



QUALITY, EQUALITY, OPPORTUNITY

# Curriculum in the Treetops Learning Community

Thetford Pathway (Pre-Formal)  
Curriculum Intent  
Statement

Exceeding  
Perceived  
Potential





The Thetford Pathway (Pre-Formal Curriculum Pathway) enables learners to interact and access the world around them through exploration and observation. This pathway lives out our values through:

**Quality** – We believe in providing high quality multisensory experiences for learners on this pathway. Utilising the creativity of staff and using high quality teaching resources to enhance the learning experience.

**Equality** – We believe that learners on this pathway should have the same access to a meaningful curriculum as their peers, but we utilise our creativity to bring it to life. We understand our learners need repetition and build this into the curriculum

**Opportunity** – We believe that learners should experience the world around them and have wide ranging learning experiences. We want learners on this pathway to interact with the world around them so they can begin to make connections with the world. We want them to exceed their perceived potential





## My TLC Curriculum

My Body

My Thinking

My Creativity

My Future

On the Thetford Pathway, learners will have the opportunity to develop their basic water skills, physical skills, self-help skills and find strategies to help manage their emotions. Learners will have the opportunity to access Yoga, Rebound Therapy and PE sessions as part of their curriculum to explore and understand their bodies. Learners will also develop their life skills to enable as much independence as possible E.g. hand washing, hygiene when eating and independent toileting

On the Thetford Pathway, learners will not study subject specific content, but will follow a planned curriculum which aims to develop life skills, social interaction and confidence. We aim for our learners to develop their personality and be proud of who they are.

Learners will have the opportunities to develop a love of stories, activities that enable learning through sensory stimuli and sessions that foster communication to develop the learners independence where possible. Communication will form a fundamental part of the Thetford Pathway Curriculum.

On the Thetford Pathway, learners will have the opportunity to develop their character and express themselves. My creativity will focus on the learners wellbeing. This will include communicating needs, wishes, feelings and emotions. We will expose learners to a variety of activities to identify their likes and dislikes. We will encourage problem solving skills and team work to produce finished pieces of work that learners can be proud of and celebrate.

On the Thetford Pathway we aim to prepare our learners for the best possible future through developing their independence and communication skills. We aim for our learners to exceed their perceived potential and expose them to key everyday language that would be transferred into the community and beyond. Lessons involve:

- Generalising skills across different environments
- Promoting independence and reducing dependence
- Exploring the world around them using different senses
- Routines and Schedules
- Using a range of tools, equipment and stimuli
- A mix of group and individual settings
- Opportunities for Community Visits



## A Thematic Curriculum Approach

In the Thetford pathway the curriculum is designed around thematic topics. A series of integrated lessons are created in line with the 4 domains within the “My TLC Curriculum” to create meaningful learning opportunities. The thematic cycle consists of termly theme topics, which are broken down into half termly curriculum topic themes. This offers a holistic and continuous provision that enables learners to make meaningful connections with the world around them through real life experiences.

Learners' interests must be considered when planning a thematic curriculum to ensure engagement with the content being taught, whilst further enabling them to draw on past experiences and prior knowledge. The curriculum topics have been chosen to support the termly theme, as well as engage learners of different ages. Three cycles have been created to ensure knowledge is continually built on and give breadth to the topics. Stories in Literacy have been chosen to link with the theme, as well as providing opportunities to intertwine Personal, Social and Emotional, Health (PSHE) development at every opportunity. This supports the preparation for the learners next steps.

## An Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Approach

The Thetford Pathway utilises the science of Applied Behaviour Analysis. The pathway focuses on how behaviours change, or are affected by the environment, which includes how learning takes place. Behaviour refers to the skills and actions needed to communicate, play and live. With the use of positive reinforcement to strengthen desired behaviours, learners are exposed to opportunities for growth.

ABA supports the use of proactive strategies to create an environment that learners feel safe and ready to learn. The principles of ABA can be applied through individualised or group interventions and generalised in the outside world. The importance of identifying the learner's individualised interests and motivational preferences are imperative to effective teaching.

The goal of the approach is to establish and develop socially important behaviours that support in improving the quality of life for our learners.



