



Social Communication Department Curriculum Guidance



Contents

Our Trust Vision	3
Curriculum Intent	3
Curriculum Implementation	3
Curriculum Impact	4
Curriculum Aims	5
Curriculum Overview	5
Phonics and Reading delivery and progression	6
Long Term Themes Overview	6
Specific Teaching Approaches	7
Assessment	8

Our Trust Vision

Every school in the East Midlands Academy Trust (EMAT) is committed to providing the highest standard of education so that **all** children are supported to be the **best that they can be**.

We are driven by a strong moral purpose that every child has the right to outstanding teaching and leadership. It is our passion to work with our children, their parents and carers and our staff to create world-class schools that demonstrate integrity of purpose through high aspiration for every child. We set high expectations for our leaders and teachers to support and stretch every child to ensure they make excellent progress and build the skills, knowledge and attributes that will prepare them well for their education journey and beyond.

We achieve this through our 5 values of inspiration, inclusion, innovation, integrity, and impact.

Curriculum Intent

At EMAT our curriculum aims to enable our children to engage with the world around them and secure outstanding outcomes for all.

We aim to develop their communication, interaction and social skills so they can communicate effectively as confident individuals, stay safe and become responsible citizens. Inspire our children and develop their independence to prepare them for the next step on their journey towards fulfilling their aspirations. Provide each child with the knowledge and skills they need to develop to take those next steps in learning with confidence and be successful.

Our curriculum is based on a holistic view of the child which is well informed and is personalised to meet the targets set out in their Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs), while providing them with a range of purposeful learning opportunities.

We have organised our curriculum into the following areas of learning:

- My Communication and Language
- Myself and Others
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- My Body
- My World
- Learning for Life
- Creative Me

Communication is at the heart of everything we do. Each child will have their own personalised communication pathway to enable them to develop their communication skills either verbally or non-verbally. Our curriculum is also informed by the EMAT Curriculum (National Curriculum objectives), Development Matters and the EYFS framework.

We work closely with a range of agencies including the Speech and Language service to plan and inform personalised learning for all.

Curriculum Implementation

We recognise that we have a diverse range of needs within our Social Communication Department and therefore our teaching and learning experiences are structured into three pathways. We have called them pathways to reflect that the children are on a journey whilst they are with us.

Some children may progress along the same pathway as they move through the school, however others may move on to a different pathway as they progress and develop. All learning is personalised according to each child's specific needs regardless of the pathway they are following. Teaching groups are organised according to stage of development as well as age.

Lessons are not necessarily planned as discrete subjects, as they will often incorporate elements of learning from some or all the areas with the development of communication and interaction being at the heart of everything we do.

Each half term we have a different topic or theme which will be used as a context for learning activities. We have chosen themes and topics that will broaden the experiences of our children and open the world around them whilst still being relevant to their stage of development and interest.

Pre-Formal Pathway

Pre-Formal learners have multiple or complex needs. Their responses might be complex and inconsistent; they are at the stage of working towards purposeful communication. They require adults to interpret their behaviours.

The curriculum enables them to build their communication and interaction skills whilst encouraging them to engage with the world around them through a multi-sensory approach.

The curriculum will be delivered through a broad and balanced range of high-quality learning opportunities and experiences within the Social Communication Provision.

Semi-Formal Pathway

Semi-formal learners have complex learning needs. They are becoming active learners who attempt to physically explore and make sense of their surroundings and are beginning to play with purpose. They communicate with others to make sense of the world around them.

The curriculum aims to develop communication, interaction, engagement, and independence. We plan our learning opportunities in small steps and include frequent opportunities for revisiting and making links; this includes core literacy and maths every day.

Children on this pathway will have access to more formal learning opportunities within the Social Communication Department.

Formal Pathway

Formal learners are beginning to understand abstract ideas. They can use expressive language to ask questions and negotiate with others.

Some of our children will access mainstream lessons for all or part of the day. They will be able to access the National Curriculum objectives in all or some subjects, broadly in line with their peers.

They access formal lessons with the support of a Teaching Assistant and reasonable adjustments are made within the classroom as required.

Curriculum Impact

It is our ambition that all children will make strong social, academic and personal progress from their starting points.

Our children will leave our provisions more confident and competent communicators, with an improvement in their social engagement and life skills and will have developed the knowledge and skills to be ready to move on to the next phase of their journey.

The impact of our curriculum will be demonstrated through learning walks, relevant assessment tracking data and reviews of individual outcomes from EHCPS. The child and parent voice will be central to this process. Pupil progress for all children will be discussed with senior leaders termly.

Assessment evidence is collected regularly about pupils learning in all areas. We incorporate a range of frameworks.

Parents are also encouraged to share achievements from home.

Curriculum Aims

- Develop communication, interaction, cognition, physical and sensory, and social and emotional development
- All children to be able to communicate effectively as confident individuals, stay safe and become responsible citizens
- Inspire our children and develop their independence to prepare them for the next step on their journey towards fulfilling their aspirations
- Provide each child with the knowledge and skills they need to develop to take those next steps in learning with confidence and be successful
- Participate in first hand active learning that promotes independence, engagement, and interaction
- Develop thinking skills to engage learners in active learning
- Apply functional skills in a range of practical contexts to develop life skills
- Sustain good physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- Work closely with parents and carers
- Embed multi-agency practice
- Be a part of our local and wider community and advocate the best outcomes for all our children

Curriculum Overview

Within the social communication provision there needs to be breathe in learning throughout our children’s time in school, especially if they will be staying in the same learning cohort. There should be variations in experiences and learning within a theme or topic, whilst ensuring the learning is developmentally appropriate.

