



Community Special School

Learning Together for Personal Success

Adult Curriculum (Post-16 Sixth Form)

References

An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland
Adult Literacy Core Curriculum (Basic Skills Agency)
Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum (Basic Skills Agency)
Education Scotland (www.educationscotland.gov.uk)
Learning and Skill Improvement Service
OCR Progression Continuum
Prior's Court Foundation Post-16 Curriculum Policy
The Bridge London Sixth Form Curriculum
The Excellence Gateway (www.excellencegateway.org.uk)

Introduction and Rationale

In the Alfreton Park Sixth Form we believe that young people with Learning Disabilities should, as far as possible and as appropriate to their needs, be entitled to the same range of opportunities as their contemporaries. The SEND Code of Practice places great emphasis on the need for parity: *“Children and young people who have a special educational need or disability deserve the same life chances as every other child,”* (Draft legislation on Reform of provision for children and young people with SEN, 2012). The Sixth Form seeks to provide an environment that will assist the young people in their transition to adulthood and shares the following goal:

“Our goal is for disabled young people and young people with SEN to have the best opportunities and support so that as far as possible they can succeed in education and their careers, live as independently and healthily as they are able to and be active members of their communities.” DfE (2011)

There are different understandings of the term ‘curriculum’ and different approaches to defining a curriculum. At one end of the spectrum, the definition of a curriculum involves a detailed specification of content to be covered or outcomes to be achieved. At the other end, it means explaining the processes undertaken by learners and tutors to identify, plan, carry out and review learning programmes for individual learners. Our approach is strongly orientated towards a process-based view of the curriculum in which the emphasis is on the way that the curriculum is negotiated with learners and builds creatively on existing knowledge, skills and understanding. Equally as important are the contexts learners experience in their private, family, community and future work lives. The more open the curriculum is the easier it is to adapt it to the needs and learning aims of learners.

Definitions

Our Post-16 Curriculum is underpinned by functional adult literacy and numeracy, which is, *“The ability to read, write and use numbers, to handle information, express ideas and opinions, make decisions and solve problems, as family members, workers, citizens and lifelong learners,”* (ALNIS, 2001).

The definition tells us that:

- To be literate and numerate is not just about mechanical encoding/decoding skills but also the knowledge, skills and understanding that enable us to do what we want to do in our private, family, community and working lives.
- In deciding what should be learned it is important to take into account the key life areas and social contexts of the individual learner.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are almost always used for a purpose – such as making decisions or solving problems – and in a particular social context. There should be opportunities for both planned and deliberate, as well as incidental and informal learning within the learning programme.
- The social contexts in which literacy and numeracy skills are applied require further development of knowledge, skills and understanding in personal, social, health, citizenship and economic contexts.
- The technological age we are in necessitates the functional application of ICT skills.
- Vocational work-related learning contexts will give learners the practice and rehearsal time necessary to fully apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to future employment situations.
- It is important that learners not only develop skills in a particular context but also become proficient in other contexts in order to broaden and transfer their learning.

Guiding Principles

We believe our curriculum framework should provide clear direction, but we believe that it is inappropriate to specify all the details of what is to be taught and learned. In applying the following principles we can offer a curriculum to meet particular, rather than general, needs.

- Provide a curriculum that will be relevant to the needs of the learners;
- Enable the learner, family and allied services to participate in the assessment process;
- Ensure Individual Learning Plans provide flexibility and responsiveness to the particular needs of the learners;
- Focus on the application of knowledge, skills and understanding not simply their acquisition;
- Enable learners to applying their knowledge in the workplace, family or community involvement;
- Focus on Life Skills and Independence;

- Enable learners to apply and retain Life Skills that will result in an optimum level of independence;
- Enable the work of students to gain nationally recognised qualifications;
- Provide a route for transition to life after school.

Curriculum Areas

In order to provide our learners with every possible opportunity to succeed our learning programmes consist of the 4 main elements set out in the OECD/CERI study:

- **Work Life:** Employment, useful work and valued activity;
- **Individual Life:** Personal autonomy, independent living and adult status;
- **Community Life:** Social interaction, community participation, leisure and recreation;
- **Family Life:** Adult roles within the family.

We strongly believe that learners' achievement should be recognised and celebrated in the same way as their contemporaries. As such each learner will have access to achieving nationally accredited schemes relevant to their achievements that will enable each learner to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and understanding acquired in earlier phases of their education. Where possible accreditations will support the Programmes for Learning with following curriculum areas:

- Functional Skills & Communication
- Daily Living & Self-Care
- Vocational Skills
- Leisure and Recreation:
- Transition into Adult Life

Planned Progression & Progression Pathways

We passionately believe that the progress of our learners should not be left to chance. Progress for our learners can be planned for in both a lateral and linear context. Foundation Learning provides our learners with the opportunity to progress in both a lateral and linear fashion.

