a £1 coin from other lesser coins such as and a 5p or a 2p; identifying £1 coins from a group of other small round flat objects such as buttons.</p> <p>Coin bingo. Shop role-play. Watch Charlie and Lola <i>'Our little town'</i>. Orchard game – <i>'Shopping game'</i>. <i>'The Price is Right'</i>. <i>'Supermarket Sweep'</i>. <i>'Delivery driver's role play'</i>. <i>'Farm shop role play'</i>. Stories such as <i>Spot goes shopping, Maisy goes shopping</i>.</p> <p>It is recognised that these are very primary based and will almost certainly need to be adapted if you are still working at this level at (say) key stage 3 and above.</p>	<p>Please note that the learner does not need to be able to name a coin in order to understand its use and use it effectively – insisting on learners naming things puts them under unnecessary pressure when what we want to know is their grasp of the use of the coin.</p>
<p>Understanding which coin to use</p>	<p>Introduce the principle that a £1 coin will buy one item. Practise in the school tuck shop and/or at snack time using £1 coins to purchase one item, or during a structured, practical table-top or class based session.</p> <p>Please refer back to this Introduction to proceed with money.</p>	
<p>Using real money</p>	<p>Basic principles which will apply for many years of the shoppers' learning will need to be established right from the start, even when using the class shop. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Money can only be obtained from the learners' money boxes or from the banker (see below). b. Learners will need to choose which coin(s) to take, with an adult checking and supporting, but not telling or directing, as appropriate. c. The money, initially a pound coin, must be put in a purse, bag or pocket, depending on the learner's ability to extract it. d. The learner must remember where s/he has put the money in order to give it to the shopkeeper. 	

My Independence

- ◆ My Travel Training



Preview of first 2 pages from *My Independence - My Travel Training - - Basic Principles*

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum SoW: *My Independence* Sub SoW: *My Travel Training*

Basic Principles

Process and Skills. *My Travel Training* (TT) is a combination of skills based and process based learning; that is, learners will learn the process of travelling from one place to another and back again by doing, and the more opportunities they have of doing, the more secure their learning will be. There are nonetheless, some basic skills that can be prepared in the classroom such as learning how to stop, look, turn left or right, go forward, backward, be aware of what is behind and in front for example. All these can and should be taught in school in order to embed essential concepts that are used when travel training since it may not be enough to practice these only when actually out of school travel training.

TT goes as far as it can go for each individual learner and there is no expectation that every learner will become entirely independent in all of the schemas attached.

The type of TT skills required by any individual learner will depend on (i) their cognitive abilities (ii) their physical and sensory abilities and (iii) their environment. Environmental factors will include the area being travelled within, so that TT for a learner living in central London will be very different from TT for a learner living in rural Somerset.

Starting age. Independent TT is very complicated to master and schools will therefore need to maximise the number of learning opportunities available. There is no logical reason why the processes outlined here cannot be started at KS1 and possibly earlier. It is certainly not unreasonable to assume that TT will be an activity which all learners will need to practice several times during every single week of their whole school career.

Motivation. TT should as much as possible be self-motivational, that is, it will work best when the learner has a reason for *wanting* to go from one place to another in the sense that something which is important to the individual learner is gained or achieved by the process of travelling. This may however be going for a walk with the class, going to a park, going to the local library etc. For some learners, it may be that the journey itself is sufficient motivation especially when using bus, tube or train, but it is always best to have a reason for travelling as well. For many learners it might simply be that it is part of the curriculum and on the timetable therefore it takes

place, when learning basic road crossing skills, there may not be an end reward or any other reason to go out other than to cross and re-cross roads time and time again to get enough practice. Staff may need to work quite hard to make it an activity that learners want to take part in by making it fun and being encouraging and positive. We may also find that many students won't (understandably!) want to go out in the cold, damp, snow, drizzle, but they still need to be practising skills in all conditions as these conditions can affect the environment they are accessing and in 'real life' they will need to venture out in all weathers.

TT must not be restricted simply to those who can walk, or those who can walk for long distances. The independent use of motorised wheelchairs may become a key factor in increasing an individual's TT independence. This may involve schools acting as advocates for learners with the Area Health Authority for the allocation of a motorised wheelchair. Clearly, all learners will need a considerable amount of practise in school before they can venture out into the road and issues of long term mobility potential come to the fore. It may be that a realistic long term prognosis of an individual's mobility potential at 19 years of age needs to be made well before Key Stage 3 and such a decision clearly needs to be multi-disciplinary and directly involve parents/carers. There may well be dilemmas here which are not easy to resolve, and which centre around the choices of (i) Do we continue with a programme that tries to maximise a learner's walking ability and thereby risk giving insufficient time for him to master a motorised wheelchair? or (ii) Do we maximise the time available to the learner to master the use of a motorised wheelchair and thereby risk speeding up the 'disability' process through lack of exercise? It needs to be recognised that 'disabling' may well occur with either scenario.

Non ambulant SLD learners who are unable to use, or who will not have access to, motorised wheelchairs should also experience travel training, being talked through the process and skills as with ambulant learners, and being encouraged to decide when to cross a road, which way to turn etc. It is **REALLY** important that the member of staff supporting the learner does not simply make the decisions for them.

TT must be grounded within the context of the actual journey being learned. Learners may need several tens and possibly several hundreds of opportunities to learn the same journey at the same time of the day using exactly the same route for it to become established and before we can bring in the variations necessary for the generalising of the skill.

The TT guides promoted here are largely developmental, but the skills achieved by the learner may not be gained in a linear fashion. For example, the use of pedestrian crossings and traffic light systems often require the ability to differentiate between green and red which the learner may not have. They also generally have time limits on the green which may be too short to allow sufficient processing time for the person's degree of learning difficulty. Alternative methods may need to be taught and employed.

Preview of 2 pages from My Independence - My Travel Training

LEARNING INTENTIONS	TEACHING ACTIVITIES Walking And Road Crossing (Travelling as a Pedestrian)	POINTS TO NOTE
Walking independently in school	<p>1. Learners will need a reason to travel around the school and journeys must have a purpose. Standard times will be travelling from bus to class; from class to class; from class to playground; from playground to class; from class to lunch; from lunch to class; from class to bus.</p> <p>2. A timed baseline will need to be recorded for every learner which will involve establishing whether the learner can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Walk independently for a set distance without pulling away whilst holding an adult's hand (the adult is holding the learner) b. Walk independently for a set distance without pulling away whilst touching an adult's arm or hand (the learner is holding the adult) c. Walk independently for a set distance without running away. <p>3. It is not necessary to go through the process of moving from a to b to c, since some learners will already be at the c stage and other learners will move from a to c without needing b.</p> <p>4. Learners may need to re-start a journey several times in order to get it right if there is LOTS of pulling away. This must always be done in a very low key, non-punitive manner with lots of praise for getting it right and of course, the reward of getting to the motivating object/place/person.</p> <p>5. Learners will need to practice in school as much as possible and teachers will probably need to manufacture reasons for walking around the school. These might include collecting favourite toys/books/objects/foodstuffs or visiting favourite people to say hello/pass on a message, etc.</p>	<p>ALWAYS inform the learner where they're going and why.</p> <p>This will be done verbally and supported with object of reference (OoR) or symbol and/or sign as necessary.</p>

	<p>6. Learners who drop to the floor or refuse to co-operate may not be making the connection between the act of walking and the reward gained; that is, their understanding of cause and effect is too fragile as might well be the case if for example, they had profound learning difficulties. It may be that TT is not an appropriate activity and they should be working in a more informal curriculum model, enabling them to access the community safely and appropriately. Alternatively, they may be being offered insufficient reward (that is, the object/person is not sufficiently motivating to the individual learner) OR we may be expecting them to walk too far. It is very important that we don't make the initial stages too demanding, since success is vital. A very easy learning intention achieved is much better than a more challenging learning intention failed. We can always gradually increase the distance once success has been established.</p>	
<p>Walking independently outside of school</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is not necessary to wait until walking independently in school for a set distance without running away is established BEFORE walking outside of school. Indeed it is envisaged that both can be practised at the same time. 2. It is assumed that learners will not move onto 3b and 3c below if they cannot walk independently without running away in school. 3. A timed baseline will need to be recorded for every learner which will involve establishing that the learner can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Walk independently for a set distance without pulling away whilst holding an adult's hand (the adult is holding the learner) b. Walk independently for a set distance whilst touching an adult's arm or hand (the learner is holding the adult) c. Walk independently for a set distance. 	<p>ALWAYS inform the learner where they are going and why. This will be done verbally and supported with OoR or symbol and/or sign as necessary.</p>

My Independence

- ◆ My Cooking /
Food Technology



Preview of first page from *My Independence - My Cooking/Food Technology - Basic Principles*

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum SoW: *My Independence* Sub SoW: *My Cooking/Food Technology*

Basic Principles

Unlike many of the other schemes of work in the *My Independence* series, *My Cooking/Food Technology* (hereinafter referred to as *My Cooking*) is not so obviously linearly developmental. That is, with dressing and undressing for example, we can see that we start at the beginning and carry on to the end since there is only so much to learn. With *My Cooking* however, there is not an obvious single starting point and there is certainly no end point. Learners will therefore probably start at several 'starting points' at once and may well go off in very different directions because what they cook may well depend on what they like to eat, as well of course, on the individual learners' possible physical and cognitive barriers, their individual skill level (for instance what they are able to cook independently and then able to cook with support and guidance) and home circumstances.

However, it is very important that learners are taught and experience as wide a range of different skills/cooking activities as possible whatever their cognitive level or physical disability. Learners may, on occasion, need to cook food for others, not themselves, in order to gain this knowledge and relevant practice. This is also very important in terms of learning about general safety in the kitchen.

It is however likely that most learners will achieve and become competent in the basics at least and we need to remember that we are aiming for the highest levels of independence that the learner can achieve by the time they leave school at nineteen.

My Cooking is going to be a mixture of skill based learning and process based learning, though the process based learning (that is, learning by 'doing' without any fixed or rigid target) will be more in evidence once the learner has established a sound base of core skills. Further, such skills, for example, spreading, cutting, chopping, dicing, washing up, drying, putting away, using an electric socket, using a toaster, using a sandwich maker, using a blender, using a hob, etc, will probably largely be learned by rote, that is, going through a set sequence of activities that never varies and never changes and repeating such a sequence many hundreds of times. Whilst it is recognised that the *art* of cooking is in the variation, the art can only be achieved if the core skills are established, though it is of course, perfectly possible to cook many and varied meals by mastering the core skills.