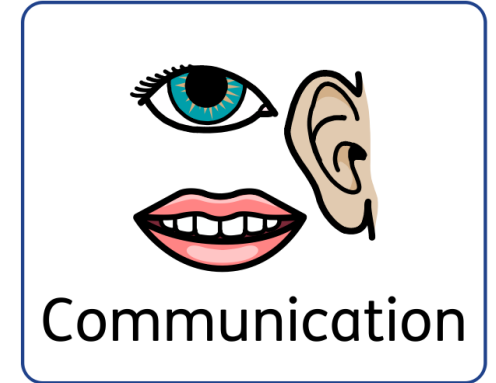
## Communication Approaches

Communication and language is integral to accessing the Thetford Pathway, and this is why it is embedded within the learning environment. We adopt a 'Total Communication' approach across the trust, meaning that we use a combination of methods tailored to the learner's needs. This can include speech, sign, gestures, pictures, body language and vocalisations. Learners also have opportunities to build communication skills through the use of AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication). This can include using 'objects of reference' (tangible items to represent activities, people or places), pictures and symbols and High Tech aids such as an electronic device or a tablet with apps.

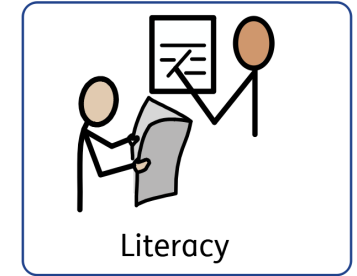
Treetops Learning Community has its own therapy team to ensure the best outcomes for our learners. To support with communication, the Speech and Language Therapists work within the school to deliver training and upskill staff. The team further deliver whole school and bespoke interventions. It is important that these interventions and strategies are then delivered by our staff to ensure targeted support is embedded throughout the day and delivered regularly for the learners, in order to make progress.

This pathway focuses on building foundation communication skills such as attention and listening, shared interaction, turn-taking, understanding of language and expressive language and communication skills. Many learners on the Thetford pathway respond well to sensory experiences. Approaches that we offer include multi-sensory environments (sensory rooms that can be used to stimulate communication through lights, sounds, textures and smells), delivering sensory story sessions, therapeutic story telling (using music to communicate a story) and Attention Autism (an irresistible invitation to learn through sensory activities).

It is also vital that communication is embedded within daily routines as these provide consistent and predictable opportunities for learners to engage. Visual timetables and 'Now and Next' charts are used to support with this. These tools can also help to improve communication about upcoming activities, and also reduce anxiety.