Foundation Learning is the name given to education provision at pre-Entry Level, Entry Level and Level 1, and includes the qualifications and accreditations at these levels within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Learners are offered personalised learning opportunities that help them gain credit at pre-Entry Level, Entry Level and Level 1, on a learning journey leading to further qualifications, supported employment or independent living. Foundation Learning Programmes should include:

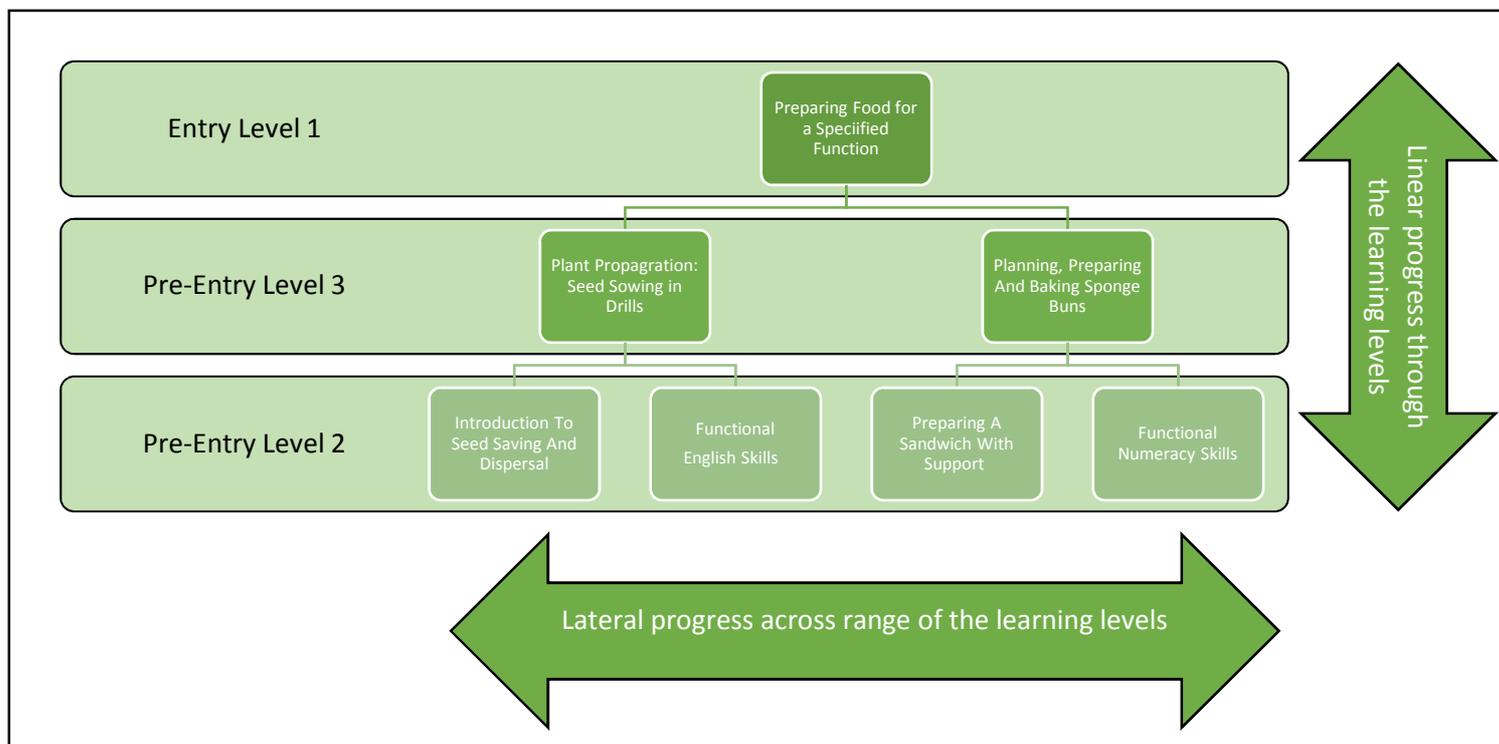
- Subject or vocational knowledge, skills and understanding;
- Functional skills (functional literacy, numeracy and ICT);
- Personal and social development learning.