Preview of 3 pages from My Independence - My Cooking/Food Technology

LEARNING INTENTION	TEACHING ACTIVITIES Pre-cooking skills	POINTS TO NOTE	CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS
Following instructions during cooking activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice visual instructions - practicing the use of symbols/photos/signs to gather (any, not necessarily kitchen) equipment. • Practice following very simple one and two part spoken instructions. • Choose and Cook ICT Program. • Practice sequencing and ordering, again not necessarily in anything related to <i>My Cooking</i>. 	Pre-cooking skills are probably not going to be that different from preparing to learn skills.	
Preparing oneself for a cooking activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run bowl of water/use a basin specifically for handwashing, wash hands, dry hands, secure apron, tie hair back, remove jewellery, roll back loose sleeves, etc • Song - <i>“Wash, wash, wash, your hands”</i> • Songs from <i>I Can Cook</i> (Cbeebies) • Role play. • Growth of mould on bread - differences between washed and unwashed hands (google Pinterest). • Sorting activity - things we need to do before cooking and things we don't. • Stories - Little Red Hen, Pumpkin Soup. • Role play kitchens, cafes etc. Including recipe cards, cooking equipment and utensils, play food, dressing up outfits (chef, waiter, etc.) • Name and identify different kitchen equipment. • Kim's Game with kitchen equipment • Match labels to correct equipment e.g. cooker, whisk. 	<p>It is recognised that learners will need certain levels of gross and fine motor skills (or adapted equipment) before they are ready to begin a Cooking programme, and some learners may not be ready until KS2 or later.</p> <p>It is recognised that some of these activities will not be age</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games - Corners type game with different equipment/utensils; Odd-one-out; Guess the utensil (use feely bag and guess what is inside obviously ensuring that the objects are not sharp). • Making instant whip or chocolate cake as a small group activity (2 or 3 learners) using pre-made mixes in order to practice mixing, pouring, stirring etc and generally preparing for cooking activities. This would also be a relevant activity for developing specific cooking skills. 	<p>appropriate for older learners who are still at this level of learning and will need adapting.</p>	
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LEARNING INTENTION	TEACHING ACTIVITIES Using a blunt knife	POINTS TO NOTE	CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS
<p>Use a spreading knife to spread and cut toast, with support as and where appropriate and/or necessary.</p> <p>Opening containers and replacing lids.</p>	<p>The following is the first of a series of task analysis exercises that lay out the process of ‘making’ a slice of toast, though initially of course, much of the actual making will be done by the staff member. Over the course of many, many opportunities to repeat the lesson, the learner will gradually be able to extend his/her learning by taking more responsibility for all parts of the task. It is vital that staff members always allow learners the opportunity to learn, and do not assume that the learner cannot do it for him/herself or that it is too dangerous for the learner to do it for him/herself. Making mistakes in a positive environment is an excellent way of practising and learning new skills and such mistakes should always be used as a way to further learning.</p> <p>At the start of the lesson, time should be spent modelling the task in hand and talking through the process – this may well be relevant for a wide range of skill development. Many of the basic skills to be mastered can be taught very effectively as one large group around a table, which</p>	<p>The sequence of spreading should progress from easier to harder, so it will probably be necessary to initially use harder foodstuffs such as toast to spread on and the flat surface afforded by a chopping board, rather than a plate which has curves that complicate</p>	<p>My Travel Training and My Shopping</p> <p>Fine and gross motor skills</p>

	<p>also gives learners the opportunity to watch and learn from other students.</p> <p>It is also very important even at this early stage of cooking that learners are taught how to use a spreading knife safely, again through modelling and practice. They should be taught:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to always pick up or hold the handle not the blade • not lick or wipe their fingers along the blade • to carry the knife with the blade pointing downwards • if passing the knife to someone else to do so by sliding it along the table or work surface with the blade pointing away from the learners. • when washing up to hold the handle not the knife blade – preferably washing up using a brush not a cloth. • when leaving the blade to dry in a cutlery container on the draining board to place the blade in first so that whoever picks it up to dry it will take hold of the handle. <p>The task of spreading a slice of toast involves:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learner (L) washes and dries hands effectively. 2. L collects apron from its regular spot and puts on. 3. At this stage the important lesson here is to learn how to spread toast, not how to make the toast, since that will come later, when making toast and spreading becomes a combined activity. 4. Toast should be prepared beforehand so that several pieces are readily available for learners, with staff making more if and when needed. 5. Staff member (SM) supports learner to take 1 piece of toast from several on a plate. 	<p>the process of spreading.</p> <p>The point of this section is for learners to concentrate on the spreading. In order to do this, lots of toast needs to be prepared beforehand – learners should not be waiting for</p>	
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Curriculum Scheme of Work

My Thinking and Problem Solving



Preview of first 3 pages from **My Thinking and Problem Solving** **Basic Principles**

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum **SoW: *My Thinking and Problem Solving***

Basic Principles

'We'll never do something for a child if he/she has a chance of doing it for him/herself.' **

(with thanks to Pear Tree School, Lancashire)

The Pedagogy of Thinking and Problem Solving for those with severe learning difficulties. In a conventional mainstream curriculum model, cognition (thinking and understanding) problem solving (acting upon understanding) and even metacognition (thinking about thinking) would be placed within the general framework and context of everyday lessons. In good and outstanding schools, much thought is put into strategies such as Bloom's Taxonomy (of learning objectives) (Bloom et al, 1956) so that the pupil is constantly steered towards deep and meaningful learning, as opposed to a shallow and superficial memory for facts.

The purpose of questioning is to extend learning from

- (i) memory to
- (ii) understanding to
- (iii) application, and then on to
- (iv) the higher orders of learning which are to be found in the abilities to analyse, evaluate and create.

For those with SLD we are however often stuck within memory, since (i) it may take many hundreds of opportunities to repeat a skill before it is lodged in the long term memory, (ii) those with SLD tend to find generalisation extremely difficult (Lacey, 2009) and (iii) we often get enticed by the need to provide routine, order, certainty and structure for our learners. SLD schools – and this is especially so where there may be a number of learners with a dual diagnosis of SLD/ASD who are usually excellent at, and respond positively to, routine, order, certainty and structure.

There are whole pedagogies based upon these principles (TEACCH and ABA for example) and there is no doubt that routines are a major opportunity for learning, especially for those who are functioning at the earliest stages of intellectual development. It is tempting, because it can be thought of as being less stressful and therefore better for the pupil, to maintain routine, order, certainty and structure to such a degree that learners become reliant upon them and experience considerable distress when such certainties are taken away. This is perfectly understandable – if you're not in control of your own life, as so many with learning difficulties are not, there is some security in knowing that someone else is. That means that routine, order, certainty and structure become essentials, not options.

By accepting this, however, we may well be restricting opportunities for learning, because we are not expecting our pupils to think and to problem solve. When faced with problems and difficulties, as inevitably they will be, pupils who have learned to rely on routine, order, certainty and structure will have no skills or strategies to fall back on. In these circumstances it may well be that their distress will be even greater. In preparing SLD learners for life beyond school and greater opportunities for independence it is vital that they are able to function in a range of situations and contexts. In order to be able to do this they will need to be able to apply knowledge, skills and understanding to circumstances that may be unusual, unexpected and unpredictable. What will they do if.....? **This SoW proposes that teaching children with SLD to think and problem solve as independently as they possibly can is not an option, it is a necessity.**

Penny Lacey was at the forefront of a growing campaign to bring thinking and problem solving back into the heart of the SLD Curriculum. Here is an extended quote that gets right to the heart of the issue.

*Children's (with severe learning difficulties) likely lack of interest in the world generally can be a challenge but providing exciting activities can help to provoke interest. We need to introduce children to different kinds of animals, let them experience the weather first hand, work with artists, make films, visit unusual places, people and things and experience a range of physical movements from abseiling to horse-riding to sailing to ice skating. Just erecting a tent and eating homemade popcorn in it can provoke many thinking skills. There is a big wide world to be discovered beyond the routine, although we must be careful not to provide a catalogue of unconnected experiences. The connection is **thinking** and **problem solving** and we need to make that very explicit or the children may not notice. (Lacey, 2009 pp 22, original emphasis).*

Problem solving basically involves four key mental processes:

1. Perception
2. Thinking
3. Action
4. Evaluation

Perception involves:

- (i) recognising and identifying problems
- (ii) recognising opportunities.

Thinking involves:

- (i) breaking down a problem into elements
- (ii) thinking through the relevant features of the problem
- (iii) planning ways to solve the problem.

Action involves:

Remembering how to solve a problem and bringing this memory to the fore.

Evaluation involves:

- (i) evaluating how a plan worked
- (ii) recognising when existing plans and strategies need changing.

Intrinsic within this is the recognition that one needs to improve one's own learning performance through:

- recognising that problems are usually opportunities to do something different;
- recognising why a task is carried out, what it involves, when it is complete and by extension, when it is incomplete;
- communicating preference and choice;
- recognising personal strengths and weaknesses;
- learning from mistakes and setting targets;
- developing attention and concentration;
- developing self-confidence in one's ability to solve problems and face difficulties.

Preview of 4 pages from My Thinking and Problem Solving

The following SoW has been written on the basis of six repeatable and variable problems that have an infinite number of variations depending on the motivating factors of individual learners. We would strongly advise that *My Thinking and Problem Solving* is not taught discretely, but as opportunity and motivation (to think and solve the problem) arise. The further 8 examples are therefore taken from situations that might occur in each of the other 8 Semi-Formal (SLD) SoW that Equals will be producing over the next two years or so.

Never knowingly do something for a learner when you think they might be able to do it for themselves.

Learning Intentions	Teaching Activities	General Points to Note	Tier Points to Note
<p>To gain access to my favourite..... toy, snack, drink, i-pad, piece of flappy string, etc.</p> <p>To acknowledge that I want/need equipment</p> <p>To get the resources and equipment I want/need</p> <p>To communicate a want/need</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Six general and repeatable problems</p> <p>TIER 1. Memory Building. Introduction of the task, namely to be involved in getting my favourite toy, snack, drink, i-pad, piece of flappy string, etc from wherever it is regularly kept at a regular time(s) of the day. This might be prompted by a visual timetable or some other regular indication. The learner may need physical or verbal prompting to get the item, but must be involved in the process many, many times.</p> <p>The item MUST be independently accessible. If it cannot be accessible (because for example, the i-pads need to be locked away for security reasons) it is not an appropriate item to use.</p> <p>TIER 2. Sabotage and recognition of a problem sees ‘my time’ announced without any prompt to get the item concerned. The minimum required here is for learners to recognise that ‘my favourite....’ is missing, that is, that there is a problem and they need to do something about it. This might be (as a minimum) to indicate that s/he does not have ‘her/his favourite.....’ and to ask for help from a member of staff. In this case the learner might be assisted to</p>	<p>You need to know what your pupil is motivated by and use this to support solving the problem This may be very different for different individuals.</p> <p>Begin with what a pupil wants rather than something they need. Recognising a need is a higher functioning skill</p>	<p>The accessibility exception might be for those who are not physically able to take themselves to the place, open drawers, open cupboards, in which case the school should look to putting the item in a place that is accessible or adapting the physical environment BEFORE relying</p>

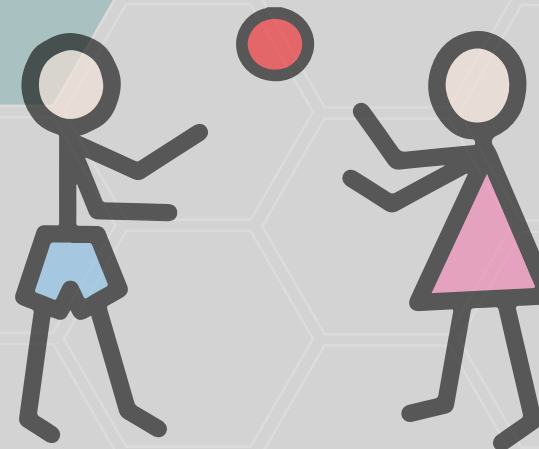
	<p>search for her/his favourite..... We can see that the whole class having 'me time' at the same time can be useful in providing modelling opportunities to the less able learners. Staff must recognise that learners may solve this problem by doing something else or by doing nothing! Whatever happens, staff should avoid prompting!</p> <p>TIER 3. Independent solutions sees the problem recognised, but the member of staff unable to give help because they don't know the answer. You are looking for learners to go to the cupboard, drawer, toy tray to get 'my favourite....' without being told to do so.</p> <p>TIER 4. Generalisation might now see an extension of the problem. For example, 'my favourite.....' is not in its usual place. A potential solution should not need to be taught because you are looking for generalisation skills, that is, for the learner to look in another cupboard.</p>		<p>on teaching the learner to ask for help.</p> <p>Not finding my favourite toy, snack, drink, i-pad, piece of flappy string etc might well have unintended consequences for the class staff which has to be prepared for. Class staff will know their learners best and should have strategies in place. It is however vital that the missing item is not magically found in order to avoid a potential or actual melt-down.</p>
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<p>To find my lost..... lunch box, hat, headphones, wellington boots, etc.</p>	<p>TIER 1. Memory Building. Introduction of the task, namely to be involved in looking for items that the learner needs when they are not in their regularly kept spot. It is advisable that there are a limited number of places to be looked in before the item is found, and that it is always found in this first stage. It is also advisable that items are 'lost' occasionally, rather than every day and this therefore becomes a learning intention which may take some time.</p> <p>This particular memory building will imply that the learner has already gone through the previous learning intention of 'gaining access to my favourite' and is now used to the concept of looking for something. Again, the item MUST be independently accessible. If it cannot be accessible (because for example, the i-pads need to be locked away for security reasons) it is not an appropriate item to use.</p> <p>TIER 2. Sabotage and recognition of a problem sees the regular limited places where the learner will look as revealing no lunch box, hat, headphones, wellington boots, or there may be some boots or hats, but not enough or they are the wrong sizes.</p> <p>The minimum requirement here is for learners to recognise that the item has not turned up in its usual alternative spot, that is, that there is a problem, and to do something about it. This might be (as a minimum) to indicate that s/he cannot find the item and to ask for help from a member of staff, in which case the learner might be assisted to search for the item in question.</p> <p>We can see that if the whole class have wellington boots to search for at the same time, this can be useful in providing modelling opportunities to the less able learners. Staff must recognise that</p>		<p>You will note that the learner has now moved from 'wanting' to find to 'needing' to find. That is, there is now a connection that has to be established between the item and being able to do something because one has the item, such as eating my lunch, or indeed, not being able to do something because one doesn't have the item, such as, going out to play in the rain with no wellington boots.</p>
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	<p>learners may solve this problem by doing nothing, for example, not listening to music or not going out in the rain. Staff might therefore have to work on the motivational angle, but should avoid instructing and prompting.</p> <p>TIER 3. Independent solutions sees the problem recognised, but the member of staff unable to give help because they don't know the answer. You are looking for learners to go to the cupboard, drawer, toy tray, fridge to find the item they need without being told to do so. The learner may need to be prompted to remember where they last had the item, for example, <i>'I last had my headphones in the hall'</i>.</p> <p>Alternatively, the learner could find the two wellington boots in different places.</p> <p>TIER 4. Generalisation sees an extension of the problem. For example, the item cannot be found in the classroom. A potential solution would be for the learner to consider remembering when the learner last had the item and check there.</p> <p>The learner may also consider borrowing someone else's wellington boots which will of course lead to further thinking and problem solving opportunities such as <i>'Do I have permission?' 'How do I get permission?' 'Do they fit me?'</i></p> <p>The learner may have to consider what to do if the item is never found, though we are not suggesting that you permanently lose things deliberately! That is, we would imagine that although these things will inevitably happen naturally, this should not stop staff discussing with the learner what the options might be if it is feared that something is irretrievably lost.</p>		
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Curriculum Scheme of Work

My Play and Leisure



Preview of first 3 pages
My Play and Leisure
Basic Principles

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum Schemes of Work
My Play and Leisure

Basic Principles

It is very difficult to over-emphasise how important Play is to the development of both the child and the adult that the child will become. All animals play; it is one of the crucial ways of learning within a safe and secure environment, but it must be given **TIME**. So often, within a conventional curriculum model, play is only allowed to develop up to the age of six, and from then on is assumed to be secondary to the serious business of formal education. For those with learning difficulties however, whose learning takes so much longer to develop, Play, with a capital P and as a key area of learning needs to be expanded at the rate and speed which each individual learner can make sense of. Play **MUST** take a central part in any Curriculum discussions, **MUST** be given time to develop and will probably continue to be central for the whole of the learners' school career.

For those who are at the earliest stages of intellectual development, play, and playing games....

'are not time out from real work; they are the most intensive developmental work you can do' (Nind and Hewett, 2001; p66).

Functions of Play. There are very many functions of Play, among them being to help the learner to:

- experience interaction with others
- learn about social interaction
- practice and develop social communication
- encourage in the making of friendships
- learn new skills in a safe environment
- explore own body and senses
- develop kinaesthetic senses

- explore the surrounding world
- develop a safe understanding of emotions of both self and others
- develop fine and gross motor skills
- develop flexibility of thought
- develop Theory of Mind
- develop Central Coherence

On top of all of these, Play is essentially about HAVING FUN and with FUN comes a multitude of learning opportunities.

Difficulties with Play. It is also however, very difficult to over-emphasise how challenging Play is for most learners with SLD, and if they have an additional autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), it is probably even more challenging! This is because children, young people and adults with SLD:

- are unlikely to learn spontaneously and will find the art of generalising one learned experience of play into another very difficult ;
- will have difficulties remembering what they played last time and with whom, and exactly what the rules were last time, and of course, the time before that;
- will have poor expressive and receptive communication skills, thus making for extreme challenges in joint play;
- will have difficulties in repairing communicative breakdowns so that misunderstandings and children’s natural squabbles will become insurmountable barriers to extended play experiences;
- will have poor concentration skills and may not be able to follow the ‘rules’ which themselves may be changed from minute to minute. They may wander off to some other attraction within a very short time;
- will have difficulties in repairing communicative breakdowns so that misunderstandings and children’s natural squabbles will become insurmountable barriers to extended play experiences;
- will have difficulties with the abstract nature of creative play.

In addition, and especially if they have an additional ASD, those with SLD

- will probably have problems with flexibility of thought, perhaps engaging in rigid routines or rituals which prevent the development of play skills;
- may lack social reciprocity;
- may exhibit behaviours which may be circular, with repeating patterns;

- may naturally incline to preferring solitude and therefore lack the motivation to communicate socially;
- may lack social and emotional directedness;
- may have a high level of compulsions and rituals;
- may have only a limited ability to communicate in unstructured situations;
- may have a limited ability to communicate beyond simple requests;
- may use inappropriate language and have difficulties mapping language to the task;
- may have difficulties understanding non-verbal communications;
- will probably lack theory of mind and an understanding of others thinking differently to themselves;
- may have difficulty with emotional involvement with other people.

These lists are limiting factors for learners with SLD and may explain why such learners struggle to play, but there is of course, a chicken and egg scenario here, since the fact that such learners struggle to play may also contribute to the establishment and continued existence of these limiting conditions. If we can teach learners with SLD (and SLD/ASD) to play, we may thereby help them to break into effective social communication, creativity, thinking, problem solving, formulating and maintaining relationships, purposeful self-engagement, narrative and storytelling, theory of mind, developing self-confidence, self-belief and self-esteem.

PLEASE NOTE. It is a grave mistake to think of any of the play opportunities noted here as being inappropriate because learners are too old. It's not about the play or what you are playing it's about the learning opportunities that the play realises. The key is the level of enjoyment gained by the learner. The greater the level of enjoyment, the more involvement, and the more likely they are to include and to allow themselves to be included by, others. You may want to lean the play towards more age appropriate learning opportunities (moving water play to a washing up style activity for example) but we must remember that age has nothing to do with having fun and we must think VERY carefully before stopping learners having fun because WE deem it age inappropriate.

Progress and what it might look like. In all of the suggestions relating to Play progress, there are clearly going to be many related directly to other Equals Semi-formal (SLD) Schemes of Work (SoW). This will be especially so with *My Communication*, and *My Thinking and Problem Solving*. The Equals Semi-formal (SLD) Curriculum has been designed to be holistic in nature, so that for example, we do not expect *My Communication* to be taught discretely (*'its 10.00 on Monday; drop everything else because now we're working on communication'*). Play progress will naturally be strongly related to other Equals SoW and it would be largely stating the obvious to point out the cross curricular links every time they occur, since they occur all of the time.

**Preview of 4 pages
from
My Play and Leisure**

Structured Play

Structured Play (Games) Learning Opportunities	Staff member’s (SM’s) role in enabling	Progression (and what it might look like)
<p>One to one or small group games such as tickle monster; Row, Row, Row Your Boat; rolling a ball or throwing and catching; peek-a-boo; Mr Potato Head; This Little Piggy; Round and Round the Garden; blowing bubbles and trying to pop them before they hit the ground.</p>	<p>These games are excellent for working into Intensive Interaction as a means of kick-starting an interaction, but can be played at any time there is a spare 5 minutes.</p> <p>Keep to the same rules every time.</p> <p>Pause before the ‘big’ ending as in ‘<i>And the laaaaaasssst little piggy ran.....(big pause).....wee, wee, wee, wee, all the way home</i>’ to encourage anticipation and turn taking.</p> <p>Be aware that the close up physical interaction games may not be suitable for some learners on the autistic spectrum who do take easily to close physical contact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner positively responds to the staff members (SM) initiation of the game. • Learner recognises that both parties in the game have roles to play (such as SM threatens to tickle and learner giggles in anticipation). • Learner requests the game by for example, holding his/her hand out for Round and Round the Garden. • Learner initiates the game by taking the lead.
<p>‘Activity’ games that can quickly develop into free play for those learners who might be at that developmental level, such as ordinary playgrounds with swings and round-a-bouts and especially adventure playgrounds.</p>	<p>The rules of these games may be as simple as ‘<i>I sit on the swing and you push</i>’ but these can be valuable for establishing and building friendships and trust between learners and staff, as well as encouraging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner expresses pleasure at the game. • Learner appropriately requests the help of a SM.

<p>Playgrounds and adventure playgrounds should not just be restricted to the very young since they are fantastic resources for all ages if the learners enjoy them. They are excellent for developing the kinaesthetic proprioceptive and vestibular senses. It is accepted that swings and roundabouts might only develop solitary play, but this is an excellent goal in itself.</p> <p>There are numerous games such as Shark Attack for playing in the swimming pool and playground, as well beach ball catch and water polo.</p>	<p>communicative opportunities, as in '<i>Push please!</i>'</p>	
<p>Small group or one to one games for any age such as Hide and Seek; Pass the Parcel; Musical Chairs; Blind Man's Bluff; Musical Statues; Simon Say's; Sleeping Lions; What's the Time Mr Wolf?; balloon and spoon relay race; barrel relay race; three armed relay race (tie children's arms together rather than their legs); skittles; Flap the Kipper; treasure hunts.</p> <p>Prize Walk Numbers, like musical chairs only with numbers in big circles drawn onto the floor. When the music stops, children have to run to a circle and stand on it. A big die gets thrown and those</p>	<p>These games are the essential stuff of structured play and should be played regularly, probably throughout learners whole school career. There is no reason why any of these games should ever be considered to be age inappropriate, as long as learners continue to enjoy them.</p> <p>There are SO MANY games that can give so many opportunities for learning that it might be best to have a group of 5 to 10 per term. The most popular ones can stay for the next term as well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner positively responds to the staff members (SM) initiation of the game. • Learner recognises that both parties in the game have roles to play (such as SM starts the music while the learner walks around the chairs). • Learner responds positively when playing the game. • Learner's ability to concentrate and follow the rules improves over time. • Learner formally requests the game by for example, choosing the particular game symbol.

