

Topaz Department Long Term Plan

5 Year Rolling Programme

Overview of department and assessment

Topaz is split into Topaz 1 (KS1), Topaz 2 (KS2) and Topaz 3 (KS3). The topaz curriculum is a thematic curriculum which offers broad and balanced learning opportunities to pupils who are on the autism spectrum. Learning through a thematic curriculum allows for the pupils in the topaz department to experience and enjoy various themes about the world in which they live. The themes which pupils in the topaz department will take part in are varied and allow for pupils to be immersed in a sensory, task specific and life skills focused learning environment. This supports them to work on specific areas of their SERTS/EHCP/IEP targets, communication, emotional regulation, and accepting support. The thematic curriculum is closely linked to the expectations of the Equals and national curriculum but adapted to support the specific needs of each individual in this department and the individual classes. Learning will be focused, structured and responsive to pupil's emotional, regulation and individual needs. Programmes of intervention will continuously be taking place, which supports a readiness to learn approach. Within lessons, the TEACCH structure will be implemented, aiding pupils to understand their environment and work as independently as possible. By focusing on the child, their skills, interests and needs, TEACCH provides a flexibility to teaching that allows the environment, sequencing and predictability to support individual tasks and understanding the concept of finished. All lessons are explicitly taught in Topaz and build on this thematic approach by incorporating national curriculum, equals and subject specific schemes of work to ensure a holistic approach to pupils' development.

Assessment for the Topaz department is recorded on our earwig system and follows the SCERTS model. SCERTS has been developed to support children with social communication needs. It is a framework of assessment and intervention that can be applied in any natural setting or context. The SCERTS framework is a strength-based framework that allows identifying and addressing the most significant challenges by building on existing strengths. Autistic children and young people are seen as complete individuals, and any support or intervention occurs by adapting how adults support and interact with the child or young person. SCERTS is an evidence-based and researched-informed comprehensive framework addressing social and emotional outcomes. Research to support this assessment framework has been completed by Wetherby et al. 2014, as well as in school-aged setting (Morgan et al, 2018). It has been decided by the senior leadership team, along with the department lead and external consulting professionals that SCERTS is the most appropriate assessment and framework for supporting pupils within the department to reach their full potential. All subjects are assessed against the SCERTS framework as it is an inclusive system of tracking. The LTP ensures curriculum mapping that fulfils curriculum requirements for each subject and although subjects aren't explicitly assessed; SCERTS targets are contextualised to each subject to ensure progress in both the SCERTS targets and the subject specific learning. Teachers and support staff know pupils explicitly well and regular book trawls, lesson observations, class/department meetings, SCERTS full baseline reassessments every 6 weeks ensure that pupils are being stretched and challenged both in their SCERTS targets but subject specific content as well.

Example of one classes 6-week SCERTS targets that form the basis of curriculum and assessment focus for half term, alongside theme and subject specific learning:

Social Partner Stage Topaz 1	
Target Section	Target
JA5.2	I can request social games and interactions when my partners consistently provide opportunities for this and consistently model behaviours associated with socialisation.
SR2.3	I can use behaviours modelled by others to self-soothe or focus myself when my partners consistently co-regulate with me and model behaviours.
LS1.1	I can know I am expected to start or end a work activity when my partners consistently cue me in and out of an activity.
LS2.1	I can request items I want to access when my partners ensure a total communication environment by having symbol systems throughout the classroom.

Curriculum Weightings (Weekly) and Explanation

Merstone School recognise that pupils will need retrieval and revision of key skills that are subject specific. Therefore, teachers will make individual judgements of pupils to ensure that they are developing mastery of key skills before being moved on, this may mean that pupils are working on key skills for a different year, rotation or class, but the structure of this provides appropriate guidance. Weightings of lessons, and focuses, across the department are as followed:

Sensory circuit x start of day (15 minutes)

A sensory circuit is a form of sensory integration intervention. It involves a sequence of physical activities that are designed to alert, organise and calm the child. The sensory circuit aims to facilitate sensory processing to help children regulate and organise their senses in order to achieve the optimum level of alertness required for effective learning. The circuit should be an active, physical and fun activity that children enjoy doing. Classes and the department are advised by OT and SALT around sensory circuits, as applicable. Consultation with these organisations and SISS have meant that sensory circuits in the department currently involve a high level of adult modelling of activities with the 'buy in' from pupils, as pupils currently tend to use this time as independent regulation from transport. Staff will continue to model expectations and participation in order to promote this 'buy in' and engagement over time, however the sensory circuit aims of ensuring pupils are ready to learn and regulated are seen from this independence use of the time.

