

## **Curriculum Statement for Motor Learning in Conductive Education**

### **Rationale**

Conductive Education is an alternative form of (re)habilitating motor disabled people with inborn or acquired damage to the central nervous system.

Developed in Hungary in the 1940's and 50's by Andras Peto, Conductive Education is a holistic integrated pedagogical/educational system which enables those with neurological motor impairments to learn to overcome the wide range of developmental challenges they face through development of the personality, creating the desire and ability to be active and solve one's problems.

Conductive Education programmes are considered complex for they involve all aspects of everyday life from feeding, through washing and play activity to schooling. Movement, speech, cognitive skills, social, psychological, emotional and other areas are simultaneously developed, not separately or consecutively.

Conductive Education attaches great significance to human dimensions and to interpersonal relationships and thus group working. It requires an active co-operation and awareness, and it ensures interest and motivation through the learning process with students given clear and consistent expectations and enabled to experience success.

At Ingfield Manor we believe that children and young people with neurological motor impairment can develop and learn in a similar way to their typically developing peers so long as appropriate learning conditions, direction and guidance are provided for them. Whilst the damage (lesion) in the brain cannot be cured, alternative neural pathways that utilise the brain's residual capacity can be laid down through a carefully planned, guided and active learning process taking advantage of the neuroplasticity of the brain.

Central to this learning process and embedded throughout each day at Ingfield is the teaching and application of motor learning.

### **Curriculum intent**

- *To encourage, engage and motivate learners*
- *To promote active and experiential learning*

At Ingfield we see the student as a whole person, we do not separate out their needs. Our aim is to enable the students to reach their potential; to become active learners who are able to make choices; people who are problem solvers who are ultimately to live their lives as independently as possible.

At Ingfield we believe that it is not the environment that has to be changed but that the motor disordered person (student) needs to adapt to the environment. This is an ongoing process and it is essential to experience success each step of the way.

The CE motor learning environment is critical to the success of skill development. We will structure the teaching environment to ensure that the individual feels success, sees new potential and learns the strategies and techniques in achieving active purposeful movement.

The environment will be supportive, designed to maintain interest, to motivate, to reinforce learning, to praise, to support and to challenge. Opportunities will be built in throughout the day for strategies and skills learnt during the motor learning task series to be applied in different contexts and environments for optimum benefit to the individual.

The CE motor learning task series programmes will satisfy all physical, intellectual and social requirements needed for developing an integrated, healthy personality. They will enable students to view themselves in a positive way through meaningful activity, teaching problem solving and application of learned skills to new situations.

## **Implementation**

- *Motor Learning (CE physical programmes through the day)*

Students are taught active, purposeful movement throughout the day at Ingfield. Central to this are the task series which teach skills that they cannot learn spontaneously e.g. lying task series, sitting task series, standing/walking task series.

All students start the day with a dedicated motor learning task series, which teaches them the strategy for movement and a set of skills to help them to solve their own problems. These sessions teach students how to build intentions to act, to be motivated, able to concentrate, transfer skills and how to actively participate in everything they do. They are algorithmic in nature; starting easy and getting more difficult in order to enable students to build upon their skills and provide a logically ordered sequence and structure to enable the individual to learn.

The task series are separated into the lying task series which is carried out on the plinth/floor, progressing to sitting tasks (either embedded within lessons or as a separate session) and standing/walking tasks.

Each different task series builds upon skills previously learnt and provides different situations in which the individual is able to practice and further develop their skills. However, none of the task series can be seen in isolation; they all combine together to form part of the daily routine.

### *Lying Task Series (Motor Learning on the plinth/floor)*

The main feature of this task series is that the students are able to practice and learn skills without fighting gravity. Lying down means that they are able to relax in the safest position, manage their tone accordingly and actively initiate movements. Lying on the plinth also enables students to have an awareness of space and provides a body image; this is gained through the body being in contact with the plinth and therefore the individuals getting sensory feedback on where their body is in space (proprioception).

Tasks relate to the basic movements required to change position in various forms: turning/rolling, bending/stretching/lifting/distancing of limbs, sitting up and lying down, opposition of

movements, combining movements of upper and lower limbs, disassociating movements and fine movements including grasp and release.

*Main Aims and Function of the Lying Task Series:*

- To prepare all types of activity performed in the daily routine
- To prepare functional ways of performing tasks
- To develop gross and fine motor skills and increase range of movement
- To relax movements and reduce spasticity
- To develop disassociation of movements including learning how to fix limbs in isolation and to eliminate over movements
- To develop head control
- To develop perception in time, space and direction
- To contribute to body image
- To help the development of speech and language through rhythmical intention

*Sitting Task Series (Hand Tasks/Foot Tasks)*

Sitting as a skill is taught during the lying programme and practised during the sitting programme. Sitting tasks prepare students for more complex tasks in standing and gives them the opportunity to develop their fine motor skills (hand tasks). The sitting task series assists balance and is an ideal position for teaching hand/foot movement.