<p>standing on that number are the winners. This can be easily transferred to a team game so that points are added up and the team with the most points wins – group hug!</p> <p>Bean-bag-toss game – into different sized holes for different scores; Hop-scotch; Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses; The Farmer’s in the Den.</p> <p>Games like The Farmer’s are excellent for working on Theory of Mind (understanding that others have different thoughts, feelings, wants, beliefs to yourself) where children have the opportunity to be the farmer, the wife, the child, the dog. There are no doubt, numerous variations of this game around the world that will carry different cultural significances.</p> <p>Duck, Duck, Goose; Hokey-Cokey (as in the song <i>‘You do the Hokey-Cokey and you turn around, that’s what its all about’</i>). Practiced hands at this will pause for children to take the lead as to what the next action might be. Songs such as Hokey-Cokey are also excellent for gathering children back into</p>	<p>Assign a symbol for each game that’s velcroed to a Games Board or kept in a box or book for more able learners, that is always in a specific place in the classroom. Have large versions of each symbol that the whole class can see, and can be held aloft when shouting ‘Let’s play MUSICAL CHAIRS!!’</p> <p>Encourage learners to take turns to make choices on the game to be played. Have all the class photos on the Games Board so that everyone can see whose turn it is next to choose the game.</p> <p>When learners have played the game 20 or so times, encourage the more able learners to take control of the game, so that they’re the ones (perhaps with initial support) switching the music on and off for example.</p> <p>Extend this to specific learners taking complete charge and clearing the classroom, getting the resources out before the game is played, clearing the resources away and putting the classroom back together again at the end. Mistakes will be made and additional time will be taken, but this is how learners will learn (see</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner is involved with organising the resources when the game is chosen and putting them away again when the game is finished. • Learner requests the game outside of the time allocated for Play. NOTE: it may not be possible to play the game at this time, but it is the active request that is important. Staff might negotiate a suitable (additional) time to play the game. • Learner initiates playing the game during formal playtime. Staff will probably need to model rounding up other learners to join in the game. • Learner initiates playing the game during formal playtime and engages other learners to join in without staff support. • Learner(s) initiates playing the game during formal playtime without staff support, both getting out and putting back all the resources.
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<p>concentration mode when games (as they sometimes do) get a bit rowdy.</p> <p>Tag and variations of it like Shark Attack where learners have to run/walk/swim from one end of the hall or the playground or the swimming pool to the other without being caught (and disgustingly eaten) by the shark. Learners become sharks when they themselves get eaten. For older learners this might become Zombie Attack.</p>	<p>Equals <i>My Thinking and Problem Solving SoW</i>).</p>	
<p>Board games for older and more able learners such as lotto/bingo; ludo; kim's game; snakes and ladders.</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Card games (for more able learners) such as snap; pelmanism.</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Any game that doesn't require cooperation within it such as matching pictures, lotto, building a picture alongside each other.</p> <p>Any game where the outcome doesn't rely upon others such as splatting aliens on a floor projector.</p>	<p>Set up the game.</p> <p>Ensure that there are sufficient resources for multiple players without necessarily having to share.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerating another in sight playing with..... • Tolerating another in reach playing with..... • Tolerating another next to playing with..... • Showing interest in the parallel play of another when both are playing with..... • Engaging in shared and/or turn taking play with another when both are playing with.....

EQUALS Semi-Formal (SLD)

Curriculum Scheme of Work

Preview



The World About Me



Equals Semi-Formal (SLD) Curriculum Schemes of Work

The World About Me

Basic Principles

Preview - Some pages from the Basic Principles

This topic based Scheme of Work (SoW) entitled *The World About Me* is quite markedly different from the other SoW in the Equals Semi-formal Curriculum in that it is more about learning for learning's sake, rather than the more practical elements of the Equals SoW series such as *My Independence* or *My Communication* or *My Thinking and Problem Solving* or *My Play and Leisure*. Even *My Creativity* is about celebrating what learners might do and can do whilst engaged in opportunities for exploring self-reflection, self-esteem and self-confidence. Perhaps the reason for teaching *The World About Me* is best explained through the desire to extend learners' understanding of learning beyond that which is immediately apparent. When asked for example, where chips come from, it is perfectly feasible that most learners with SLD would reply, assuming that they are able to reply at all – from MacDonald's; or where milk comes from – the fridge; or where water comes from – the tap. The principles we are concerned with might therefore be regarded as presenting a holistic understanding of everyday events, activities and experiences and about making the connections between these events, activities and experiences.

It is however, very easy to assume that the very act of presenting learning through a topic based activity is sufficient to ensure an holistic understanding. This might well be the case for neuro-typical, conventionally developing learners, but not necessarily for those with SLD, because the key consideration must still be to reflect on how children with SLD learn. Imray and Colley (2017) noted that the defining learning characteristics of all those with severe learning difficulties who are consistently and over time, working academically between P4 and the starting levels of the UK National Curriculum and other similar curriculum models such as the Australian National Curriculums or a US Standards Based Curriculum, encompass:

- Communication difficulties
- Difficulties with abstract concepts
- Difficulties in concentration and attention

- Difficulties with both short term and long term memory
- Difficulties with sequential memory
- Difficulties with working memory
- Inefficient and slow information processing speed
- Insecure general knowledge
- Poorly developed strategies for thinking and learning
- Difficulties with generalisation and problem solving.

Further, these are not isolated difficulties, but work together to act as barriers to learning, especially with regard to making the connections necessary for a topic based SoW. To help overcome these individual and collective barriers, we have therefore stated some ***absolute essentials*** required of a topic.

1. **The topic, and indeed the presentation and teaching of the topic, must engage the learners.** If this sounds obvious to you as a teacher or school leader, then good, as that's one less teacher or school leader we need to convince.
2. **The topics are not related to age, key stage or academic ability,** though be warned, some topics (such as Food for example) will be better suited to P5 plus and will be quite challenging for learners working consistently and over time within P4, that is, at the lower (more complex) levels of severe learning difficulties.
3. **Primary (as in first rather than age) learning experiences need to be concrete and not abstract.** Resources and materials that are on the page or on the screen, whether this be TV or computer, must be regarded as being secondary and therefore supporting. This doesn't mean that we can't use secondary sources, but only as back up and only after the primary, concrete sources have been fully and repeatedly explored. For example, if we're talking about the sea, learners must visit the sea, paddle in the sea, touch the sea, smell the sea, taste the sea, ***before*** they look at references to the sea in books or film.
4. **Learning must be contextualised within the topic,** so that background experiences are essential for real understanding. Seasons will be explained better by going to the same spot in the same park once every month taking photos of the learners in that same spot and comparing all 12 photos back in the classroom.
5. **A key part of all topics are their potential for narrative.** That is, the learners' narration of their understanding of the topic rather than teachers narration to pupils. We would therefore direct your attention to the *My Communication* SoW, and the section under *Narrative*, because the real, concrete experiences that learners will undertake as a result of the topic will naturally provide considerable raw material. In addition to verbally (or through AAC aids) narrating interesting events and personal 'adventures', all learners should be making Topic/Project Books which involve

Equals Semi Formal Curriculum

SoW - *The World About Me*

Topic – Festivals

Suggested length of topic – one year

Preview - few pages

The term ‘festivals’ has a fairly loose association with all of the events which are suggested might make up a scheme of work here, since it is clear that for example, neither Remembrance Day nor Ramadan are festivals (though Eid-al-Fitr probably is). Nonetheless, our focus is aimed at making both religious and traditional (English) occasions meaningful to and for children, young people and adults with severe learning difficulties, and we have therefore taken a broad view of the term. The common theme is however, to bring a spiritual element to the occasion so that each one has a personal focus for each individual learner (what does this event mean for me and what can I learn from it?) and to try and to move beyond the notion that festivals are just occasions for eating, drinking and receiving presents. They are, or perhaps should be, times for reflection and our learners need to be allowed the opportunity to engage in such reflections as much as they are individually and collectively able to, if they are truly to be part of the wider communities around them.

It should also be noted that the list below is not definitive. Other occasions, especially religious occasions, may just as easily be substituted or added, provided that staff take care to come back to the central issue of facilitating and encouraging learners to ask themselves the key questions of ‘*what does this event mean for me?*’ and ‘*what can I learn from it?*’.

Festivals

Remembrance Day	September - October
Christmas	November - December
Bhodi	January - mid February
Holi	mid February - March
Mother’s Day	April
May Day	April and May
Father’s Day	June
Summer Fete	May and/or June and/or July
Ramadan and Eid-al-Fitr	as per the Islamic calendar

LEARNING INTENTIONS	TEACHING ACTIVITIES	POINTS TO NOTE
<p>Learning about and from Christmas.</p> <p>Learning that the celebration of Christmas is about giving as well as receiving.</p>	<p>In the run up to Christmas, take part in as many class parties as you can - these could be the birthdays of any of the class members, including staff.</p> <p>Hold class discussions around the nature of the celebration so that all learners have an opportunity to involve themselves in what might happen at the party, such as birthday music and songs, food and drink, party hats, cards, disco music and disco lights, cakes with candles, party banners, streamers, bunting.</p> <p>Is there any way we can particularise the party so that it is special for the person who is having the birthday? This might mean that we have to find out what the birthday person really, really likes so that we can ‘theme’ the party around these things.</p> <p>Weekly topic time therefore needs to involve quite a lot of planning with learners finding out, preferably as a whole group, making special birthday cards based on the theme, planning special music based on the birthday person likes, making a giant picture/collage with all of the known likes represented on it.</p> <p>Use the word celebration synonymously with party, so that learners get used to hearing the word.</p> <p>Get the class to reflect upon and talk about times that were special to them - birthdays, weddings, meeting family, perhaps a football team winning a cup competition. How did they feel? What did they do? Did they eat any special food?</p> <p>Talk about Christmas Day being Jesus’s birthday. Jesus believed that God asks us to love everyone and not to fight anyone, so that the world can become a better place.</p> <p>We can personalise the spiritual element of this festival by getting the learners to ask key questions. Who do I love? Who loves me?</p> <p>Gather as many photos as you can of people known to each learner. These will obviously be individual to a large degree, so parents/carers will need to send in photos of as many family members and friends of the family as they can, making sure that each one is named, but these will need to be supplemented by everyone in the school. This is a lot of photos!</p> <p>All learners should spend time with these photos so that each picks as many as they want who they feel they love and who they believe loves them. There should not be a limit to this number.</p>	<p>Of all the festivals celebrated in the UK, Christmas (and probably Easter) are perhaps two that have become most divorced from their origins. This is especially so with Christmas being ‘what’s in it for me?’ and this topic has therefore tried to get back to the idea of giving and thinking of others, rather than just receiving and thinking of myself.</p> <p>The word celebration will be used in a number of other festivals, so it’s a handy word to know.</p> <p>Family photos are excellent resources for so many areas of the curriculum and should be highly prized classroom assets. They will need to be up-dated annually.</p>

	<p>Make a ‘very special person’ book with each very special person being given space for their photo and then some indication of the things that this person really, really likes doing through words/photos/symbols.</p> <p>Take one or two VERY special people, who will probably be parents, and prepare ideas in preparation for making/buying a very special present. It is always a good idea for parents to send in pocket money on a weekly basis, no matter how young the pupil, and the learner should be encouraged to save a portion of his/her pocket money for the present or resources towards making the present. Be clear with learners that this is a labour of love.</p> <p>Be clear with whoever are the recipients of these presents how much thought, time and effort has been spent on this activity, and that they will need to be fulsome in their praise and appreciation when the presents are opened on Christmas Day. If families don’t celebrate Christmas, the presents should still be opened and the praise still forthcoming, though it may not happen on 25th December.</p>	<p>These ideas sessions, leading up to the preparation for buying one or two presents will clearly need quite a lot of individualised support.</p>
<p>LEARNING INTENTIONS</p>	<p>TEACHING ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>POINTS TO NOTE</p>
<p>Learning about and from Ramadan</p>	<p>Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, the month when the first revelations of the Quran were given to Muhammed. It is celebrated by fasting during daylight hours, an act which is obligatory to all Muslims, except those who are ill or infirm.</p> <p>Ramadan is a time for reflection, with self-denial allowing us an opportunity to give thanks for what we have and to think of others as much as we can. Regular acts of charity are an essential part of the Islamic faith, but Ramadan affords the chance of additional and extra acts of charity.</p> <p>Charity is about those who have, giving to those who do not have. It is an important word to use.</p> <p>We can personalise the spiritual element of this festival by getting the learners to ask key questions. Who can I think of who does not have? What can I give them to help their lives?</p> <p>There are various options that classes and individuals might go for here, but two might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) spending time discovering information about the local food bank; visiting local supermarkets who organise such banks; perhaps getting the person in charge to talk to the learners or at least spend time in the classroom; donating some pocket money on a weekly basis so that the whole class can put items in the food bank; shopping for these items. If your school is near to a mosque, get in touch with the Imam to work with you. 	<p>Learners will need to start thinking about Ramadan and planning out their timetable at least a month before. This will give around half a term for the topic, but this may not be at the beginning if the half term, as Islamic months are based on the lunar cycle and therefore change every year.</p>