Circle time x start of day (15 minutes)

Circle time provides spiritual, moral, social and emotional development of students by developing a caring ethos, encouraging democratic values, positive relationships and behaviour, self-discipline, self-esteem and motivation. Circle time is based around communication, choices around dinners and greetings, shared attention and engagement in activities with peers and staff.

PSHE x start of day (15 minutes)

Ensuring a PSHE focus that involves modelling discussions around feelings, co-regulation and aiding communication skills ensures daily focus of mental health and wellbeing. This will support students holistically and integrates core skills into the rest of the curriculum.

Attention Autism across the week

Attention Autism is an intervention approach to support the development of communication, social and cognitive skills in children with autism. The program uses a progression of visually based and highly motivating activities to teach children how to pay attention, imitate, and engage socially. The goal is to develop critical skills like joint attention, turn-taking, and shared focus which provide the foundation for language and social interaction. The department are advised by internal and external SALT support to ensure that Attention Autism sessions, that run across the week when appropriate for individual classes, follow the Attention Autism stages and are appropriate for each class.

Interventions and therapies across the week

Swimming: Each pupil will have access to our hydrotherapy pool weekly. Our swimming sessions provide physiotherapy support along with regulation support. These sessions will be ran by a trained poolside and include members of topaz department that pupils are familiar with.

Rebound therapy: Each pupil will have access to rebound therapy weekly. Rebound provides opportunities for movement, therapeutic exercise and recreation. This will be provided by a trained rebound therapist.

Other therapies within school such as music therapy or intervention groups will be delivered on an individual bases through our referral system:

Music therapy: Our external music therapist is trained to help children explore concerns or difficulties that can arise during their time at school. Music therapy involves the use of sounds and music to support and develop an individual's physical, developmental, social, mental and emotional wellbeing. Through the process of clinical music making and interaction, the therapist will endeavour to support pupils needs. The aims in music therapy are not musical; instead using music to promote and support development. Pupils may be referred by parents or staff to this service.

Interventions: Interventions across school include books beyond words, MHFA, ELSA, nurture, learning mentor and our intervention offer is currently expanding. This is based of yearly Boxall profiles and staff referrals to the senior mental health lead, also the topaz department lead. Pupils across the department will access interventions as appropriate to their current needs.

SALT: Speech and Language input is high within topaz department and our internal and external SALT team work with individual pupils and whole classes. This can be to work on individual SALT targets or to provide sessions such as bamboozle to aid whole class communication.

Superhero reading x end of the day (15 minutes)

The English scheme of work incorporates aspects of Merstone's reading spine and topaz department's recommended reads. Superhero reading is an initiative that is used across Merstone school. It includes ensuring that reading happens each day within classes and promotes pupils love of reading. Superhero reading can be whole class reading, individual reading, sensory stories/massage or interactive stories. They should be pupil led but also include diversity focuses from across school.

English

All aspects of topaz's English planning aims to: build reading for pleasure and information, develop fluency with reading, where applicable acquire vocabulary appropriate to pupils' developmental stage in order to support linguistic conventions to aid English development, introduce and develop written skills for pupils that focuses on letter formation and sentence structure, allow pupils to communicate their opinions and understanding on a range of English topics.

English- Sensory story x 2 (weekly 1 hour)

English is a core subject within topaz department. The English scheme of work incorporates aspects of Merstone's reading spine and Topaz department's recommended reads. Lessons taught through a sensory story are supported by research to show that pupils will be supported to develop listening, turn-

taking and communication skills. They provide a fun and creative way of learning that supports brain development and helping to transfer knowledge to pupil's long-term memory.

English- Communication x 2 (weekly 1 hour)

English is a core subject within topaz department. The English scheme of work incorporates aspects of Merstone's reading spine and topaz department's recommended reads. Communication is a key aspect of English and is a key focus within the SCERTS assessment and framework that will support pupil communication. Communication focused English sessions allows classes to work on key communication targets and incorporates cross-curricular learning such as PSHE, turn-taking, two-way engagement and interaction. SALT contribute to English communication sessions within the department.

English- Fine motor x 1 (week 1 hour)

English is a core subject within topaz department. Fine motor sessions within English help pupils to develop their grasp, control and independence with tasks such as writing, creating and exploring within sessions, expanding from English to other subjects.

Maths

All aspects of topaz's Maths planning aims to: help pupils develop mastery around the fundamentals of mathematics in order for pupils to engage in recall and retrieval in order to apply knowledge accurately, to have exposure to key mathematical concepts that build on the foundations of mathematical principles.

Maths- Number x 3 (1 hour)

Maths is a core subject within topaz department. Maths number allows pupils to develop their early understanding of number concepts such as place value, counting, recognising numbers and progressing to skills such as addition and subtraction. Mastery of concepts is key within mathematics to ensure there are no gaps within learning and the foundations of maths is understood.

Maths- Topic x 3 (1 hour)

Maths is a core subject within topaz department. Maths topic within topaz ensures that pupils have exposure to key concepts such as space and shape, length and height in a context that is relatable to pupils real lives. Mastery of concepts is key within mathematics to ensure there are no gaps within learning and the foundations of maths is understood.

Science x 1 (1 hour)

Through the thematic approach, pupils will have exposure of key concepts that link to biology, physics and chemistry, with a key focus on experiments and pupils being emersed in the learning that is taking place. Lessons will have content linked to the theme that term and will have a sensory focus for exploration

PE x 2 (1 hour)

Physical education in topaz supports pupils to participate in a broad range of physical activity for a sustained period of time, building competency in following instruction and participating in physical activity.

PSHE x 1 (1 hour)

PSHE sessions allow pupils to explore who they are. It allows taught co-regulation, leading to self-regulation and allows pupils to explore fundamental topics such as healthy bodies, hygiene and developing preferences. At the time of writing, the topaz department lead is also the PSHE lead for Merstone school and has ensured that the curriculum links with key associations and resource hubs linked to PSHE, including statutory documents such as RSE guidance.

RE X 1 (1 hour)

RE teachings are statutory and ensure the incorporation of British values through exploring religious teachings that mirror the society that we live in. Lessons will have content linked to the theme that term and will have a sensory focus for exploration of the subject. RE teachings also compliment the Solihull SARCE. Across school, pupils engage in a RE assembly with other departments once every 3 weeks.

The world around me (History/Geography) x 1 (1 hour)

The world around me links to historical and geographical learning. Through the thematic approach, pupils will have exposure of key concepts such as physical and human geography along with the past. Lessons will have content linked to the theme that term and will have a sensory focus for exploration of the subject.

Art/DT x 1 (1 hour)

Through the thematic approach, pupils will have exposure of key ART/DT concepts such as line, tone, structure and mechanics. Lessons will have content linked to the theme that term and will have a sensory focus for exploration of the subject.

of the subject.

Music/ICT x 1 (1 hour)

Through the thematic approach, pupils will have exposure to key musical concepts such as tempo and rhythm. Lessons will have context linked to the theme that term and will have a sensory focus for exploration of the subject.

ICT within topaz focuses on using technology that pupils will access in their day-to-day lives, such as kettles, microwaves, toasters. We want to empower pupils to become digitally literate so pupils also have access to ipads, computers and screens as part of exposure to ICT through other sessions. Having ICT accessible through a variety of means provides opportunities for our pupils to be active participants in a digital world. Lessons will focus on using technology safely and respectfully and recognising common uses of information technology beyond school.

SMILE session x 1 (2 hour)

SMILE sessions are ran across school at the same time for all departments, focusing on our SMILE ethos we have in school; social, move, interest, learn and engage. These 4 areas are based on the NHS 5 areas of wellbeing. The sessions provide a designated time to focus on pupils social, emotional and mental health, ensuring opportunities for socialisation across both topaz department and the wider school.

Topaz 3- ASDAN Transition challenge x1 (1 hour)

Topaz 3 complete the ASDAN transition challenge. This is a gateway for preparing them to progress into our diamonds department and participate in other ASDAN based qualifications. The challenge incorporates a host of life skills and the units all explicitly linked to another area of the curriculum; such as English, maths or ICT.

Topaz 1, 2 and 3 (5 year rolling plan)

Topaz 1 caters for key stage 1 pupils within the department. Topaz 2 caters for key stage 2 pupils within the department. Topaz 3 caters for key stage 3 pupils within the department. Themes compliment an EYFS and KS1 thematic approach to teaching and have been decided by senior leaders and the department lead, in collaboration with the teaching staff. Each theme has links to the national curriculum and Equals framework, making sure to compliment the SCERTS assessment and promote academic growth of pupils. Each theme is followed in individual lessons, as seen in the curriculum weighting and justification. Each theme will have rooting within one subject area, which is colour coded, but will then be explicitly seen throughout all teaching that half term. Topaz 1, 2 and 3 follow the same themes but sessions are explicitly different within each class and this is detailed further in the 5 year rolling programme that follows.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	All about me Friends/families	Shapes of the world	Who put the colours in the rainbow?	Insects	Witches and wizards	Our community
Year 2	Dreams and goals	Celebrations	On the farm	Everyday materials	Traditional tales	The Artic
Year 3	Being me in my world and celebrating differences	Food glorious food	Easter	Growth	Dragons	Under the sea
Year 4	Healthy me	Festivals	Starry Night	Forces and magnets	Pirates	Africa
Year 5	Relationships	Noisy Numbers	Bring the noise	Earth and Space	Superheroes	Jungle