

Curriculum Overview at Sparklers Centre of Excellence

What's the purpose of our curriculum?

Our Sparklers curriculum is designed to provide an opportunity for the holistic development of our learners; academic, non-academic, functional and the personalised autism-related needs. Our curriculum is inclusive in intent, content and impact and allows for high quality and consistent irresistible invitations to learn. It also aims to develop our learners as confident and valuable members of the Ghanaian and global community.

Our curriculum provision is learner-centred and highly personalised, leading to a positive, exciting, meaningful, relevant and rich learning experience.

Our broad and balanced curriculum enables pupils and learners develop the functional knowledge and skills which are required for the development of their independence, life skills, sense of responsibility and preparation for adulthood. We acknowledge the fact that learners have different cognitive abilities and therefore differentiate our provision through pathways to help pupils and learners access learning at their own pace. The breadth and depth of learning on offer, makes learning a rich, positive and enjoyable experience for pupils and learners.

Our Sparklers curriculum also provides our learners with vital opportunities for the nourishment of their mental health, wellbeing and a growth mind-set.

Curriculum Coverage

The content of our curriculum is differentiated within the Sensory, Middle and Upper pathway systems which run through Key stages three, four and five; with pathways tailored to ensure access to learning at the appropriate developmental ages and cognitive abilities of pupils and learners. Curriculum coverage therefore ranges across Early Years Foundation, National Curriculum, Functional skills and the Autism Education Trust (AET) frameworks. Our Pre-school, Nursery and Primary provisions follow theme-based cycles while Secondary and College follow relevant accreditations and options which lead to a combination of nationally and internationally recognised award schemes.

Subject areas

Literacy and English – English is the foundation on which all aspects of learners learning are built and the medium whereby other curriculum areas are experienced. At Sparklers, we recognise the link between cognitive development, speech and language development and the acquisition of the four strands of English language – speaking, listening, reading and writing. The different aspects of communication (receptive, expressive, oral, graphic or gestural) are therefore developed on a daily basis through English lessons. English skills are also essential for increasing access to the National Curriculum, and for wider participation within society. English is taught in daily lessons and consolidated in other subject areas and through cross-curricular activities.

Numeracy and Maths – The Sparklers maths curriculum aims to be accessible for all abilities by covering topics from sensory skills, such as counting and moving objects, to GCSE skills such as algebra and probability.

Our main aim is to develop independent living skills, build confidence in all learners, to use thinking, reasoning and problem-solving skills fluently, while reducing anxiety in those who find mathematics challenging.

Sparklers supports all learners to gain recognition, no matter their level of mathematics, through qualifications ranging from B.E.C.E to professional qualifications using a range of resources.

Science – Science is one of the main vehicles through which the world around us is explored by our learners. It develops a spirit of enquiry by encouraging curiosity and reason. Science learning is based on vast amounts of knowledge about our world by using the skills of observation, prediction, investigation and interpretation. Here at Sparklers Centre of Excellence, these skills are developed largely through practical investigations, outdoor learning, community activities and accredited work. During the exploration of the four strands of science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics and How Science works), pupils and learners develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and the world around them.

Computer Science/Computing: The Sparklers computing curriculum aims to develop skills and knowledge of hardware, software and coding. We also aim to widen thinking on social, cultural and ethical issues that arise from the ever changing world of technology including safeguarding pupils and learners from the risks of the online world.

PSHE, SRE and SMSC – Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Sex and Relations Education (SRE) at Sparklers is fun, enriching and personalised to meet each learners' needs. It enables learners to manage their lives as independently as possible, achieve their academic potential, and leave school equipped with skills they will need throughout later life. Our curriculum is holistic, enabling the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. Our curriculum addresses six core themes namely:

- Self- Awareness
- Healthy Lifestyles
- The World I live in
- Relationships: Changing and Growing
- Self-Care, Support and Safety
- Relationships (Managing Feelings)

The knowledge, skills and attributes pupils acquire, are life skills, which enable them to keep healthy and safe and to prepare them for life and work in modern Britain.

PE and Outdoor Learning – The curriculum is designed to be enjoyable, but at the same time develop and stimulate the pupils and learners; physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. It aims to provide an equal opportunity of learning experiences, knowledge, skills and maturity in physical education and outdoor education. Pupils and learners will be encouraged to take on different roles and enjoy physical activity as performers, spectators and referees, umpires, officials and nature detectives. Expectations are high but realistic in terms of achievement, discipline, behaviour and resilience.

Creative Arts: The Sparklers Arts curriculum aims to be accessible for all abilities and offers a comprehensive range of rich experiences based on the Ghanaian culture; from Fine Art and Pottery, through to Drama, Music, Photography, Dance and Media. Learners can take a wide range of different qualifications and can explore their individual talents through 1:1 music and Arts lessons.

Humanities: Learners explore their culture and world around them through our carousel History, Geography and Religious Education lessons and experiences.

Other Areas: We are proud to use other options and vehicles such as Forest School, Eco school, John Muir Nature conservation Award, Work Related learning and enrichment weeks to bring our curriculum to life for our learners.