<p>Learning about and from Eid-al-Fitr</p>	<p>At least one visit to the mosque would be excellent. If not, national organisations such as the Salvation Army might be useful to contact. You might even persuade them to come in and play at the school!</p> <p>(ii) adopting a local, national (or even international charity such as Oxfam etc) to help in any way that you can; organising sponsored walks/runs around the playground; trampoline bounces (count the number); cake sales etc, etc.</p> <p>As a general point, it is important that individual learners see and understand that they are personally giving – their (pocket) money, their time and energy (walking around the playground), the proceeds from cake sales. This should not be tokenistic with parents or school staff doing all the work. There will of course be some learners, especially those working at the lower reaches of the SLD spectrum (P4 for example) who may not be able to understand this concept, but those on P5 and above should have some understanding that can be worked on. More able learners, those on P7 and above for example, may be able to understand the concept of giving up (as in fasting) in order to fund their charitable acts. This may be giving up chocolate, fizzy drinks, crisps etc during daylight hours and putting the money they would have spent to charitable use.</p> <p>After the last day of the month of Ramadan, indicating the first day of Shawaal, Muslims celebrate its end with Eid-al-Fitr. Another chance for a great celebration, with LOTS of food and drink!</p> <p>Time also to reflect on everything that has been given (and possibly given up) during Ramadan with a special whole school celebratory assembly where individual learners can have their charitable achievements recognised and quietly praised.</p>	<p>The concept of an Oxfam or Save the Children type charity would be especially relevant if there is an international crisis of some sort which is currently hitting the news. Unfortunately, there usually is!!</p>
<p>LEARNING INTENTIONS</p>	<p>TEACHING ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>POINTS TO NOTE</p>
<p>Learning about and from Holi</p>	<p>Holi is a Hindu festival that celebrates the defeat of both Holika, and her equally evil brother Hiranyakashipu, by Vishnu and Prahlada (Hiranyakashipu’s son). In many Hindu communities it is a night and day festival that begins with the bonfire of Holika Dahan (Holika was killed in a fire) with the next day being taken over by the Rangwali Holi, which is the festival of colours. Holi occurs in the Hindu calendar month of Phalgun, around the end of February to the middle of March.</p> <p>Holi signifies the arrival of spring, the end of winter, but it also celebrates the victory of good over evil, and is for many a festive day to meet others, play and laugh, forget and forgive, and repair broken relationships.</p>	

	<p>We can personalise the spiritual element of this festival by getting the learners to ask key questions. What ‘good’ can I do for someone else to help them? This might be a simple cleaning of someone’s car or doing their shopping for them and it is best if general classroom discussions can determine what these acts of kindness might be. Learners may spend some time asking people around the school if there might be something they would like done and this could extend out to the community around the school.</p> <p>This might develop into a revival of ‘bob-a-job week’ where scouts and girl guides used to do a job for someone and earn a bob (5p) for doing it. The bob was given to charity, and even though the amounts earned may well be small, this is not the point. This could be a real opportunity to raise the profile of those with learning difficulties in their local communities, and is certainly a way of meeting new people and spreading cheer.</p>	<p>It is recognised that this might not be feasible for all learners but this might be particularly appropriate for older (secondary age) learners, and especially for VI formers.</p>
<p>LEARNING INTENTIONS</p>	<p>TEACHING ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>POINTS TO NOTE</p>
<p>Learning about and from Remembrance Day</p>	<p>Although this is a day particular to the UK and both the current and former Commonwealth countries, versions of this day, when the nation remembers it’s fallen war dead, are common in many countries.</p> <p>Remembrance Day is held on 11th September as the day the hostilities of the First World War formally ceased. It is marked by the display of red poppies and by the observing of a minute’s silence at 11.00 on the 11th September.</p> <p>In 1915, John McCrae (1872-1918) a Canadian physician at that time fighting on the front line in Flanders, wrote <i>In Flanders Fields</i>.</p> <p>In Flanders fields the poppies blow Between the crosses, row on row, That mark our place; and in the sky The larks, still bravely singing, fly Scarce heard amid the guns below.</p> <p>We are the Dead. Short days ago We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, Loved and were loved, and now we lie In Flanders fields.</p>	

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

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

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.

Learning Intention	Teaching and Learning Activities	Notes
<p>To prepare for the activity as a regular routine.</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"> • 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. • 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. • 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. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. 	
Learning Intention	Teaching and Learning Activities	Notes
<p>To warm-up and become familiar, comfortable and ready to engage in the main body of the session.</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"> • Musical chairs/bumps/statues • Dodge-ball • Copying simple physical skills like running, jumping, waving etc., through Follow the Leader. • 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. • Running to 'stations' which might be colours, mats, bases. 	<p>We would suggest keeping to the same introductory format – that is, one of these listed opposite – for at least a term.</p>

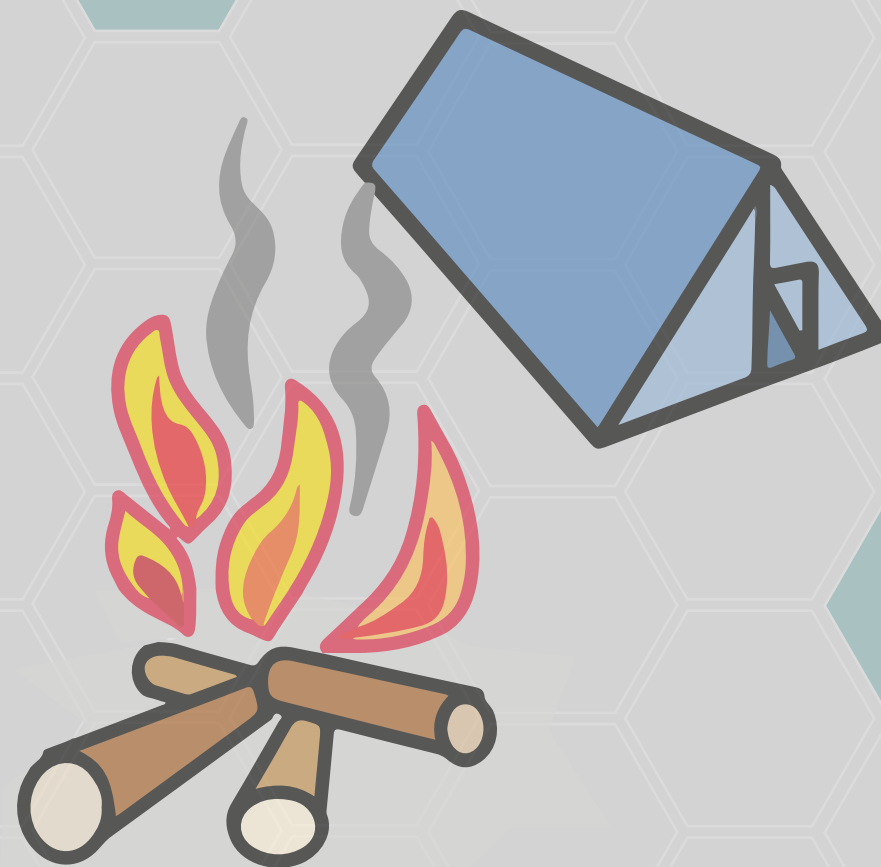
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action/dance songs with individual learners demonstrating a move in turn which everyone has to copy. Over a period of a half term or a term, a short dance sequence can be built up by adding one more move each week. This has the added advantage of aiding the improvement of sequential and long term memory. • 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. • 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. 	
Learning Intention	Teaching and Learning Activities	Notes
<p>To participate in and enjoy different forms of skill based physical activity.</p>	<p>The basis for all motivating activities is having fun. Get to know learners and tap into the interests that motivate them. This doesn't mean that individual learners will ONLY 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>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.</p>	<p>TOP Sports ability- www.youthsporttrust.org/top-sportsability login YSTINCLUSION20 www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/motor-activities-training-programme</p> <p>MATP Special Olympics</p>

EQUALS Semi-Formal (SLD/MLD)

Curriculum Scheme of Work



My Outdoor School



Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum

My Outdoor School Scheme of Work (SoW)

Basic Principles

There are very many reasons for adopting *My Outdoor School* as a regular part of your curriculum and as a weekly activity in every class timetable – promoting independence, self-esteem, self-confidence, resilience; fostering sensory awareness; promoting physical well-being; enabling communication, especially peer-to-peer communication; promoting team building and co-operative learning; promoting thinking and problem solving; not to mention, having fun! Of course, some schools will have access to the most amazing outdoor resources with their own woods just a stone’s throw from the school, but others will not. ***My Outdoor School* is however, designed to work in any outdoor space, including a playing field or a garden or any patch of green (or not so green concrete!)**

It might be a good basic principle to contact organisations that offer outreach services to advise on developing school grounds to create more diverse habitats (for example, the RSPB who offer free outreach). ‘*Learning through Landscapes*’ provide outreach advice (potentially free with an up to £500 as a grant) on improving biodiversity of school grounds and nature education.
<https://www.ltl.org.uk/naturegrants/>

Local parks, wasteland areas, community gardens etc. may be amenable to being used by small groups.

Local nature reserves, urban farms etc. may offer opportunities for urban schools.

Local councils may be able to advise on suitable sites, such as pocket parks, community gardens, as might the National Trust or the John Muir Trust. It might be worthwhile talking to local land owners who may be able to provide a small site for Outdoor School activities.

It at all possible, have a teacher or senior TA as the lead ‘outdoor school’ worker, who takes responsibility for ensuring the supply and worthiness of basic equipment and first aid. Whoever is responsible for the group however, also takes responsibility for the equipment needed and clothing worn etc. This is no different to any other classroom situation.

Know the area you are using for your Outdoor School. Be risk aware. Find out what’s there and what’s safe, being mindful that this will change with the seasons.

ALWAYS reconnoitre the site fully as a basic element of your risk assessment and preferably take someone who has experience of teaching in an Outdoor School. Equals may be able to put you in touch with schools in your area who are running *My Outdoor School* or you could put a request out on the SLD Forum. **A basic site assessment checklist has been attached (See Addenda 1).**

Learners probably need to be grouped according to their skill levels so that a limited range of activities are taking place and the skills involved can more easily be focussed on. Such issues should be incorporated into each activity, at a level differentiated to cater for all learners within the group. Numerous websites have been noted in *My Outdoor School* as being may be useful in providing resources for teaching about safety in outdoors.

ALWAYS BE AWARE OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF WEATHER – even when the prospect looks mild. The wind can be an exceedingly chilling factor, so the basic safeguard of dressing to go out in warm wet weather gear is a good one. You can always take clothes off, but you cannot put them on if you haven’t brought them in the first place. This may be a problem if a learner insists that s/he is perfectly warm in their vest and shorts, and in these circumstances staff will need to consider the learning opportunities of allowing the learner to go out unsuitably dressed versus the potential risks involved. In any event, remember that deep learning sometimes involves learners making mistakes. Mistakes are fine, even good, it’s how we all learn, as long as you’re aware.

Leaders of the session will need to ensure that the correct weather appropriate clothing is worn, but given this, sessions should run in all weathers. The activities need to be considered but there is no reason the learners should not be outside regardless of the weather. Weather is an integral part of the Outdoor School and it is a great way for children to learn to regulate themselves and assess their own needs. As far as possible the sessions will continue in blustery wind, rain, very low temperature and even snow. The only time a session may need to be cancelled is in very high wind (above Beaufort Scale 6 where large branches of trees are in motion) or a thunderstorm. Removable shelters should be assembled to protect from strong sun, heavy rain and snow.

Schools will need to be certain that all learners have suitable clothing available to them. This may be an issue for parents and/or a possible fund-raising issue, especially if learners are involved in the fund-raising themselves. A letter to parents requesting old clothing, coats, waterproof trousers, wellies, hats etc. can help to create a good resource of appropriate clothing.

Collecting the equipment needed. The general principle of using a symbolled or photographed and/or written list for each individual learner needs to be established from the very start, even though this may well take time out of practicing the actual skill to be learned.