Progression Pathways are specific to each learner and will begin to be shaped following a baseline period that incorporates an initial diagnostic assessment and functional analysis. Each Progression Pathways consists of two complementary elements:

- **Individual Learning Plan (ILP):** This is a personalised, flexible and dynamic working document that provides a brief summary of where the learner is currently and where the learner hopes to be in the future and sets communication, personal, social and academic targets (Appendix 1).
- **Individual Study Programme (ISP):** This is a summary of the accreditations, qualifications, functional skills programme and work experience opportunities relevant to the learners own interests and areas of strength.

ILPs and ISPs are at the heart of assessment, learning, support and achievement for each learner and support their continued progression towards adulthood and life after Alfreton.

The diagram below illustrates the relationship between linear and lateral progress within this framework:



As pupils progress both across the range of a learning level and through the learning levels and begin to transfer their learning in different contexts, they will also demonstrate both linear and lateral progress along the following progression continuum:

- **Encounter:** Characterised by presence and reflex responses.
- **Early awareness:** Characterised by fleeting attention and inconsistent responses.
- **Interest:** Characterised by more consistent and differentiated reactions.
- **Supported participation:** Characterised by co-operation and engagement.
- **Active involvement:** Characterised by recognition, anticipation and proactive responses.
- **Development:** Characterised by remembered responses and intentional communication.
- **Exploration:** Characterised by concentration, recall and observation.
- **Initiation:** Characterised by established responses and conventional communication.
- **Consolidation:** Characterised by the formation of skills, knowledge, concepts and understandings.
- **Application:** Characterised by the application of skills, knowledge, concepts and understandings.

Assessment

The Adult Curriculum assessment strategy forms part of the school's overall assessment strategy (please refer to the Assessment Overview, Assessment Cycle and Assessment and Attainment Continuum). It is multi-faceted such is the complexity of progress at this stage of learning for learners with SEND. All pupils have an agreed *Individual Learning Plan* that is compiled in collaboration with pupils, families and teachers, as well as other allied professionals where appropriate. This is a fluid plan that changes as the needs of the learners change. It is reviewed and amended on at least 3 occasions every year.

Linear Progress

Learners' linear progress is assessed using the *B-Squared* assessment tool which enables us to record and assess learners' small steps of progress in relation to Milestones Levels (M Levels), which broadly align with P Level descriptors. Learners are set annual targets for all strands of literacy and numeracy. Progress in relation to these targets is analysed on a termly basis to determine whether learners are making below expected progress, expected progress or above expected progress. In addition, learners' linear progress can be described in relation to their progress through the Foundation Learning framework.

Lateral Progress

Learners' lateral progress is largely identified through their progress across the range of Foundation Learning level as well as across the progression continuum as detailed earlier as well as through the range of vocational experiences they have accessed. Learners' lateral progress may be articulated through their Individual Learning Plans if applicable.

Programmes for Learning

1. Functional Skills & Communication:

Learners should be given opportunities to:

- Apply the essential skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT that are vital active participation in learning, life and employment;
- Continue to develop and apply their communication skills, including their social skills;
- Strengthen the use of existing pragmatic communication strategies and techniques (e.g. PECS, iPads etc.) that they have acquired previously and that they are comfortable with.

2. Daily Living & Self-Care:

Learners should be given opportunities to:

- Practice meeting their own personal hygiene needs and consistently applying the skills they have acquired to a broad range of contexts;
- Gain experience in and skills associated with a wide variety of daily living situations tailored to their needs and level, including food preparation, shopping skills and all aspects of domestic skills where appropriate.

3. Vocational Skills:

Learners should be given opportunities to:

- Experience a range of vocational skills
- Develop and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding within a work experience type placement;
- Participate in Mini Enterprise projects, work placements in the voluntary sector and placements in industry.

4. Leisure and Recreation:

Learners should be given opportunities to:

- Take part in activities of their choice on a regular basis;
- Participate in activities within different settings and contexts;
- Develop lifelong leisure and recreational interests.

5. Transition into Adult Life:

Learners (and their families) should be given opportunities to:

- Openly discuss and explore life after school
- Visit organisations and institutions that may provide future placements, e.g. residential and non-residential college placements, independent and dependent (supported) living, day centres and employment;
- Be fully supported through a successful transition into adult life.

These Programmes of Study should be delivered in and through all aspects of Sixth Form life including formal, structured activities and informal, unstructured activities. Although some elements can be delivered in isolation it is preferable that there is sufficient overlap to reflect real-life adulthood complexities.

Additional Notes: