



Chadsgrove Curriculum Long Term Planning: Explorers Curriculum Pathway

Curriculum Intent

The Explorers Curriculum Pathway is designed to meet the learning needs of pupils for whom 'curricula need to be different rather than differentiated, because the way such pupils learn is different, and often very, very different, from neuro-typical, conventionally developing learners for whom the national curriculum was designed' (Peter Imray, EQUALS Informal Curriculum, 2021).

Pupils are encouraged to express choices, build relationships and take part in daily routines. The focus is on developing independence and active engagement with their peers and the wider community.

Pupils within the Explorers Curriculum Pathway at Chadsgrove will follow aspects of the EQUALS Informal Curriculum, which is designed so that pupils can:

- be allowed (and indeed, be positively encouraged) to be comfortable with activities and states of being that are important to them, as part of the process of being given opportunities to discover other activities and states of being that may become important to them
- be free to like who and what they wish and be encouraged to learn how to express such preferences positively
- be free to reject experiences and people not liked and encouraged to learn how to express such preferences positively
- be positively encouraged to take total control of their own behaviour so that self-regulation (rather than being regulated by others) becomes a major part of their learning
- be given constant opportunities to communicate positively and to have both voice and agency (that is, be always listened to with preferences always acted upon) within the confines of a safe and secure environment. There may be occasional times when voice and agency are denied, but these will only be in exceptional circumstances when the safety of the learner or those around the learner is in question
- know that the curriculum and the pedagogy behind the curriculum has each individual learner at its centre. Each pupil must be secure within the concept that if problems arise, it is the curriculum that has to change, not the learner

Play is a fundamental and essential part of learning for pupils at all stages of development and is therefore a core component of the Explorers curriculum. Through play, learners explore the world, develop relationships, practise communication and social skills, and build understanding in a safe, meaningful and motivating way. For pupils on this pathway, development often progresses more gradually, and high-quality play remains a vital vehicle for learning well beyond early childhood. Play is not separate from learning or a reward after it; it is a powerful form of learning in itself, supporting cognitive flexibility, emotional understanding, physical development and independence. Given appropriate time and value, play enables learners to make sense of their experiences at a level and pace that is right for them, and continues to be relevant and age-appropriate throughout their school life.

Alongside curriculum learning, pupils work towards meaningful outcomes linked to their Education, Health and Care Plans and Individual Education Plans, including areas such as cognition and learning, communication and interaction, sensory and physical development and social and emotional development. Through this approach, we aim to support pupils to develop the skills, confidence and self-awareness needed to participate as fully as possible in life both within and beyond school.

Curriculum Implementation

The Explorers curriculum is delivered through a holistic and highly personalised approach, ensuring that learning is meaningful, engaging and responsive to each pupil's individual needs and interests. Teaching draws upon key areas of the EQUALS Informal Curriculum, including:

- My Sensory Play
- My Communication
- My Physical Well-Being
- My Independence
- My Outdoor School
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Learning is designed to be interconnected, with pupils developing skills across multiple areas through practical, experience-based activities rather than through isolated subjects. A thematic approach enables pupils to make meaningful connections within their learning and apply skills in a range of contexts.

The pathway follows a process-based approach to learning, where the pace, direction and progression of activities are guided by the pupil's engagement, responses and interests. Staff use responsive teaching approaches to build upon pupils' interactions, motivations and preferred ways of learning, ensuring that experiences remain accessible and purposeful.

Repetition and familiar routines are recognised as essential in supporting pupils to develop anticipation, confidence and understanding over time. Through repeated experiences, pupils are encouraged to participate more actively, communicate preferences and develop increasing independence. Variation and extension are introduced gradually and at a pace appropriate to each individual learner.

Intensive Interaction is embedded throughout the curriculum as a key approach to supporting communication, shared attention and relationship development. Staff use responsive and pupil-led interactions to encourage engagement, communication and social connection in meaningful and motivating ways.

