

JUNE 2020



LIFE SKILLS POLICY

**HORIZONS EDUCATION TRUST
AMERICAN LANE, HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE. PE29 1TQ**

Life Skills

INTRODUCTION

Spring Common Academy aims to develop our students' life skills for living so each of them is able to lead a fulfilling and substantially independent life dependent on the individual needs. Life Skills provides an inclusive curriculum for all our students to access at appropriate levels. Our approach to teaching functional skills and life skills is at the core of our curriculum where our framework can be taught within the programmes of study and the schemes of work for all our students.

AIMS

The life skills curriculum is not seen as linear learning, it is a broad framework in which each child works. The pathways will be determined by each individual's;

- EHCP outcomes, IEP'S and Learning Pathways
- strengths and areas of development
- personal development needs as assessed by the parents, staff, therapists, professionals and where possible, the student

Life Skills is taught across the school in a range of teaching styles. It is taught as a separate subject in Key Stages 3, 4 and Post 16. Within Key Sage 4 and Post 16 the students have the opportunity to gain an accreditation through Asdan PSD and AQA Unit Awards. Our curriculum includes ample opportunity to develop life skills through the experience of daily activities both on and off site. There is a key focus to each topic or area taught and these are integrated across the day in addition to discrete sessions.

ENTITLEMENT

All pupils are entitled to a curriculum that prepares them for the daily demands of adult life. Due to the learning difficulties of our pupils this curriculum must include the teaching of the skills required to help towards independent living – daily living to reduce dependency on other adults.

INCLUSION

Life Skills provides an inclusive curriculum for all students to access at appropriate levels. Students with physical disabilities will have accessibility arrangements to enable suitable adaptations under the Equalities Act 2010.

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITIONS

General guidance on the approach to teaching and learning for children with ASC may be found within the school's Autism Handbook.

In Life Skills students with ASC demonstrate the following characteristic learning and thinking styles:

- * A relative strength in concrete thinking, for example, being able to relate to familiar or liked foods rather than food groups or a 'balanced' meal.
- * A preference for visually as opposed to orally presented materials, for example using actual items or photographs rather than descriptions. E.g. tooth brush, shower gel
- * A relatively slow speed of processing of orally presented materials leading to partial or incomplete understanding of a spoken instruction.
- * A strength in understanding visuospatial relationships, for example, ability to prepare vegetables to a particular specification consistently and ability to divide a mixture precisely between a given number of dishes.
- * Difficulties in abstract thinking, for example, giving an opinion
- * Difficulties in social cognition, for example, working with a partner when roles may not be specified,
- * Difficulties in communication. Many people with ASC are reluctant writers, some ASC adults describe struggling to understand why they were expected to write down something they already knew.
- * Unusual patterns of attention, for example, total absorption in a favourite activity and fleeting attention to something that is not preferred.
- * In Life skills children with ASC may often experience additional difficulties linked to sensory issues around food, a lack of awareness of danger and understanding the need to adhere to personal hygiene regulations.

Students with ASC are often helped by:

- * Visual sequences
- * Regular routines that are repeated in each session
- * Demonstrations and modelling
- * Gradual introduction to new foods to support desensitisation
- * Reduced verbal instructions using simplified language structures

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is seen as an integral part of teaching. It is a continuous process which takes into account the learning process and the way pupils approach and deal with tasks, as well as the final

product.

Progress will be monitored regularly and recorded each term using the AET Framework, Learning Journeys, Accreditation schemes and Scales where applicable or where possible in relation to Maths (especially SSM and Number) and English (especially Reading).

In conjunction with teacher assessment, pupils, where appropriate, will be involved with the self-assessment process.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The subject leader for Life Skills will monitor and support colleagues – the planning, teaching and learning of Life Skills. Observations of teaching will take place in accordance with the school's monitoring cycle.

HOME/SCHOOL LINKS

There is a strong emphasis on working in partnership with families to ensure the teaching of life skills span across the student's day including before and after school.

We value parents / carers' involvement in their child's learning. Teachers will communicate with home, where appropriate, to discuss specific areas of teaching e.g. taking into account the needs of pupils from multicultural and different backgrounds. Parents / carers may also be involved when pupils learn about and go shopping, e.g. they may be asked to provide a shopping list and payment for items that are needed at home.

IMPLEMENTATION

Life skills learning is divided into three broad areas of learning which cover

- Independence
- Learning
- Social Understanding

Life Skills 2. Learning towards Adulthood	
Organisation and learning skills	Building skills to become an independent learner or engage in learning independently in whatever method is appropriate to the individual.
Motivation and engagement	Building attention skills and engagement skills and developing resilience in persevering with tasks
Routines and expectations	Recognising and understanding there are different expectations across different settings.
Evaluating own learning	Building self-esteem and self-awareness

Life Skills 1. Independence towards Adulthood	
Independent Living	Getting ready for a supported independent life as an adult
Personal Safety	Recognising risky situations and how to manage them safely and how to get help
Road Safety & Travel	Recognising how to be safe in the community when travelling and getting ready for independent travel
Keeping Healthy	Recognising how to remain healthy through exercise, diet and well-being
Personal Care	Building independent functional skills
Leisure	Recognising different aspects of leisure and identifying ways and means to navigate and enjoy leisure activities
Work Skills	Getting ready for the world of work, working in the school shop and mini enterprises

Life Skills 3. Social Understanding towards Adulthood	
Coping with change	Building resilience to manage changes
Transitions	Building resilience to manage transitions
Special interests	Understanding own special interests and their significance on mental health and well-being
Play	Shaping learning
Thinking & problem solving	Developing memory to understanding to application to analyse, evaluate & create

Policy agreed on: _22 JULY 2020 _____

Signed on behalf of the Trustees _____

Committee: _____

Author: _____

Review date (optional): _____

Website Y/N