



**SOVEREIGN**  
Bringing imagination into play

## Case study

Springfield Community Special School | Leek | Staffordshire



*"This has been a highly successful project. Sovereign has provided us with an excellent service, thus enabling us to provide our children with a wonderful new, exciting and stimulating play environment."*

**Ruth Zimmerman, Headteacher**



## Springfield Community Special School Leek | Staffordshire

Springfield Community Special School is a co-educational primary school that caters for pupils with special educational needs, aged 3-11. Situated in pleasant and extensive grounds on the outskirts of Leek, the school has recently undergone a major development to its outdoor facilities for pupils.

### The issue:

Although the school has access to a large outdoor area and learning resources, it lacked permanent outdoor facilities. Staff selected play equipment and set it out each morning and at the end of each day cleared it away.

### The resolution:

Teachers decided it was time to develop the school's external learning environment for the children. A plan was devised to incorporate motivating and enjoyable activities and equipment for all pupils to use. The environment had to be visually enhanced and it was essential that the new facilities would promote play in a safe and secure environment, giving each child the opportunity to take risks safely.

### The process:

The project was extremely specialised and in order to meet the special requirements of the school's pupils, class teacher, Lisa Price, undertook 12 months of research. Lisa paid particular attention to play equipment companies and their ability to adapt equipment or produce bespoke alternatives. Sovereign ticked all the boxes and was chosen to carry out the project.

In order to ensure maximum learning opportunities for pupils, each area of the school was planned out accordingly. The plans evolved through discussions with the children, staff and governors. Once the design was approved, Darran Hine, Sovereign's Sales Director, met with the school to discuss the project, the school's 'wish list' and any concerns or issues that could occur.

Sovereign worked with Springfield to overcome each of the potential problem areas, redesigning and altering product specifications where necessary, until the final design was approved.

### The installation:

#### Area 1: Activity zone

Comprising whiteboard and chalkboard wall games for children to articulate their creativity, the first step was to install a selection of play and activity panels. A Cleveland bench has also been installed, along with a nursery picnic table, without seats, to accommodate wheelchair access.

#### Area 2: Play tower

Providing children with challenging but manageable play activities, a Hot Potato tower has been installed. This unit comes complete with a slide and manageable log climber for the most adventurous of children, and is a favourite for promoting social skills, eye-hand and eye-foot co-ordination. This area was finished with Sovereign's visually appealing Pencilvania fencing and gate to secure the area and prevent injury to others.

#### Area 3: Musical play

Ideal for allowing children to express their creative flair, a musical play area has been installed, complete with musical bat pipes, rattle wheel, xylophone and bongo drums. This equipment supports music education and provides interactive activities to promote creative, rhythmic, aural, concentration and motor skills.

#### Area 4: Activity zone

A sandpit and water play equipment have been installed underneath an existing canopy. Perfect for promoting physical, cognitive and social-emotional growth, sand and water play is ideal for increasing children's sensory experiences. Activity panels and wall games have also been installed to provide children with a fun and interactive way to broaden their logic, hand-eye co-ordination, and problem-solving skills.

#### Area 5: Bespoke trail

A challenging and manageable bespoke low-level trail has been installed to develop confidence and enhance co-ordination skills. Components include a stepping stone, clatter bridge and balance weaver and have been installed into a 65sqm 20mm May Green wet pour safer surfacing for maximum safety.

#### Area 6: Seating spot

Cleveland benches and nursery picnic tables have been positioned underneath Springfield's existing canopies to provide sheltered seating arrangements. The area is complete with an assortment of activity panels to give little ones easy access to wall games and tile-slide activities.

#### Area 7: Discovery area

Finally, a minibeast box and wormery have been installed. Complete with viewing panel and sliding lids, children will be able to search for, watch and learn about some of nature's wonders.



### The benefits:

- The children have shown a huge amount of enthusiasm for their new learning environment. They request to go out to the different playgrounds and the Student Council requested that the outdoor learning environment be a free-flow area.
- The children show through their behaviour that they feel safe and secure and enjoy making their own choices about risk when playing on the climbing frame.

**T: 01702 291129**

[www.sovereignplayequipment.co.uk](http://www.sovereignplayequipment.co.uk)

Sovereign Design Play Systems Limited, 40 Towerfield Road  
Shoeburyness, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, SS3 9QT