Other learning opportunities can be selected according to pupils' individual needs and preferences, and planned on a rolling programme according to the following themes:

	<i>Summary of Themes 2025-2029 (4 Year Cycle)</i>					
	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Explorers 1	2025	Let's Explore the Senses	2026	Out and About	2026	On the Move
	2026	In the Dark	2027	Little Creatures	2027	Splash!
	2027	All Aboard!	2028	Let's Pretend	2028	In the Garden
	2028	Colours and Patterns	2029	My Favourite Things	2029	Let's Go Wild!
Explorers 2	2025	This is Me	2026	Amazing Animals	2026	Blue Planet
	2026	Festivals and Feast	2027	Wheels in Motion	2027	Grow it, Cook it, Eat it
	2027	Story Worlds	2028	Tastes of the World	2028	Seaside and Beyond
	2028	My Place, My Community	2029	Light, Colour, Action!	2029	Rhythm and Vibes

Religious Education

Pupils follow elements of the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus for RE, as outlined in the RE Long Term Plan, as well as participating in the whole school initiative 'Festival of the Month'.

PSHCE and RSE

As part of their holistic curriculum, pupils will access meaningful content from the PSHE Association Planning Framework for Pupils with SEND. See PSHCE Long Term Plan.

Suggested learning opportunities, to be linked to termly themes (adapted from the EQUALS Informal Curriculum):

My Sensory Play	My Communication	My Physical Well-Being	My Independence	My Outdoor School
• Solitary Play • Parallel Play • Shared Play • Turn Taking Play • Co-operative Play	• Imperative Communications • Declarative Communications • Formal Social Interaction with Familiar People • Non-verbal Behavioural Communications • Peer to Peer Communications • Alternative and Augmentative Communications	• Sensory Integration and Sensory Circuits • Rebound Therapy • Other Play Based Activities • Aquatics	• Dressing and undressing • Travel Training • Shopping • Cooking	• Learner Preparation • Starting Out • Orienteering • Shelter Building • Cooking Outdoors
Activities may include:				
Sand and Water Play, Play with Foodstuffs, Discovery Play, Toy Based Play, Kinaesthetic Play	Intensive Interaction, Sensory Stories, teaching the use of signing, photographs, symbols for receptive and expressive communication Intensive Interaction: at least one regular timetabled slot per week and throughout the curriculum Communication Cues: Objects of Reference, Touch Cues, Sound and Smell Cues, Symbols and Photographs, Signing, Routines	Physical Play, Bikes, Trikes and Scooters, Swimming	Routines: consistent routines, including arriving at and leaving school, lunchtimes, break times, assemblies, the start and end of the day, the start and end of lessons. Personal Care: pupils should be given the opportunity to develop their independent eating and drinking skills, snack times should be built into timetables and sufficient time given for practicing skills. Pupils should be encouraged to take as much control as possible during their personal care times, including developing skills of dressing and undressing, where appropriate	Inclusive Community Awareness: regular opportunities to access the outside world, including visiting their local community and accessing school facilities such as Forest School

Curriculum Impact

Individual targets are set for each pupil in the areas of Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Sensory and Physical development and Social and Emotional development. These targets are set in line with their EHCP Outcomes, as well as linking closely to the Areas of Recording set out in the EQUALS Informal Curriculum Assessment documentation.

Pupils' progress towards meeting their targets is recorded using the Engagement Model, which allows small steps of progress to be recorded in the areas of exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation. The Engagement Model is used as part of pupils' formative assessment; future lesson planning is guided by pupils' individual assessment records.

Videos and photographs are used to evidence this progress; these are saved as PowerPoint Presentations ('Learning Evidence Files').

The school's online SOLAR site is used to record pupils' progress each term, which evidences teachers' summative assessment. Data is collected which enables progress to be tracked and interventions to be put in place where necessary to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential.

As pupils progress through the school, the assessment process will allow a clearer picture of their future goals to emerge. This means that pupils can then be supported to work towards their future beyond school, with clearly defined aims which may include preparing pupils for the next stage in their lives and ensuring that they have the means to communicate preferences, engage in shared activities and manage transitions in adult life.