Equals SLD (Semi-Formal) Curriculum

SoW: My Outdoor School

Learning Intention	Teaching and Learning Activities Staff and learner preparation	Notes
<p>For learners to familiarise themselves with all (or as many as can be remembered) of the essentials held in the leader’s support bag</p>	<p>My Outdoor School, list of essentials for the lead member of staff A leader support bag or ‘Happy Bag’ containing: First Aid kit Emergency procedures. Medical information for each individual along with any necessary medication – inhalers, epi-pens etc. Risk Assessments Mobile phone (checked for working order and battery strength) Clean Water in sealed bottle Emergency whistle Emergency Life Blanket (space/foil blanket) A set of appropriate spare clothing for the leader Contact Cards (indicating the location of the site using postcode and OS grid reference)</p>	<p>Although this list is for members of staff and central to the leader’s role, staff must share the contents with learners so that, over time, they too have multiple opportunities to know what’s in the bag and why it is there.</p>
<p>For learners to familiarise themselves with all (or as many as can be remembered) of the essentials for</p>	<p>This is not an exhaustive list, and will very much depend on what activities are being undertaken, but these are the base resources that the outdoor school must have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wellies • waterproofs • hats 	<p>There are a number of websites, organisations and apps that will be extremely useful to the good working of My Outdoor School. Here are some of them</p>

<p>learning in an Outdoor School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sun cream • tarpaulins 3m x 3m • tent pegs • cords, string, twine • rope - 30m climbing rope 11mm thick • clothes pegs • mallet • plastic buckets • burns pack – please note that basic burns training will be required by at least one member of staff whenever open fires are being used. • gloves • fireproof gloves • fire steels • fire bowl • cotton wool • Suitable tinder – birchbark, ‘old man’s beard’ etc. • folding griddle/grill to go over the fire • ferro rod (flint and steel) • fire bucket • fire blanket • 20 litre water container or 2 x 10 litre container • wood bark • pine cones • box or central large bag for a range of emergency equipment • trolley to carry equipment • backpacks for students • containers for rain collecting (plastic drums etc.) • logs as seating • folding stools/camp stools • milkman milk crates as seating • pallets • yoga mats • whistles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monkey Do website, advises on ropes and off ground activities • RSPB • John Muir • National Trust • Forestry commission • Woodland Trust - Nature detectives • Wildforestschoools.org.uk • Schools Shropshire Council • Woodcraft Folk • Learning Through Landscapes - offer grants and support to develop your school grounds • Duke of Edinburgh awards • Forest Schools Association • Forest School Education • Muddy Faces • Calvert Trust Keswick • B and Q • Local tree surgeons • Homebase • Wickes • building sites • I Bird app • Woodland Trust tree identification app
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high vis jackets • personal water bottles • scissors • knives • potato peelers • binoculars • magnifying glasses 	
Learning Intention	Teaching and Learning Activities Learner preparation	Notes
<p>To prepare for the outdoor school</p> <p>To select suitable clothing and footwear</p>	<p>Before setting out, go outside of the class into the open air to look at and discuss the weather and conditions. Spend a little time outside, at least 10 minutes – though perhaps a little less if the weather is obviously extreme (rain or snow).</p> <p>These are issues that should be familiar to learners of all ages because they will have already been worked on before every single outdoor playtime.</p> <p>It echoes the point made in <i>My Play and Leisure</i>, that schools who do not let learners out during inclement weather, having instead the incorrectly named ‘Wet Play’ indoors, are missing daily opportunities to explore thinking and problem solving, independence, communication, dressing and undressing, living the seasons etc., etc.</p> <p>Appropriate alternative clothing should always be available in known spaces in the classroom for all learners. Clearly such clothes will need to be personalised and related to the likely seasonal weather conditions – rather like our own wardrobes.</p> <p>Staff may need to guide learners to dress accordingly through fairly unobtrusive modelling. <i>‘Oh my, it is SO cold. I’m going to put on my coat and hat AND gloves!!’</i></p>	<p>The issue of choosing appropriate clothing is discussed in <i>My Travel Training</i> in <i>My Independence</i>.</p> <p>Be aware that some learners will not be able to recognise when they are getting too hot/ cold and will need adult supervision and guidance to learn to make appropriate adjustments to clothing.</p> <p>Some staff may be reluctant to engage in forest school sessions in all weathers. Efforts need to be made to ensure they are on board and ready to model enthusiastic engagement. Providing them with suitable clothing and footwear can help with this.</p> <p>It is best to have legs and arms covered even in hot weather to reduce risk of sunburn, stings and ticks.</p>

EQUALS Semi-Formal (SLD)

Curriculum Scheme of Work

Preview



My Drama



Equals Semi Formal (SLD) Curriculum

My Drama

SECTION 1 Basic Principles

Preview - Some pages from the Basic Principles

What is drama?

Drama in educational settings can be a source of confusion – not least because the word ‘play’ can mean both the process and the product of drama work! Drama is often assumed to be **performance-based**, such as an end-of-term show as celebration of the school community, acting out a story, or watching a production - at the most sophisticated level, professional theatre presents texts that illuminate themes in a way to make them accessible to audiences, for example a touring theatre-in-education company to special schools. Whether a TV soap opera or a Shakespearean play, audiences witness characters in conflict - facing a problem or dilemma – and are brought to reflect on insights and new knowledge gained and on understanding of ourselves and others. The same is true of drama in schools: children can also be encouraged to devise their own performances, although these will be richer if children have had the chance to explore issues and themes beforehand in what is known as ‘process based drama’.

Process based drama is a learning medium – an interactive teaching style that often happens in the classroom, in which issues, themes and possibilities can be explored ‘from the inside’ through improvisation-based role playing that has a ‘living through’ quality. In this way, other subjects may be brought to life in a way that engages children more deeply and meaningfully, such as illuminating key moments in history, or practising a life skill in cross-curricular tasks embedded in the drama. Process based drama can provide multi-layered opportunities to promote learning across the curriculum, and to practise and consolidate learning – for example, helping Snow White (teacher-in-role) by advising her on how to set the table for her seven house mates, or teaching her how to say ‘no’ if offered food by a stranger calling at the door. The group can discover that outcomes can be different, and that they can be instrumental in influencing the course of events, even if this means that familiar stories may not turn out the same as the known narrative. Process based drama can lead to creating moments of theatre to capture an idea or meaning, rehearse and present it to others. This can be small scale, to the rest of the class for example, and not necessarily to a large invited audience.

The common linking thread is that at its core, drama at all levels and in all its forms hinges on make-believe, which is used to explore shared human experience. Participants are motivated by a situation that is simultaneously fun and intriguing, and the lure of drama’s double-edge: that what seems to be about someone else is really about me!

The real potential of drama in schools is to make the most of using the analogous situation of a drama to explore scenarios ‘one step removed’; this means that what happens in the drama can be reflected upon, lessons learned perhaps and links made afterwards to real life. Planning drama does not contradict the essential creative nature of the experience, as genuine opportunities can be incorporated for the group’s decisions, however small and clear-cut choices may need to be at first. The group should still feel that sense of ownership, and will be more likely to engage, with the underlying ‘play for the teacher’ kept covert.

Although pretence is key to both, **drama is not the same as children’s spontaneous role play** as in the home corner or playground. **Rather, drama looks to extend children’s play, to confront their make-believe, slow things down and promote their thinking.** It is in these moments where their existing frame of reference is challenged that new learning can take place, and it is the drama teacher’s job to set up such opportunities. For example, rather than settle for the ‘quick fix’ of leaping into a handy helicopter to escape from an approaching scary creature, this turns out not to be available... What shall we do? The teacher then empowers the group by encouraging their ideas and helping them to draw on their experience, resourcefulness and initiative. When working in this more open-ended way, it is advisable to have already anticipated possible avenues along which the drama could develop in order to explore the learning area – in this case, how to deal safely with a potentially dangerous animal – whilst retaining an open mind-set in case a viable alternative idea is suggested.

Groups with SLD can learn to make and share in drama work, and through it, explore and comprehend their world through encountering a wider range of scenarios in which to make new connections and reach new understandings of universal themes affecting us all – for example, taking responsibility, behaving appropriately in a certain situation, or helping someone in need. Drama can take participants into the past and into the future beyond the here-and-now, to consider what might have been or could be.

Approaching Drama with Groups with SLD

Account will need to be taken that the teacher of drama working with groups with SLD will face additional challenges, especially when there are diverse starting points within the same group:

- Developmentally they may be at the earliest stages of learning and/or have limited communication
- Some may understand how make-believe works but lack the social skills for engaging in the group experience
- Others may be able to engage in make believe but struggle to generate and sustain it

The way forward when working with groups with SLD is to base an approach to drama on what happens naturally in real life so that both teacher and the group can ‘learn how to do drama whilst doing it’! Drama’s appeal is that it hinges directly on the natural way that children learn and make sense of the world – play, in other words. It is not that children with SLD cannot play, rather that they may not know how to. The teacher needs to base their approach to drama on how typically developing children are enabled to engage in play, and replicate this in drama with groups with SLD. Children’s understanding and use of make-believe typically follows a developmental pattern.

Early ritualistic interactive play

- Caregivers across cultures instinctively induct the youngest children into fictitious contexts – for example, adopting exaggerated feigned annoyance at baby throwing a rattle out of the cot, which baby then repeats with squeals of delight as the realisation dawns that they can generate the play format.
- These repetitive ‘games of theatre’ (other examples being ‘peep-bo’, ‘I’m coming to get you’, or ‘look out behind you’) become the pivot on which caregivers extend children’s play into more complex sequences – building up a sense of anticipation by hiding that bit longer before emerging, or knocking down an ever-increasing tower of bricks built by the adult with feigned exasperation.

More complex flexible play sequences

- Young children then begin to use items functionally for their real purpose (pretending to drink from a cup), and
- later understand how one thing can be used symbolically to be another (eg a cardboard box to be a boat or television), and miming without the presence of the object at all.

Exploration of social experience

- A discernable difference can be observed in children engaging in social play, between perfunctory *role taking* ‘as if’ in familiar scenarios from life (for example a bathing baby routine), and
- more elaborate themed fantasy *role playing* where children may assume a character and push boundaries beyond the familiar to explore ‘what if’ scenarios (for example, building a shelter in the jungle, crossing a rope bridge across a canyon, escaping from a monster).
- A key moment may also be captured and/or revisited, with a view to sharing it with others in a short rehearsed play.

So, even if a drama context is beyond their actual worldly experience, children will bring to it their knowledge and understanding from real life – imagination is creative use of memory. In the same way that caregivers immerse themselves in and extend children’s play at all levels, similarly, older children will also support younger children within their make-believe play, even if above their level, effectively operating as ‘play tutors’ by structuring choices and decisions for them and explaining if necessary the motivations, intentions and consequences that influence the unfolding play narrative.

This gives teachers working with groups with SLD a model for how drama work can be structured and supported so that it can become a developmental curriculum suitable for the diverse classroom, with embedded opportunities for progression and differentiating challenge at all levels! (See Figure 1)

Preview - few pages

SECTION 2

Route 1 – Drama-related activity

This section includes examples of activities aimed particularly at the inexperienced teacher and/or group new to drama. Although individual activities can be lifted as warm-ups within the opening phase of a more involved drama lesson, they can comprise a unit of drama work in their own right. There are compendia of drama games available, as they are often used by theatre companies as a means to quickly gel a group (see Section 4 – Resources).

Spending time playing drama games will

- strengthen interaction and the group dynamic,
- develop awareness of individuals within the group
- establish anticipation and participation
- get the group used to focusing their joint attention
- help with understanding how representation works
- develop improvisation

Similarly, movement experiences, such as those developed by Veronica Sherborne (see My Dance), entail relationship play based on a ‘people as apparatus’ principle. In Route 1, movement is given an imaginary dimension as a bridge into make-believe. It can also be embedded in more open-ended drama (Route 3 and 4) as moments of physical theatre. Movement can

- be valuable for learning physical control to enhance the body as an expressive tool,
- help develop trust and collaboration,
- develop confidence and feelings of self-worth
- help with understanding how representation works.

Key ground rules can be agreed, such as:

- Nobody has to join in
- We are careful when we move
- We talk one at a time - unless we are all joining in!
- We give everyone’s acting a chance – including the teacher!