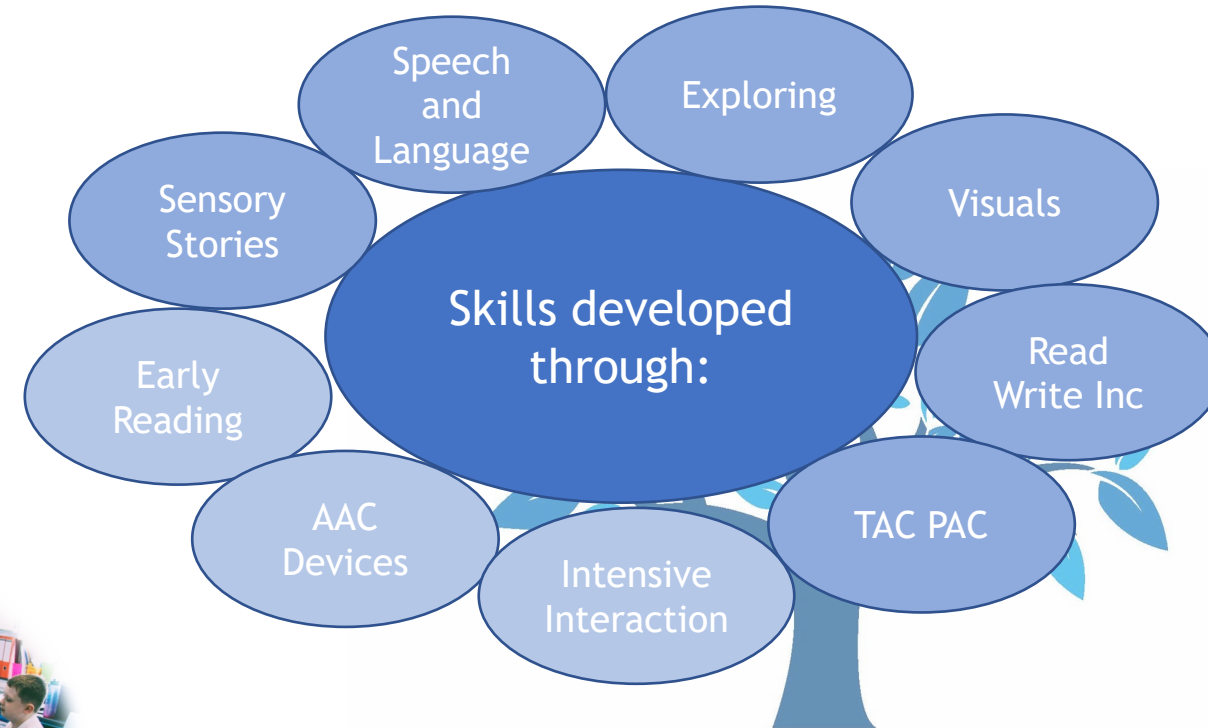


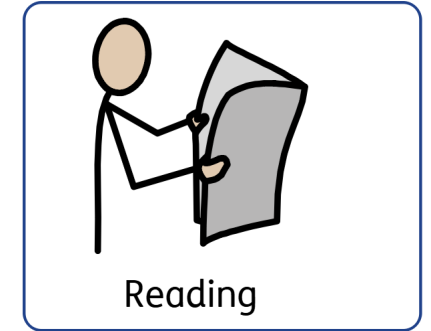


## My Thinking - Literacy

The development of a learner's language underpins all areas of learning. The interactions that learners have with staff and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial to their development.

Learners are exposed to early literacy skills that include matching, sequencing, visual aids, making choices, exploring patterns, experiencing letters and words, Tac Pac, role play and sensory stories to support and develop language. Teachers will continuously create opportunities to model and prompt language.





## My Thinking - Reading

### Love of Reading

Treetops Learning Community strive to create a love of reading for all learners in a way that is engaging to the individual. Through our immersive Literacy Curriculum, we aim to promote engagement and curiosity through a multi-sensory approach. Our approach focuses on developing early reading skills using senses through exploratory play and promoting making choices and showing preferences.

Sensory stories include creating opportunities for learners to experience the story in the natural environment. Sensory stories are repeated to enable our learners to anticipate upcoming events and shape their responses in known situations.

### Phonics

We use a multi-sensory approach to the teaching and exposure of letters and sounds using an individualised approach. Although we focus on early exposure, we continually support the development of learners' phonemic awareness and expand on this through appropriate materials.





Within the Treetops Learning Community, we want our learners to develop their functional Numeracy skills. Learner awareness will be developed through multi-sensory experiences, practical and interactive approaches linked to the thematic cycle. We focus on Pre-Skills such as: Matching, Visual Attendance, Pushing and Pulling, Prepositional Language, Puzzles etc.

Learning through play enhances the experiences with opportunities for tactile, kinaesthetic, visual and auditory exploration. Multi-sensory approaches to Numeracy aims to support our learners to make real life connections to the world which is diverse in numbers, colours, shapes and forms. Building numerical knowledge and skills enhances learners critical thinking, spatial awareness, problem solving and number sense to support in functional everyday concepts.

Learners on the Thetford Pathway will not be taught Numeracy discreetly but will have opportunities to explore Numeracy in set activities that are designed specifically for engagement in areas of: Number, patterns, sorting and Shape, Space and Measures. Learners are assessed through their PLGs on Evidence for Learning and through our Numeracy Curriculum Assessment Framework.

## Number

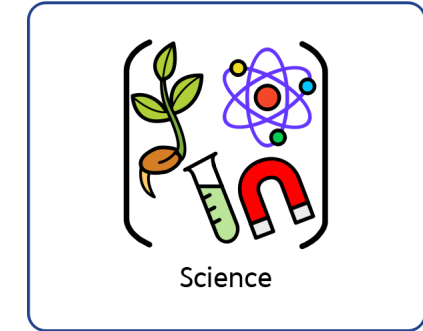
- Number Rhymes, Songs
- Number stories
- Number Games
- More and Less
- Counting
- Addition
- Subtraction
- Sharing

## Shape, Space and Measures

- Shapes
- Sizes: Big and Small
- Mass: Heavy and Light
- Capacity: Full and Empty
- Position and Direction
- Prepositional Language
- Shopping: Exchanging

## Patterns and Sorting

- Colours
- Objects
- 1:1 Correspondence
- Matching
- Sorting
- Comparing



## My Thinking - Science

In the Thetford Pathway, Science will be included within our thematic curriculum, as well as having an identified slot in the timetable using experiments that foster scientific enquiry. The approach to Science will involve multi-sensory experiences that are both experiential and practical with the aim of creating awe and wonder. The cause and effect nature of science promotes an engaging sensory experience, sparking curiosity and interests.

We aim to use Science as a vehicle to further enhance communication opportunities, problem solving and creativity. Through sensory Science, learners will develop an understanding of the range of Science skills in the areas of observing, experimenting, sorting and communicating.





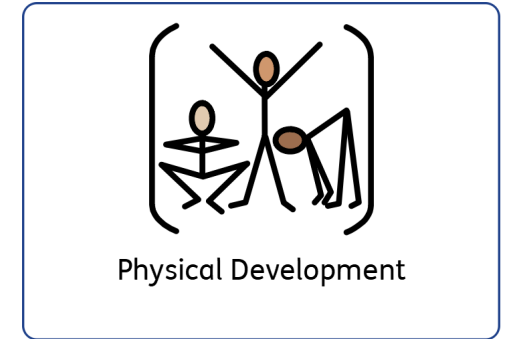
Outdoor Learning

We believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of their learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstance. On the Thetford Pathway, we want to enhance our learners connectiveness to the world around them, understanding that our learners significantly benefit from experiencing and exploring the natural world. Outdoor Learning is a broad term that includes: outdoor play, school grounds projects, environmental education, recreational and adventure activities, personal and social development, educational visits, forest school experiences and more.

There are no limits to the experiences and curiosities that the outdoor environment could stimulate and not only does outdoor learning stimulate all the human senses, but it also provides experiential opportunities that promotes 'real life learning'. All learners have access to outside spaces which are used regularly to consolidate and generalise key skills learnt in the classroom. Learners have scheduled opportunities for outdoor learning within the class timetables, including educational visits, accessing the local area, forest school experiences, school productions and as part of our Treetops Learning Experiences.







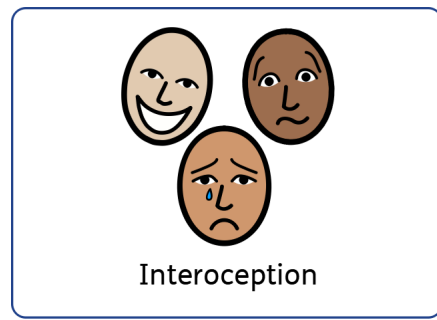
## My Body - Physical Development

Physical Development is extremely important for all our learners and we understand the impact that health and fitness has on the holistic wellbeing of our learners. In the Thetford Pathway, there are plentiful opportunities for learners to be active citizens and we encourage this through the use of engaging and fun physical activities. Learners will have access to discreet physical development lessons as well as being interwoven throughout the whole curriculum. We use specialist rooms such as Softplay and our multi-purpose sports hall as well as our outdoor climbing equipment to promote physical development. Learners on the Thetford Pathway also have access to Rebound Therapy, Outdoor Gym, Horse Riding and swimming.

### Swimming

We aim for learners on the Thetford Pathway to develop their water confidence so learners are comfortable in and around water. This includes: putting their face in the water, feet on the floor and floating with aids both on their front and back.





## My Body - Interoception Curriculum, Occupational Therapy

Interoception is a term for the processing of the internal sensations of our bodies, such as increased heartbeat and breathing, growling and twisting in the stomach, etc. These sensations form the foundation for all our emotions, whether they are homeostatic (e.g. hunger or thirst) or affective emotions (e.g. anger or anxiety). Interoception is therefore a pre-requisite skill for emotional self-management and self-regulation.

The research recognises that interoceptive awareness is reduced in people with Autism – many are delayed in developing toileting skills, and many seem to be unaware of thirst and hunger. Therefore, Interoception explains some of the difficulties our children have in regulating their emotional states and why they often change so suddenly.

At Treetops Learning Community, we work on Interoception Awareness in all our pathways under the guidance of Occupational Therapy.

The interoception awareness works on three steps: **Noticing the body signals, connecting them to the right emotion, and choosing an action** to address it.

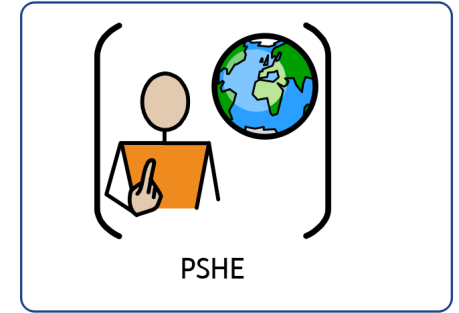
In the pre-formal pathway, the focus is on promoting the learner's awareness of the body signals and their general awareness of their body, nurturing the connection to the right emotions, with a high level of adult support to choose an action to regulate.







