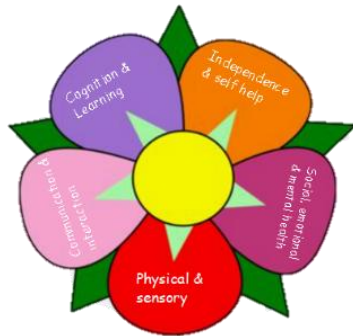


Semi-formal curriculum

(Steps 1 and 2 of The Hive planning)

Fundamentals of
Teaching and
Learning



Semi-Formal
Curriculum
Overview

Our specialist enhanced provision (The Hive) pre-formal, semi-formal, and formal curriculum is special to each individual pupil. The pupil is kept at the centre of the teaching and learning process. It is not for the child to change to meet the demands of the curriculum but for experienced and skilled practitioners, to provide a flexible and responsive curriculum that meets the very individual learning needs of each pupil.

Our Hive curriculum is for our pupils who have a range of complex learning difficulties and/or neurodiverse conditions. Our curriculum in The Hive endorses building connections and encourages active engagement in learning and problem solving. Our curriculum focuses on developing the key skills of communication, cognition, independence, physical development and self-care, all transferable skills that equip young people for life beyond school. Our learners are still at the very early stages of their learning and development, and they learn best when the curriculum is related to their own experiences and when they are given plenty of opportunities to experience the same activities and overlearn, with lots of opportunities for repetition built in. Alongside our Hive curriculum, our learners may also need specialist provision in physio, OT, sensory integration, communication, and sensory learning.

Our curriculum strives to be responsive to each learner and build on individual strengths and interests. The Curriculum ensures ongoing opportunities for active cross-curricular and contextualised learning, which provide stimulating contexts for learning through a variety of learning experiences within a flexible framework.

Our pupils with complex needs are on a learning spectrum that indicates that they have complex learning needs. In addition to learning difficulties, they may also face other barriers to learning such as sensory processing disorder, communication difficulties, and/or ASD. Our learners will all require additional interventions throughout their day to enable them to fully access and engage with all educational activities and opportunities.

Curriculum Focus:

Our Hive learners are extremely unique with individual learning needs and as such it is impossible to force them to fit into a formal and structured framework. Whilst they will benefit from accessing the more formal subject curriculum, they also need a more flexible and holistic approach to learning to ensure that all learning needs are met and barriers to learning are removed. All pupils require a personalised timetable throughout the day and practitioners have a clear remit to ensure that the curriculum is flexible and adaptable to meet each pupil's individual need whilst taking account of atypical patterns of development which impact on learner's ability to process new information and stimuli.

Our Hive curriculum places an emphasis on developing:

- Communication, both verbal and nonverbal. Cultivating deliberate and intentional communication skills that allow learners to effectively convey simple messages to peers and adults
- Cognition and the ability to think and learn. Our students also require support in developing attention and concentration to ensure effective learning occurs.
- Self-regulation. Many of our learners face sensory processing challenges and will need a sensory diet to help them develop self-regulation, allowing them to fully engage in learning.
- Generalisation - many of our learners struggle to apply a skill learned in one context to various other contexts and situations.
- Working memory - our students struggle to retain multiple words, numbers, and ideas simultaneously, making it difficult for them to follow complex instructions due to their inability to remember the steps.
- Problem-solving - the ability to use their existing skills, knowledge, and understanding of the world around them to address simple everyday problems.
- Physical skills - both gross and fine motor skills, to help students become as independent as possible in daily activities.
- Independence is a central focus of our curriculum, which aims to help students become as self-sufficient as possible in all areas of their lives. "We will never do for a child something they have the potential to do for themselves."

Assessment:

Ongoing, continuous, and rigorous assessment is fundamental to the Hive curriculum as it:

- Ensures that teachers reflect on their provision and maintain an appropriate personalized curriculum for each individual learner
- Informs planning and teaching
- Ensures pupils are making the best possible progress
- Embeds Assessment for Learning as a key to success, with all teachers integrating appropriate assessment practices within their classrooms

BSquared is our primary assessment tool for our learners, used at key times throughout the year to summarise learning, set targets, and provide qualitative data for reporting to parents, governors, and other relevant professionals.