EQUALS Semi-Formal (SLD)

Curriculum Scheme of Work

Preview



My Dance



Equals Semi-Formal (SLD) Curriculum Schemes of Work

My Dance

Basic Principles

Preview - Some pages from the Basic Principles

WHAT IS DANCE?

Responding to life's rhythms is an innate drive in us all. We all come into the world with a rudimentary ability to move. We all have a body with parts that can move, internally and externally. We use our body to experience our internal landscape and the world around us, by noticing our inner sensations, moving through space and connecting with others. We can use dance and movement in education to enhance our understanding of ourselves, others and the environment. Historically and across cultures, dance has formed a language without words - *'To watch us dance is to hear us speak'* (Hopi Indian saying). Aspects of experience have been shared through giving significance to movement and everyday actions, for example the dance moves in the sailor's hornpipe capturing tasks on board ship. In order to move creatively and expressively, dancers of all abilities need to develop:

- awareness of their body and its possibilities
- control over their musculature in order to be able to adjust their strength and tension to give movement an expressive quality.

Additionally, they need to be able to

- harness movement in different combinations
- execute actions with control, balance, co-ordination, poise and elevation
- transfer weight onto different parts of the body
- execute transitions between actions smoothly and fluently
- learn to make contact between their body and the body of another/others

Developing movement skills will have additional benefits of underpinning attention, balance and co-ordination within other aspects of life, for example, fine-motor skills which are required for a range of practical activities from doing up a button to handwriting.

Understanding of abstract basic concepts such as big/little, fast/slow, over/under can be internalized and memorised better through active learning. By refining and honing movement skills, dance can be used to express ideas and feelings through choreography, share them in performance and understand intentions through appreciation. Performances give the opportunity to consolidate, celebrate, connect, be witnessed and evaluate. This will further enhance a sense of self, the capacity to communicate and promote emotional well-being.

APPROACHING DANCE FOR GROUPS WITH SEND

Rudolf Laban in the 1930s, saw the potential of the development of the whole person through movement, and identified the elements of dance as the focus for promoting children's expressive potential; his approach is still the basis for educational dance today. One of his students, Veronica Sherborne, devised a developmental approach to movement that became prevalent in special education in the 1980s and 90s, and there has been a recent revival of interest in her work. She concluded that:

'...all children have two basic movement needs: they need to feel at home in their bodies and so to gain body mastery, and they need to be able to form relationships. The fulfilment of these needs – relating to oneself and to other people – can be achieved through good movement teaching'. (Sherborne, 1990, p v)

Identifying needs

Everyone is a 'natural dancer', whatever their starting point. Observing how someone moves will indicate their learning needs. For example, some will rush and need to learn to slow down, others may be tense and need to learn to relax. Some may feel more comfortable and confident in a floating action that is slow and sustained, flexible, delicate and free-flowing. They will benefit from extending themselves in a thrusting action that in contrast is fast and sudden, direct, firm and contained. The emphasis is less on physical prowess as in gymnastics, and rather on how movement can be used to develop bodily confidence and knowledge, and give it quality to express an idea or feeling. Movement is driven from an inner urge to express oneself using the body as a medium. It is possible to learn how to use the body expressively while working on developing movement skills at the same time – a case of 'learning how to do dance while doing it!' *'There is no limit to the improvement of movement'* (Moshe Feldenkrais, founder of the Feldenkrais Method).

Physiological and neurological considerations

A child's starting point for dance will be influenced by their age and stage of physical development (see below), and/or possible limiting factors. Advice should be sought from physiotherapists regarding a physical disability to ensure the person is not pushed beyond their physical limitations.

Preview - few pages

My Dance

ROUTE 1 – SEQUENCING MOVEMENT

This route eases groups into dance work. The lesson will primarily focus on the Development section of the lesson framework above (Figure 3), and will be based on Sherborne Developmental Movement. This prioritises development of relationships, body awareness and the basic actions (travelling, jumping, turning, gesture and holding stillness), **as well as** the movement dynamics. It may be possible to introduce some ‘light touch’ sequencing of two or three movement experiences at the end of a lesson, perhaps accompanied by two or three contrasting percussion instruments, before a calm finish.

LEARNING INTENTIONS	TEACHING ACTIVITIES	POINTS TO NOTE
	<p style="text-align: center;">SNAKES</p> <p>Element: The body – awareness of middles</p> <p>Actions: travelling (wiggling, sliding)</p> <p>Dynamics: slow, sustained, flexible, free</p> <p>Resources: Youtube – animated story of <i>Dear Zoo</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzI9IyeMWto ; jointed wooden snake; blanket</p> <p>Accompaniment: tambourine and guiro; snake charmer music – Youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-E1-Xv2Vsg</p>	

<p>Encountering: <i>Establish movement themes; use of stimulus to capture movement themes; warm-ups – bend, stretch, twist</i></p>	<p>Watch the story of <i>Dear Zoo</i>, then in the hall, show the group the snake toy – elicit action words to describe (wriggling, sliding, slithering);</p> <p>Sit in a circle: wriggle toes and fingers; close-open-wriggle; wriggly toes to say ‘hello’</p> <p>Curl up small, open into a long thin shape along the floor</p> <p>Spin onto tummy, facing the group: slide into the centre and then push out again; repeat at speed, then push out to the edge of the room and only use hands/arms back to the centre</p>	
<p>Exploration: <i>Expand possibilities relating to movement themes. Enhance quality through contrasting dynamics. Encourage extension, poise and elevation, transferring weight onto different body parts and in relation to the floor.</i></p>	<p>Individually, find a way to travel round the room on your tummy, then on your back (choose examples to watch and try)</p> <p>Build in a wriggle, by bringing elbows and knees close together</p> <p>In 2s, help one another to wriggle by giving them a slide (pull along by ankles) and feeding in a wiggle; participants with mobility challenges can be placed on blankets and given a wiggly slide or explore snake-like slithering movements with their limbs, tongue or fingers</p> <p>In 2s, one makes a shape on all fours for their partner to explore by wriggling in and out</p> <p>Whole group: make a tunnel, for ‘snakes’ to slide through one at a time</p>	
<p>Developing Understanding: <i>Combining material into phrases/sequences. Rehearsing and perfecting – presenting and reflecting</i></p>	<p>Teacher-led dance: Starting position: curled up on the floor – open out</p> <p>‘Snakes’ to go for an improvised wriggly slither on tummy and/or back, wriggling and sliding over other snakes if they encounter them</p> <p>Either finish in group pile of snakes, or coil up individually on shake of the tambourine.</p> <p>Pairs or small group: Each share their favourite snake move and agree a third</p> <p>Practise the sequence until smoot;</p> <p>Negotiate start and finish positions and how they will perform in relation to each other (towards, away from, around, over and under etc).</p>	

LEARNING INTENTIONS	TEACHING ACTIVITIES	POINTS TO NOTE
	<p style="text-align: center;">DANCE BY CHANCE</p> <p>Element: Space – pathways</p> <p>Actions: examples of travelling, jumping, turning, gesture, holding stillness (See Section 3 – Glossary)</p> <p>Dynamics: (as influenced by which action words are selected)</p> <p>Resources: Packs of cards with different kinds of actions; large dice; abstract art prints featuring symbols (eg by Mondrian, Miro, Klee, Riley)</p> <p>Accompaniment: Boogie Woogie (eg Louis Jordan’s Choo Choo Ch’ Boogie) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8uxrypkqv4) or the theme music to <i>Peter Gunn</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oysMt8iL9UE</p>	
<p>Encountering: <i>Establish movement themes; use of stimulus to capture movement themes; warm-ups – bend, stretch, twist</i></p>	<p>Warm ups: jumping on the spot, walk and turn in time to set number of drum beats.</p> <p>Use an abstract painting by an artist (eg Mondrian, Klee, Miro), and ascribe different types of actions to symbols in the work (eg Mondrian’s colours: red=gesture, blue=jump, white=turn, black=travel, grey=hold stillness). The painting will provide a pathway – a ‘script’ that will be danced or a projector could be used creatively to show different sections of the painting on the floor, into which dancers could move/reach/travel.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVELY, each action could be ascribed a number, and then a dice rolled</p> <p>ALTERNATIVELY Individuals to select three or four cards from different piles of cards (eg a kind of jump, turn, gesture, travelling)</p>	<p>Limit the number of actions according to the group.</p> <p>Individuals could be on behalf of the whole group, so that everyone will explore the same actions, OR each individual may have their own set of actions, OR selects on behalf of a pair/small group</p>
<p>Exploring: <i>Expand possibilities relating to movement themes. Enhance quality through contrasting dynamics. Encourage extension, poise and elevation, transferring weight onto different body parts and onto the floor.</i></p>	<p>Experiment with different ways of interpreting the actions – explore contrasts in levels, speeds, strength, as suggested by the vocabulary on the cards.</p> <p>Select a final sequence.</p> <p>Fit the sequence to the script in the print to decide the sequence for the actions and for how long they will be performed, as influenced by the length of the block of colour – transfer the painting to the floor.</p> <p>Work on transitions between each action so that they become smooth.</p>	

EQUALS Semi-Formal (SLD)

Curriculum Scheme of Work

Preview



My Art



Equals Semi Formal Curriculum

My Art

Basic Principles

Preview - Some pages from the Basic Principles

What is Art? Art is a means of combining expression, creative skills, imagination and emotions, typically within a visual or multi-sensory form. It is subjective and changes through time and in different cultures.

Art develops a visual, tactile and sensory vocabulary and an understanding of the visual elements - colour, line, tone, texture, pattern, form and shape - in order for them to effectively express themselves through artistic means.

It encourages communication through the exploration of differing processes and provides opportunity through the use of artistic media to acquire skills and develop artistic techniques as well as critical abilities and understanding of one's own and others' cultures and heritage.

Art and Design stimulates creativity and imagination. It provides visual tactile and sensory experiences and a unique way of understanding and responding to the world. Students use different materials and processes to communicate what they see, feel and think. Through Art and Design activities, we are able to explore, take risks, inquire, play, express, persist, enrich, appreciate and learn to make informed judgements and aesthetic and practical decisions, as well as learning about the diverse roles of functions of Art, Craft and Design in contemporary life as well as in different times and cultures.

Art itself is a process and through enabling opportunity for exploration children, young people and adults with severe learning difficulties will learn through the process of doing. They will learn through painting, drawing, sculpting, printing etc and the more you allow them into these processes and to be part of these processes the more they will learn. It is vital they are given opportunity to take risks, make a mess, make mistakes, for through exploration and the willingness to take risks, Art can not only be fun but it can be a vehicle to explore the world around us as well as an outlet for our individual expression and realisation.

Creativity uses the Right side of our brains which is the side of the brain that deal with emotion and feelings. When we are in a creative ‘flow’ (fully engaged in a creative process) the brain releases, oxytocin, opioids and serotonin (the natural feel good hormones) which increase our ability to play, have fun, and further explore, thus increasing positivity and well-being. The exploration of the process and lots of time for such exploration, will increase confidence and thus further enable creativity to flow.

My Art has been laid out in similar fashion to the other ‘subjects’ inherent in *My Creativity* in two main ways.

Firstly, the whole area of study has been subdivided into the sections of Painting, Collage, Printmaking, Sculpture, Drawing, Textiles and Digital Media, not because we believe that these sections ought to be separately taught, but merely to aid and simplify the recording of the ideas that make up the whole. The elements of Art; line, tone, shape, space, texture, colour and form are explored throughout the sections. **These are NOT developmental** sections; that is Drawing should not automatically come before Painting; it may do but then again, it may not. Each area overlaps in many ways and different sections can be used alongside other sections if and when appropriate within the holistic experience.

Art and the teaching of Art should NOT be concerned with product. The purpose of Art as an educational subject for those with severe learning difficulties is not to produce a painting or a sculpture or a print or a drawing or a Mother’s Day card or a picture to show Ofsted what wonderful work our learners can do. This will either happen or it won’t. As soon as teachers start to get overly concerned with product they are in danger of leading the artistic process and stifling creativity. Teachers should facilitate the artistic process, but they shouldn’t lead. Teachers may facilitate through guiding, offering ideas, demonstrating what will happen if, offering opportunities to experiment, offering differing materials to experiment with, ensuring LOTS of opportunity to practice and refine ideas and skills, giving time and then giving more time.

