



The Meadows PMLD Curriculum Policy

Aims & Objectives:

Most curriculum frameworks, even those focusing on early development or designed for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, assume that children will follow a 'normal' pattern of development. There are few frameworks that have considered the complex needs of learners with profound and multiple learning difficulties and the interaction between the sensory impairments, motor disabilities and medical problems that many of them experience. In addition, many linear or hierarchical assessments will be unable to detect the very subtle changes in behaviour shown by these learners, regardless of how many 'small steps' are provided. In real life, children's development and learning is not compartmentalised. A fit-for-purpose PMLD curriculum must take a more holistic view of learners and focus on how they learn.

Pupils with PMLD are at very early stages of development and it is more appropriate for them to access a more focused curriculum starting at their individual needs rather than a curriculum written for typically developing children.

Definition:

There are a number of definitions of PMLD but the official DfE definition of children with PMLD is: "Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties have complex learning needs. In addition to very severe learning difficulties, pupils have other significant difficulties, such as physical disabilities, sensory impairment or a severe medical condition. Pupils require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and also for their personal care. They are likely to need sensory stimulation and a curriculum broken down into very small steps. Some pupils communicate by gesture, eye pointing or symbols, others by very simple language. Their attainments are likely to remain in the Q Scales.

Department of Education (2005) later adopted by Department for Education (2012) Within this group we include all pupils with profound learning disabilities, whether or not they are wheelchair users or have sensory impairments. It is possible that there are other pupils who do not have their 'primary need' defined as PMLD and will require teaching and learning environments and approaches suited to pupils with PMLD (Hobbs, 2012). It does not include pupils who are wheelchair users who have severe or moderate learning difficulties. We consider our PMLD pupils to be operating within a pre-formal phase of learning.

Objectives:

To provide a whole picture of the learner and the learning process;

- Focus on the learner's abilities, not disabilities;
- Provide a process-based assessment and look at the relationship between the learner and the learner's environment;

- Enable the learner, family and allied services to participate in the assessment process;
- Ensure that staff undertaking the assessment have a high regard for relationships and support interactive approaches;
- Ensure that the main purpose of assessing a learner is to enable them to make the best possible progress in developing skills, knowledge and understanding;
- Empower staff and parents/carers, value all sources of knowledge about the learner, and share and feedback information in a clear and helpful format (this allows accurate judgements and promotes consistency between staff and others assessing the learner);
- Support teachers and others to seek evidence of understanding and help them to focus on priorities for future learning; and
- Identify and support emerging skills, knowledge and understanding

Curriculum Planning and Organisation:

Planned Progression

We passionately believe that the progress of our pupils should **not** be left to chance. Although progress may look different for our PMLD pupils there are still some key considerations as our students progress through the chronological key stages of the education system.

1. Introducing new skills, knowledge, understanding and increasing the breadth of curriculum content
2. Creating opportunities to consolidate, maintain and generalise skills/concepts
3. Providing greater opportunities for creativity/experiential learning and experience of a wider range of teaching/learning styles and methods
4. Increasing learner participation in the learning process by including opportunities for control over the environment
5. Extending learning contexts to include more age appropriate situations, wider range of people and environments
6. Providing opportunities to practise skills and apply knowledge in practical situations with increasing independence, in preparation for adulthood

Assessment:

Our PMLD assessment is multi-faceted such is the complexity of PMLD progress. In addition, all pupils have an agreed Provision Map that is compiled in collaboration with pupils, parents and teachers, as well as other allied professionals where appropriate. This is a fluid plan that changes as the needs of the pupils change. It is reviewed and amended on at least 3 occasions every year.

In line with the recent Rochford review (2016), our school has sought to explore assessment tools which can accurately reflect the engagement progression which is essential for our students to prepare for adulthood. School has adopted a method of assessment which incorporates the stages of learning (Q Scales) advocated by The Northern Ireland PMLD curriculum together with the use of Evidence for learning. Q scales have been extended to accommodate students who have made progress beyond the Northern Ireland PMLD curriculum.

That is :

- Q1. Experience
- Q2. Respond
- Q3. Engage
- Q4. Actively Participate
- Q5. Consolidate
- Q6 Independence
- Q7 Generalisation

These are used in conjunction with the engagement model guidance (Dfe, 2020)

Monitoring and Review:

Monitoring takes the form of:

- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Data analysis
- Discussions with the class team
- Moderation of work

Policy produced: April 2022	Policy agreed: April 2022
Signed: Darryl Davies	Chair of Teaching, Learning & Outcomes Committee
Signed: Chris Best	Headteacher
Review date: April 2024	(2 years)



Company Number: 09461655

Registered Office: Loxley Hall School, Stafford Road Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, ST14 8RS