Communication:

Communication is central to everything we do in The Hive and is a fundamental aspect of learning for all our learners. These learners are intentional communicators who typically progress through the following stages as they develop their communication skills.

Communication level	What is the learner communicating?	How is it communicated?	Interaction skills
Intentional communication All our learners will actively engage in communication. In the initial phases, they will have acquired the	Pupil communicates a meaningful message nonverbally to express simple statements such as	Pupil will have acquired various forms of non-verbal communication, including vocalisations,	Pupil relies on a familiar adult to respond to the interaction and provide it with meaning.

<p>ability to express their basic desires and requirements to familiar adults. They possess enough comprehension and memory of their surroundings and have learned to manage their physical actions adequately to communicate simple desires or needs using various non-verbal methods. During this period, our learners can influence their environment to some extent and are progressing towards greater independence.</p>	<p>"It's gone," "More," or "Stop."</p>	<p>approximations, facial expressions, and gestures.</p>	
<p>Words and ideas Intentional communicators have developed and grasp many foundational communication skills, including:</p> <p>Briefly attending to another person</p> <p>Sharing attention with others</p> <p>Taking turns in communication</p> <p>Using and interpreting non-verbal cues such as eye contact, facial expressions, pointing, and tone of voice</p> <p>Using and understanding different tones of voice</p> <p>During this stage, our learners are starting to connect auditory information with visual stimuli. They practice vocalising sounds, and adults begin to recognise and respond differently to these vocalisations. Over time, our learners begin to understand words that are meaningful in their lives. Their vocalisations begin to resemble real words more closely, and their messages become clearer and more effective, enhancing their ability to express their desires effectively.</p>	<p>Pupil will use basic vocabulary to label objects, make requests, and ask for more.</p>	<p>At first, pupil will rely on non-verbal communication, but over time, they will gradually learn essential words, signs, or symbols.</p>	<p>Pupil requires an adult to respond to their communication and demonstrate language.</p>
<p>Joining words and ideas At this point, our learners have achieved proficiency in fundamental communication skills, and with appropriate support, they will further advance their abilities. They will start combining words to create more coherent sentences and will be able to discuss a broader array of subjects and occurrences. Colourful Semantics is frequently employed to support children's learning at this stage.</p>	<p>Pupil employs words and phrases to make comments and descriptions. They can ask questions about who, what, and where, and discuss the present situation.</p>	<p>Pupil will utilise words, signs, or symbols to convey brief phrases and sentences.</p>	<p>Pupil requires an adult to demonstrate the rules of interaction.</p>
<p>Abstract words and reasoning Pupils at the advanced stage of our semi-formal curriculum may begin to cultivate this level of communication. They might initiate discussions about topics beyond immediate circumstances and use multiple informative words to construct more intricate sentences.</p>	<p>Pupil can contemplate abstract ideas, comprehend, and employ language to discuss concepts beyond immediate circumstances. They can strategize, inquire, negotiate, predict, and reason.</p>	<p>Pupil employs more intricate sentences for communication.</p>	<p>Pupils are acquiring the skills to engage appropriately with various individuals. As they progress, they may begin to adapt their interaction style based on the situation or person involved.</p>

A Comprehensive Communication Environment

A foundational aspect of our approach is establishing a Comprehensive Communication Environment to support the communication development of our semi-formal learners. While these learners have mastered the basic building blocks of communication, there are instances when they still benefit from the consistent support of a comprehensive communication environment to aid their comprehension. This environment embraces and integrates all forms of communication, including:

- Natural gestures
- Speech
- Vocalisations
- Variation in tone, pitch, or volume of voice
- High-tech communication devices
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Sign languages such as Makaton or British Sign Language (BSL)
- Symbols
- Photographs
- Pictures
- Real objects
- Sensory cues

In addition to incorporating these varied forms of communication, our THE HIVE learners also thrive in a responsive environment where they:

- Receive responses to their actions
- Are provided opportunities to respond to others
- Can initiate interactions with adults or peers who respond appropriately
- Have positive role models who demonstrate correct language and sentence structure

Developing Working Memory

- Our semi-formal learners excel when learning is connected to their personal experiences, and a critical focus of their curriculum and provision is the enhancement of working memory. Compared to typically developing children, our THE HIVE learners often have a smaller working memory capacity, which can pose challenges in classroom settings for various reasons.
- Due to their smaller working memory capacity, our learners can hold fewer words, numbers, and ideas simultaneously, making it difficult for them to remember and follow complex instructions. Without deliberate attention to developing working memory, these learners may struggle to progress because the cognitive demands of each activity exceed their capacities.
- Effective progress is achievable when the curriculum and environment are tailored to each learner's needs. Personalised curriculum planning should aim to expand memory capacity by reducing memory loads in the classroom. This can be achieved by breaking tasks and instructions into smaller steps, repeating important information in a manner comprehensible to the learner, presenting information in different ways, and promoting the use of memory aids.

Generalisation

Generalising a skill or knowledge requires learners to make connections between the original context and new situations, which imposes significant processing demands. This process is particularly challenging for our Hive learners. Therefore, it is crucial that their curriculum prioritises extensive practice of skills or knowledge across diverse contexts to support generalisation. Most pupils with SLD need a huge amount of repetition to develop or even maintain a skill. A small number of activities should be repeated over and

over again, rather than giving continually new experiences. This will give the opportunity to build anticipation whilst consolidating learning.

Problem Solving

Problem solving is a critical skill that requires intentional teaching for our Hive learners. In its more intricate form, problem solving involves the ability to apply a skill broadly, understand when to employ it in unfamiliar situations, and integrate it with other skills to resolve issues.

Structured instruction should focus on the following components, engaging learners in real-world problem-solving scenarios and fostering the transfer of these skills to other challenges:

- Recognising and understanding the problem
- Analysing the problem and devising a solution
- Implementing strategies to address the problem
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the chosen strategy

Teaching Thinking Skills

Developing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities is a crucial endeavour for our semi-formal learners. They require opportunities to:

- Focus on general cognitive skills
- Engage in subject-specific learning, such as mathematics
- Apply learned skills across various subjects and situations

To facilitate the teaching of thinking skills, our Hive curriculum integrates subject-specific lessons within a creative thematic framework. Through these themes, learners are encouraged to enhance their thinking skills by applying knowledge gained from specific subjects. Teachers model the thinking process and utilise a vocabulary that promotes discussion and transfer of skills.

Play Skills

Our curriculum, particularly emphasises hands-on learning and play, providing scaffolding for children's learning experiences and demonstrating that thinking is a dynamic process. There are very many functions of Play, among them being to help our learners 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

Some pupils need wild and exciting stimulation to react, but others need a gentle, slow approach. For example, some pupils may find a loud environment overwhelming. Pupils are observed carefully to see

which level of stimulation is best for them. Whilst, the environment has been designed with this in mind, there may be changes to reflect the cohort or individual pupils.

Like all our learners, teachers, room leads, and teaching assistants must hold high expectations for our children and young people. They need to challenge learners within a supportive Growth Mindset environment, as many of our learners may have developed a sense of 'learned helplessness,' where they may give up when faced with challenges. By cultivating a Growth Mindset and presenting challenges, we aim to develop children's thinking skills and support their problem-solving abilities.

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Embracing Growth Mindset

In our Hive curriculum, adopting a growth mindset is a pivotal aspect. Children can either possess:

- A fixed mindset, where they believe intelligence and abilities are innate, leading them to avoid challenges and view mistakes as indicators of inability.
- A growth mindset, which empowers children to embrace challenges and see failures as opportunities for learning and growth.

Our curriculum fosters a growth mindset by:

1. Teaching children that the brain functions like a muscle, growing stronger with effort, determination, and practice.
2. Avoiding labelling children as inherently smart or talented, as this discourages effort and resilience.
3. Acknowledging and praising children when they demonstrate a growth mindset.
4. Celebrating the process of effort, hard work, and practice rather than solely focusing on outcomes.
5. Embracing mistakes as valuable learning opportunities, encouraging perseverance through challenges.
6. Promoting participation in collaborative group learning, where children engage deeply with topics and advance together.

Promoting Independence and Self-Help Skills

A significant emphasis in our curriculum is on cultivating independence in learning and encouraging pupils to rely less on adult support. Our curriculum is designed to equip students with the skills needed to transition into adulthood confidently, fostering their ability to be as self-sufficient as possible in every aspect of their lives. The Early Years Characteristics of Learning serve as a foundational framework for nurturing independent learning among all our students.