Each child drives the direction and content of their own ‘curriculum’. Whilst there are themes or topics, the planning, learning and delivery may differ for individuals or groups of learners. Priorities based on EHCP learning targets, the child’s age, need, motivation and learning style will help build the curriculum.

The areas of learning and development below underpin all we do:

Personal and Social Development	Communication Skills	Thinking Skills
Social Interaction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to Others • Working with Others Emotional Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotions • Behaviour Regulation • Confidence and Risk Taking Independence for Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and Self-motivation • School Routines • Self-help and Personal Independence 	Social Communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations • Greetings and Social Conventions Expressive Communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Choices • Language and Concepts • Storytelling and Narratives • Communicative Functions Receptive Communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following Instructions and Requests • Listening and Responding Functional Literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing 	Thinking Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memory and Routines • Making Connections • Problem Solving • Creative Thinking • Patterns and Properties Functional Numeracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Numbers • Mathematical Thinking

These are our key areas of learning, and within them there is a clear progression of leaning, dependent on each child’s stage of development. These include Birth to 5, Development Matters, the EYFs and National Curriculum. See below for the links to the areas of learning.

Areas of Learning
My Communication and Language Main EYFS links: Communication and language (listening, attention and understanding and speaking) Include social communication

Main NC links: English, PSHE
Myself and Others Main EYFS links: Personal, social and emotional development (Self-regulation, managing self, building relationships) Main NC links: PSHE
Literacy Main EYFS links: Literacy (comprehension, word reading and writing) Phonics Main NC Links: English and Phonics
Numeracy Main EYFS links: Mathematics (number and numerical patterns) Main NC Links: Mathematics
My Body Main EYFS links: Physical development (Gross motor skills, fine motor skills) Main NC links: PE
My World Main EYFS links: Understanding the world (Past and present, people cultures and communities, natural world) Main NC links: Science, D&T, History, Geography, RE
Learning for Life Functional life skills, food technology Main NC links: Computing
Creative Me Main EYFS links: Expressive arts and design (Creating with materials, being imaginative and expressive) Main NC links – Art, music, drama, dance

Phonics and Reading delivery and progression

To access the curriculum and to develop future life skills, we recognise the importance of phonics and reading for all children, whether at an appreciation of environmental sounds level or advanced text analysis or comprehension tasks.

We use RWI to teach early phonics and reading and this is adapted to suit the needs of the learners and the stages they are at.

Pre-Formal Learners	Semi-Formal Learners	Formal Learners
Hearing and distinguishing sounds in the environment, and making preferences Hearing and saying sounds Oral blending VC, CVC words Exposure to rhymes and stories	RWI Set 1, 2 and 3	RWI Set 1, 2 and 3

Long Term Themes Overview

***'Why am I teaching what I'm teaching? What am I trying to achieve and am I making a difference?'* (Peter Imray)**

The themes have been selected to engage our children and provide richness of experience as well as to make good use of cross curricular links.

They have been sequenced to enhance a holistic approach and to ensure breadth and balance and to build in flexibility to deliver the curriculum through subject specific, themed, or therapeutic work.

The selected themes will provide opportunities for pupils to experience and work on their individual long term and short-term outcomes in differing contexts and allow them to make links and generalise the skills they have learned. Each year there will be opportunities to take part in special days, celebrations and charity events that will inspire

learning and help the children to make links and integrate with the wider school community and the community in which they live.

Planning will be regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the changing needs and individual interests of our children to develop their strengths and enable them to move on to the next stage of their education as confident, enthusiastic learners.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Cycle 1	All About Me	Special Days and Festivals	Space	Water	Travel and Transport	Amazing Earth
Cycle 2	Terrific Tales	Superheroes	In the garden	The Prehistoric world	Hot and Cold places	Healthy me
Cycle 3	This is me	Tell me a story	Kings and Queens	Wild Weather	Let's go on Safari	People who help us
Cycle 4	Once upon a time	Food, glorious food	Famous People	Minibeasts	Let's go to the Rainforest	Growing and Changing
Cycle 5	Me and my family	Let's Celebrate!	Homes and Habitats	Electricity, Light and Sound	Let's go to the Seaside	Our Amazing World
Cycle 6	Super stories	Light and Colour	Building and construction	Let's be Scientists	Let's go to the Mountains	Looking after me and my environment

Specific Teaching Approaches

Embedded into all our curriculum areas and provision are a range of specific teaching approaches. These are planned and delivered according to our children's personalised programmes. The teacher, working alongside the team and the wider multi-agency team, decide which approaches will be most beneficial for the children.

These include, to ensure curriculum access and engagement for all:

- Visual timetables, objects of reference and pictures, now and next and schedules
- Using technology
- Attention Autism
- SCERTS
- CATHS
- TEACCH
- Play opportunities
- Small steps learning
- Multi-sensory approaches
- Sensory stories
- Music opportunities
- Outdoor learning
- Speech and language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Swimming
- Horse riding

Play will be taught every day both in and out of the classroom where appropriate and for many will form the core of their education and exploration. It will provide a strong base for those who may progress on to a more formal curriculum delivery in the future.

The functions of play are to:

- Learn new skills in a safe environment
- Explore own body and senses, and the surrounding world
- Develop a safe understanding of emotions, both of self and others
- Experience interaction with others
- Develop flexibility of thought
- Develop theory of mind

Assessment

We assess our children using B Squared and Evidence for Learning.

They allow us to celebrate the children's progress and achievements and identifies their next steps in learning.

B-Squared provides several different frameworks within its system, which allows us to tailor assessment based on the individual needs and stages of education. This individual approach to assessment mirrors our individual approach to learning.

Evidence for learning allows us to collect evidence of the children's learning and progress and against individual targets related to EHC plans.