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## My Creativity - PSHE/Wellbeing

### Learning for Life (PSHE)

Learners on the Thetford Pathway have regular opportunities to engage in Learning for Life (PSHE) which is instilled into all we do. PSHE is a 'Golden Thread' that runs through the curriculum and links directly to other areas of learning. For example, our English curriculum is designed around books that foster learning in PSHE and taught discreetly to ensure our learners get the opportunities to grow into social, regulated and capable members of the community.

### Food Technology (Food Fun)

On the Thetford Pathway, learners can explore a range of foods to live a healthy and active lifestyle. Hands on learning experiences and food fun sessions provide learners with a multi-sensory approach that teaches how to use the senses to explore food.

Food fun involves capturing learners' curiosity through exploring and manipulating foods, giving them the opportunity to discover new foods which they may not have encountered previously and in some cases, support learners to overcome barriers associated with food. The sensory experience surrounding food fun also supports learners with language development, problem solving skills and turn taking. Although learners will be encouraged to prepare different foods, the primary focus is to promote food exploration, communication, independence, hygiene, food and using utensils safely.



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## My Creativity - Creative and Performing Arts

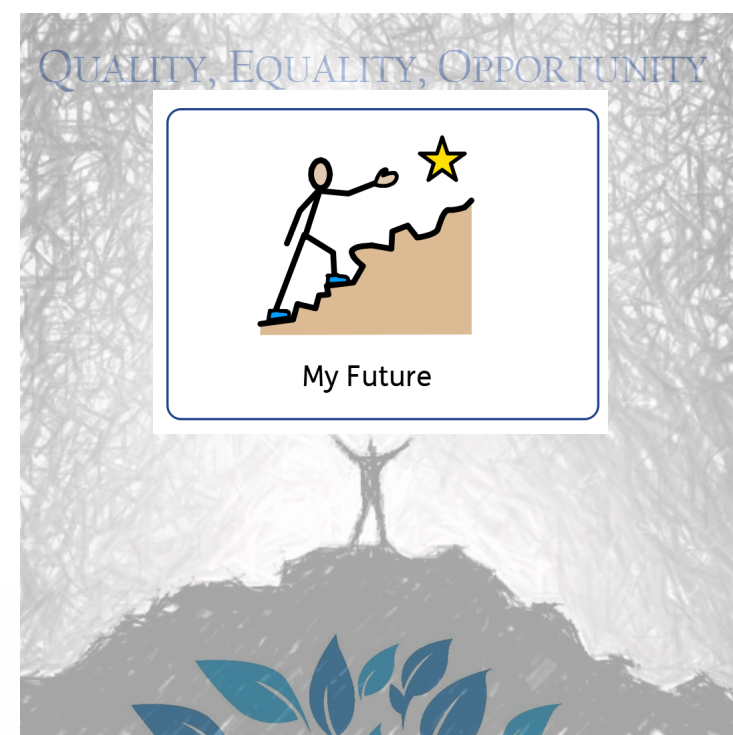
The Thetford curriculum is underpinned by the concept of exploration, and we understand the importance of using art to encourage creativity, exploration, and self-expression. We build on the learners' interests to capture their imagination and to support the motivation to communicate and be expressive. Art and Performing Arts have allocated discreet slots on the Thetford Pathway timetables. The focus is on the process and sensory experience that has supported the development of the finished piece of work.

We aim to provide an enriching experience which builds on natural creativity enabling visual, tactile and other sensory experiences unstructured ways to communicate ideas and feelings. By focusing on sensory art, learners are provided with activities that will naturally enable them to explore, investigate and be creative through artistic mediums such as painting (including fingers, hands and feet), printing, collaging, marbling and more.





## My Future



### Pathway Vision:

When learners on the Thetford Pathway leave Treetops Learning Community, we want them to have the skills to be able to initiate an interaction to request for things they need or want. We want the learners to be able to tolerate busy social environments and have a toolbox of strategies to manage their emotions if they become overwhelmed or anxious. We hope, where possible, that the learners are independent in their self-care needs and can complete everyday routines with reducing reliance on others. We strive to ensure that learners have many enjoyable experiences and broadened their interests so they can engage in activities beyond the school setting with support.

The overarching themes throughout the whole of the Thetford Pathway curriculum enables learners to develop the skills, knowledge, and behaviours to enjoy the best possible outcomes. Therefore, providing learners with the ability to be fully active members of society. Individualised learning opportunities prepare learners for a successful future and ever responsive to individual needs as linked to their learning goals within their EHCP's. We aim for learners to exceed their potential.