Characteristics of Independent Learning			
	A unique learner Observing how a pupil learns	Positive Relationships What adults could do?	Enabling Environments What adults could provide?

Developing Engagement with learning	Finding Out and Exploring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Showing curiosity about objects, events, and people ☺ Using senses to explore the world around them ☺ Engaging in open ended activity ☺ Showing particular interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Play with learners ☺ Encourage them to explore and show your interest in discovering new things ☺ Help learners as needed to do what they are trying to do, without taking over or directing ☺ Join in play sensitively, fitting in with learner's ideas ☺ Model pretending an object is something else and help develop roles and stories ☺ Encourage learners to try new activities and to judge risks for themselves ☺ Pay attention to how learners engage in activities; the challenges they face, the effort, thought, learning and enjoyment ☺ Talk more about the process than the product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open ended so they can be used, moved, and combined in a variety of ways ☺ Make sure resources are relevant to children's interests ☺ Arrange flexible indoor and outdoor space and resources ☺ Help learners concentrate by limiting noise and making spaces visually calm and orderly ☺ Plan first-hand experiences and challenges appropriate to the development of the children ☺ Ensure learners have uninterrupted time to explore
	Playing with what they know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Pretending objects are things from their experience ☺ Representing their experiences in play ☺ Taking on a role in their play ☺ Acting out experiences with other people 		
	Being willing to have a go <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Initiating activities ☺ Seeking challenge ☺ Showing a 'can do' attitude ☺ Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences and learning by trial and error 		
Developing motivation to learn	A unique learner Observing how a pupil learns	Positive Relationships What adults could do?	Enabling Environments What adults could provide?
	Being involved and concentrating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time ☺ Showing high levels of energy, fascination ☺ Not easily distracted ☺ Paying attention to details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Allow learners ownership over what they are doing ☺ Stimulate learner's interest through shared attention and calm overstimulated learners ☺ Help learners to become aware of their own goals, make plans, review own progress and success ☺ Describe what you see them trying to do, and encourage learners to talk about their own processes and successes ☺ Be specific when you praise, especially noting effort such as how the learner concentrates, tries different approaches, persists, solves problems, and has new ideas ☺ Encourage learners to learn together and from each other ☺ Learners develop their own motivations when you give them reasons and talk about learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Notice what arouses learner's curiosity ☺ Ensure learners have time and freedom to become deeply involved in activities ☺ Learners can maintain focus on things that interest them over a period of time. Help them to keep ideas in mind by talking over photographs of their previous activities ☺ Make space and time for all learners to contribute.
	Keeping on trying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Persisting with activity when challenges occur ☺ Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off ☺ Bouncing back after difficulties 		
	Enjoying achieving what they set out to do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☺ Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals ☺ Being proud of how they accomplished something-not just the end result ☺ Enjoying meeting challenges for their own sake rather than 		

	external rewards or praise	rather than just directing.	
Developing creative and critical thinking	A unique learner Observing how a pupil learns	Positive Relationships What adults could do?	Enabling Environments What adults could provide?
	Having their own ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking of ideas Finding ways to solve problems Finding new ways to do things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the language of thinking and learning: think, know, remember, forget, idea, makes sense, plan, learn, find out, confused, figure out, trying to do Model being a thinker, showing that you don't always know, are curious and sometimes puzzled, and can think and find out Encourage open ended thinking by not settling on the first ideas: What else is possible? Always respect children's efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea Talking aloud helps learners to think and control what they do. Model self-talk, describing your actions in play Give children time to talk and think Value questions, talk and many possible responses without rushing toward answers too quickly Model the creative process, showing your thinking about some of the many possible ways forward Encourage learners to describe problems they encounter, and to suggest ways to solve the problem Show and talk about strategies-how to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In planning, ask yourself: Is this an opportunity for children to find their own ways to represent and develop their own ideas? Avoid learners just reproducing someone else's ideas Build in opportunities for children to play with materials before using them in planned tasks Recognisable and predictable routines help children to predict and make connections in their experiences Routines can be flexible, while still basically orderly Use mind maps to represent thinking together Develop a learning community which focuses on how and not just what we are learning Play is a key opportunity for learners to think creatively and flexibly, solve problems and link ideas. Establish the enabling conditions for rich play: space, time, flexible resources, choice, control, warm and supportive relationships.
	Making Links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making links and noticing patterns in their experience Making predictions Testing their ideas Developing ideas of grouping, sequences, cause and effect 		
	Choosing ways to do things <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal Checking how well their activities are going Changing strategy as needed Reviewing how well the approach worked 		