This task series can be carried out at or away from the table (e.g. foot tasks in free sitting) and provides the opportunity for tasks to be immediately followed by application and activities, for example, NC lessons or lunch time: reaching for and grasping a pencil or sitting on a stool grasping a bar and feeding themselves.

The sitting task series builds on what is learnt in the lying task series e.g. students further experience weight bearing to some degree through their feet in sitting on a stool. This builds on bridging in supine in lying task series.

The sitting task series includes a whole range of movements: extension/flexion, abduction/adduction, pronation/supination/rotation, closure/opening of fingers.

*Main Aims and Function of the Sitting Task Series:*

- To build on and further develop skills from the lying task series
- To develop active/independent sitting
- To develop sensory-motor skills inc. hand-eye and hand-leg co-ordination
- To develop eye control and promote conscious self-control
- To develop perception, body awareness
- To improve posture and head control
- To learn to use lower limbs to stabilise position
- To increase range of movement in upper limbs
- To develop ability to grasp and release
- To teach differentiated finger movements
- To improve precision of movements

- To teach hand co-ordination

### *Standing/Walking Task Series*

The main features of the standing/walking task series are that it is very much based around weight bearing, gaining balance and stability, and maintaining posture and stance. The preparation for standing/walking is in all programmes (lying tasks, hand tasks, foot tasks).

The standing/walking task series is the most advanced task series which applies the learning from lying and sitting. In the standing/walking task series the individual is learning how to move, taking gravity into consideration. Spatial and visual perception within the standing/walking task series is different as there are now many more distractions that the individual could face; this enables them to learn to concentrate on their task and play/chat later.

### *Main Aims of Standing/Walking Task Series:*

- To learn to move against the pull of gravity
- To assist in development of body image
- To develop perception in time, space, direction
- To develop posture
- To develop balance
- To teach transference of weight
- To teach application of tasks learnt in other programmes

### *Application of Standing/Walking tasks:*

- between tasks series – moving around
- during academic lessons
- entering/leaving group/building
- during games/social activities
- moving around the group
- at home/other environments

Essential for the implementation of the curriculum, are the staff teams. At Ingfield we work in transdisciplinary teams with a blending of professional roles and expertise. We have a number of different professionals working together: conductors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, teachers, as well as excellent team members. Each person has an invaluable role in the team and can significantly contribute to a student's learning. Instead of a student coming to school just for his/her education and going outside of school to visit various discrete professionals, at Ingfield we work together across the different disciplines as a team, with the student at the centre. We meet to discuss individual's aims, we talk about all the students at team meetings, reviewing their progress, discussing what we can change/improve, with each person sharing their views. All staff are involved in all aspects of the students learning. Teamwork is essential.

The group approach is an essential part of Conductive Education and that is true within the motor learning task series. The students are not just learning from the adults, they are learning from their peers. They are learning to appreciate the successes of others and to praise them, as

well as being encouraged and motivated by the praise they receive from others. They are learning by observing those who are better at a particular task than they are and will hopefully be motivated to achieve more for themselves. They are learning about their own personality, their likes and dislikes, in contrast with those around them. They are learning that everyone is different and to appreciate the needs of others. They are learning to project their voice so that their friends can hear them. Often students with SEN can live in a very adult orientated world and it is important that we provide an environment where they learn to socialise and interact with each other- to play and have fun like any child or young person does.

### **Impact of the Motor Learning Curriculum**

The impact of the curriculum is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it is fun, engaging, maintains interest, motivates, reinforces learning, supports and challenges the students as well as delivering the high-quality physical, intellectual and social teaching to develop an integrated, healthy personality.

Ongoing observations through the programmes by the leader and facilitators will ensure students are engaged with their tasks and developing their skills. It is important that we give the students specific feedback and praise- they need to know when they have achieved a good position so that they know what that feels like.

As students get older they become more aware of the impact of their disability and what they cannot do, we therefore need to make sure they appreciate what they can do and recognise their achievements. So, the goals we have for them for each motor learning task series need to be challenging but there needs to be plenty of opportunities for them to be successful to build their self-esteem and are motivated to keep going.

The main aim of motor learning is that the students will transfer the skills they learn in the motor learning task series to the rest of the day. For example, when they need to stretch their arms to reach for their pen, they can remember how they stretched to reach a stick in the task series - they have learnt what it feels like to have a straight elbow and what they need to do to achieve a strong grasp and they can then apply that learning in order to work out how they are going to pick up and hold their pen.

In addition to the informal, formative evaluation, the impact of our motor learning teaching will be monitored termly through motor learning observations, feedback from individual termly targets, annual review targets, evidence photos and progression in skills for learning. All the students have education, health and care plans (EHCPs) which state their long term outcomes. From these, annual targets are set at the EHCP review meeting, in consultation with the student, their family and other stakeholders and these are broken down into termly objectives, which support the student work towards their annual goals. The termly objectives are shared with parents at the start of each term and their evaluations, based on regular observations and assessments, are shared at the end of the term. Over the course of the year, these show the journey the student has made towards their annual targets, which are discussed at the review meeting.