Secondly, the ideas that make up this scheme of work (SoW) have been ‘graded’ into (i) encountering (ii) exploration and (iii) developing understanding. This aids the creative process by gradually allowing for more depth to be offered over time so that learners move from encountering to exploration to developing understanding and beyond, but it also allows learners to proceed at their own pace. This means that some learners, for example, those consistently and over time working at around P4/P5, will spend a very long time encountering the materials, resources and ideas. They may dip their toes into more complex ideas offered, though they may not.

Encountering may involve: raising awareness; becoming familiar with; focussing attention on; a sensory, immersive, visceral experience; an immediate and reactive response; sharing with others; apprehension; anticipation; experiencing a range of feelings; participation in presentation and/or performance. These encounters affect all people with or without learning difficulties, they are how we first make contact with the aesthetic;

Exploring may involve: recognition of the process; building sequential memory; playing; learning with and from others; experimenting; making connections, recognising same and different; discovering possibilities; coping with new or multiple encounters; expressing a range of feelings; sustaining attention; persevering; contributing; contributing to presentation and/or performance.

Developing understanding may involve: practising and refining; rehearsing; generalising; consolidating; building on previous learning; making something new; reforming, elaborating, embroidering and embellishing; arranging and rearranging; re-forming; appreciation, reflection, appraisal, practising and refining; collaboration and negotiation; independence; resolution; understanding meaning and significance; interpret a range of feelings; purposeful and focussed presentation and/or performance.

It is central to the whole, that all learners are allowed TIME to fully explore their independent potential. Teachers should not therefore, assume that each section, say for example, Painting 1, will consume a minimum or a maximum amount of time. The ideas that are laid out in Painting 1 or Printing 3 or Drawing 2 will be covered when they are covered, and this will vary from class to class and group to group. It is perfectly feasible for any of the sections to take at least a term, many will take longer, and some for some groups may take considerably longer. Further, this might not be because they ‘don’t get it’; it might well be because they do get it and they want to get more of it. Monet’s *Water Lillies* series covers some 250 canvasses painted over 30 years from his garden in Giverny. Clearly familiarity with the scene, the subject, the medium and the possibilities was not a barrier, it was an inspiration. Those with SLD must be given time to learn and repetition could be the key to learning.

It is not absolutely essential that you have any Art training in order to effectively teach Art, though of course it helps. Perhaps, just as important is if you, as the teacher, have an interest in the subject and enjoy teaching it. All subjects can be taught creatively and even though many adults feel ill equipped to teach Art it can be taught across all curriculum areas and it will benefit all if there is an open sharing of ideas and strengths within staff teams. Having said this, Equals would strongly advise that schools seek out the services of a trained artist as a teacher of Art if they have the opportunity, because there are only so many ideas that can be passed on and there is no substitute for experience.

Micaela Beatson has been teaching in SLD schools as a specialist Art teacher for 24 years (14 years in London, 10 years in Canterbury). She has a Textiles Fine Art Degree, a PGCE in Art and Design, has a Post Graduate in the Therapeutic application of the Arts and is currently training as a Child Creative Arts Counsellor. Micaela has also run SLD and PMLD Art Inset Training courses for staff at The Bridge School Training Centre in London for 10 years, and worked freelance for ‘Cloth of Gold’, a screen printing charity in London working in differing educational settings creating large scale sensory banners, as well as for Creative Partnerships on various educational creative projects in schools across Kent.

Micaela teaches with a holistic approach including sound, drama, movement, games, sensory exploration, with curiosity with the process taking priority over outcome. *‘I am continually learning from the students and young people I work with. I feel it is incredibly important to be open to and allow change as ideas and processes are explored and developed. As students are working and exploring they may challenge, enquire or ask about something which can lead onto new exciting developments and creative possibilities.’*

**My Art
Collage**

Preview - few pages

LEARNING INTENTIONS	TEACHING ACTIVITIES Collage (1) – pattern, texture, form.	POINTS TO NOTE
<p>To encounter, copy and continue a pattern using a variety of objects and materials.</p> <p>Introduce the element of both 2D and 3D shape, form and space.</p>	<p>Use a bag, box or tin to play a ‘feely game’ with an assortment of objects; such as plastic bottle tops, cotton reels, lego pieces, lolly sticks, fir cones, pasta shapes, shells, yoghurt pots etc. What do they feel like?</p> <p>Use large scale boxes, plastic bottles etc. and encourage learners to create a repeat pattern by for example, placing a box, next a plastic bottle, next another box, next another plastic bottle.....</p> <p>NB. This can be used with the entire group or small groups as a fun turn-taking activity on the floor. Take photographs.</p> <p>Create a tactile collage placing alternate objects onto cardboard. Squares of cardboard will need to be pre-cut.</p> <p>Apply PVA all over a plastic bottle the size of your choice and collage the bottle randomly with any chosen collage materials. Learners can choose any small tactile objects to put into the bottle to create a shaker. LEAVE TO DRY.</p> <p>Explore creating a repeat pattern by using pipe cleaners to thread; beads, buttons, bottle tops etc. and attach to plastic collaged bottle/shaker using tape.</p>	<p>Pattern is all around us in both the natural and the manufactured/man-made environment.</p> <p>Arranging shapes, lines, colours etc in a considered way thus creating pattern.</p> <p>Differing objects and materials will need to be collected over time prior to activities.</p> <p>Encourage matching, sorting, identifying properties etc.</p>

<p>Explore copying and continuing a pattern using a variety of objects and materials as well as identifying differing objects by their shape and differing size.</p>	<p>Introduce differing imagery such as photocopied images of; themselves, a friend, images they like, plants growing etc. Create repeat pattern collage.</p> <p>Explore the creation of pattern by alternating differing mediums such as paint and chalk, pencil and pastel. Using these alternately to create a sequence.</p> <p>Explore the creation of pattern by using differing textures such as fake fur, feathers, bubble wrap, netting, textured wallpapers etc. Stick the objects and materials to create a pattern or sequence.</p> <p>Look at images of simple Mosaics. Look at Anton Gaudi’s work in Barcelona.</p> <p>Demonstrate creating a mosaic using 2 or 3 colours. NOTE learners will need to be provided with have strips of coloured card to cut into their own square shape to use as mosaic pieces to collage.</p> <p>Create a simple mosaic (a picture or design made from small pieces of coloured tile, glass, or other material set normally in mortar, but for experimental pieces any holding material such as PVA glue will suffice. NOTE These are best mounted on coloured card or thin foam sheets.</p> <p>Learners to explore creating a 2 or 3 colour repeat pattern paper mosaic on card strip; keeping space between each piece.</p> <p>Using plain biscuits or cakes create a repeat pattern using icing sugar for the glue and sweets for the Mosaic tiles! Learners are required to place the sweets with space in between each one to create the desired Mosaic effect!</p> <p>Using small plastic bottle learners to create repeat pattern using any of the above textures or colours.</p>	<p>If possible, encourage all learners to take the digital photographs themselves. That way you are likely to get a stream of images that motivate the individual learner.</p> <p>See the Digital Photography Topic in Equals <i>The World About Me</i> SoW</p>
<p>Develop understanding of differing 2d and 3d shapes and forms when used in collage.</p>	<p>Learners to draw simple design for Mosaic onto A4 or A3 card.</p> <p>Using any of the above colours, shapes or textures learners to create a Mosaic (using PVA glue or a glue stick.)</p> <p>Using various junk modelling, attach differing materials to create a sculpture.</p> <p>Explore the process of papier mache applique over the entire area of the sculpture. Leave to dry.</p> <p>Paint sculpture and leave to dry.</p> <p>Learners to cut up mosaic pieces from strips of card and collage onto to decorate their sculpture.</p>	<p>Look at the Art Nouveau of Gustav Klimt and Sarah Driscoll’s lamps.</p>

LEARNING INTENTIONS	TEACHING ACTIVITIES Collage (2) – Faces and everyday objects using line and form.	POINTS TO NOTE
<p>Encountering differing artists who use food, junk etc. to create images of faces.</p>	<p>Dress up in various hats, wigs, sunglasses, scarves, false noses etc and take photographs. This will always be better if the learners are taking their own photos. See the topic on <i>Digital Photography</i> in the Equals <i>The World About Me SoW</i>.</p> <p>Look at images of various facial expressions. Encourage learners to make differing facial expressions, the weirder and wackier the better. Take more photos.</p> <p>Explore differing facial expressions and discuss what they may be portraying.</p> <p>Find differing facial expression in magazines and cut out and collage.</p> <p>Look at and talk about the images of portraits created by Guiseppe Arcimboldo.</p> <p>Take photos of real fruit and vegetables, and/or cut the images out of magazines to use as collage material.</p> <p>Using an A3 pro-forma, place features of the face in the appropriate places. Decide what fruit or vegetable to use for what feature. Less able learners may need features or marks on the paper to indicate where to place the features.</p> <p>Using paint, make marks using a variety of fruits/vegetables (inside of banana skins, apples, lemons, cabbage, flowers, leaves).</p> <p>Create a large scale group collaged Arcimboldo face using the various fruit and vegetable prints.</p>	<p>Materials needed might encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • magazines for cutting up; • glue sticks; • Arcimboldo images; • paints, paper, brushes; • fruits and vegetables; • photocopied A3 outline image of a face. (some may need features on or pointers depending on ability of learners)
<p>Exploring the work of differing artists who use their wider imagination to create images of faces.</p>	<p>Cut out (or have these already cut out) different features of the face and things we may wear on our head's; mouth, nose, eyes, ears, hair, hats, sunglasses etc. If using magazine photos, these may have to be enlarged on a photocopier, or we could use cut up images of various photographs that the learners have already taken as the start to the project. Compile a whole bank of noses, eyes, ears, mouths, hair, hats, glasses etc. and keep them separately, that is, noses in the nose box, eyes in the eyes box.</p> <p>Collage the above images onto card and cut out the face. Attach a lolly stick to the back and hold up to face, take photographs of learners exploring this. Look at ourselves in the mirror and take photographs. Learners may want to cut eye holes out.</p> <p>Use banana prints as mouth to create happy faces on a hand-held mask. Learners could use various materials to create hair.</p> <p>Look at various portraits of faces by Arcimboldo, Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee, Rene Magritte etc.</p>	

	<p>Explore this further by using differing images from magazines to represent features. Once learners have the basic idea that anything can represent a mouth or a nose or ears, anything and everything is possible!</p>	
<p>Developing understanding and creating facial collages</p>	<p>Look at images of Pop Art. Are there any ideas that learners might want to expand? Look particularly at Andy Warhol's 'Soup'.</p> <p>Look at various cylinder shaped food products that will be familiar to learners such as cans of coke, soup, baked bean. Look at other shapes such as boxes of cereal etc,</p> <p>Use your empty cans to create the base for a collage, perhaps using different textures or patterns or colours or faces.</p> <p>Collage a photograph or perhaps even a series of photographs of themselves onto their can design.</p> <p>Collage using lettering or images from magazines.</p> <p>Try drawing a can. Explore creating a mixed media collage using all or some of the above. Draw with pens or paint etc over the top to enhance particular areas.</p> <p>Look at cylinders and explore wrapping card around a cylinder shape. Work out how to create the top and bottom and create a card cylinder.</p> <p>Decorate as above, with image of themselves, their interests, their friends, their idols etc.</p> <p>Extend the concept of collage onto other mediums such as clay -</p> <p>Demonstrate rolling clay to create a tile and encourage learners to explore using various materials to press into and make shapes and patterns in the clay tile.</p> <p>Make a clay cylinder by rolling the clay flat, cutting out the appropriate shape to wrap around a cylinder form such as a coke can. Decorate as desired.</p>	<p>Pre-plan a collection of empty cans and cereal boxes</p>