		<p>things-including problem solving, thinking and learning</p> <p>😊 Give feedback and help learners to review their own progress and learning. Talk with learners about what they are doing, how they plan to do it and what they would change next time</p> <p>😊 Model the plan-do-review process yourself.</p>	
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Management and Organisation


- The teacher manages staff time, so all pupils have their needs met
- Staff know and understand what and why they are doing what they do at all times in the day
- Teachers and staff are flexible and adapt to the pupils' engagement and behaviour
- Staff work as a team with common aims and practices. They support each other to meet the pupils' needs
- Teachers are responsible for planning documents, but all staff contribute ideas to them. They will adapt the Hive curriculum as required. Complex Needs Team will support with this.
- Teachers and staff meet regularly to discuss individual pupils and the plans for teaching and learning
- Teachers meet with therapists and outside agencies with the school SENDCo to agree on pupils learning goals
- Staff are focused on the pupils during the school day
- Pupils are engaged with activities when supported by staff
- If they are able, pupils engage with activities unsupported
- Waiting times for pupils to be engaged are minimal and individually appropriate
- Pupils are grouped appropriately to support their learning
- Staff know how to work with pupils whose behaviour can be challenging
- They have a plan B when plan A doesn't work
- The Complex Needs Team support, guide, model, coach throughout the process

Teaching and Learning

- Staff know pupils' outcomes and can provide suitable activities to practice them, based on the Hive curriculum
- Staff understand what is included in the areas of learning for pupils with SLD and Complex Needs
- Teachers know what they are teaching and why, including Interventions
- Staff know how to challenge pupils sufficiently
- Staff provide suitable resources for individual pupils and adapt accordingly

- Staff communicate at a level pupils can understand and know when to use supportive AAC with support from a SaLT
- Pupils are encouraged to interact with each other
- Pupils are enabled to learn in an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment
 - Teachers /practitioners continuously evaluate progress made towards pupil outcomes

An example of prompt/support sheet when Mapping and Assessing Pupil Progress

Code	Levels of support/ annotation codes explained
I	Independent: The task was completed independently
SH	Spoken help: Including signing and verbal prompts to remain on task
GH	Gestural help: Help from someone who has used gestural cues
PH	Physical help: help by someone holding / helping a student move
C	Corrected: Work corrected/ requires correction
	Next steps: Target/ challenge or next steps information recorded for student
S	Scribe: Work/ notes recorded by someone else
VF	Verbal Feedback: Verbal feedback has been provided following the task

<i>from approximate</i>		FLUENCY		<i>to accurate</i>	
Learners reach a level of mastery combining speed and accuracy					
The skill is approximate and the learner's behaviour needs considerable shaping in order to accomplish the task. Performance is slow and halting.		The learner's performance is increasingly purposeful and coordinated, but it is not yet sufficiently accurate to effectively accomplish the task.		Performance is sufficiently accurate to meet the requirements of the task which is completed with little faltering or hesitation.	
1 2		3 4 5		6 7 8	
				9 10	

<i>from inconsistent</i>		MAINTENANCE		<i>to consistent</i>	
Learners maintain competency over time through repetition. They remember how to do a task after a break					
The skill has been observed on a single occasion or, at most, on sporadic and isolated occasions.		The skill is demonstrated on repeated occasions. Performance is not yet sufficiently consistent to be reliably anticipated.		Performance of the skill is consistent and can be reliably anticipated. The skill needs refreshing after a break.	
1 2		3 4 5		6 7 8	
				9 10	

<i>from single context</i>		GENERALISATION			<i>to many contexts</i>	
Learners achieve mastery in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or with different staff						
The skill is demonstrated in a single setting or context, with limited stimuli or materials and with the same staff.		The skill is repeated but with some variation in setting, context, materials or staff.		The skill is demonstrated in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or materials and with different staff.		The learner applies the skill to meet the demands of a new situation.
1 2		3 4 5		6 7 8		9 10