

Name of Policy: Curriculum Policy PMLD



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Woodlands Meed Equalities Statement is available on the website:
www.woodlandsmeed.co.uk under policies.

Woodlands Meed's Overall Aims:

Building Unique Futures Together

This includes:

- Providing a safe, secure environment
- Recognising the individual needs and strengths of each child
- Planning and facilitating unique, enjoyable opportunities to maximise learning and potential
- Working with parents/carers and outside agencies to achieve the best for each child
- Ensuring opportunities from the wider community are utilised.

What do we mean by Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities?

- A severe physical and a severe learning disability
- May have severe visual and hearing impairment
- Likely to have epilepsy – interrupts the flow of learning
- Likely to have additional medical needs that affect development and learning
- Likely to have poor sleep patterns
- Likely to have periods of poor fluctuating health
- Pre-verbal in terms of intent
- Physically reliant on others for the majority of their needs

PMLD Ethos

- Everything we do should start with the needs of the learner, a thorough knowledge of them and a determination to meet their learning needs in the most meaningful way.
- We believe that a learner's needs should be viewed holistically, so all areas of need are considered and valued, their social and emotional well-being is vital and requires them to be considered within the context of their family/home setting as well as how they present within the school context.
- We will respect and work positively and respectfully with the combination of the learner's chronological age and developmental stage.
- We will respect our pupils/young people as learners and give time for them to respond, react and initiate.
- We believe learners need to feel safe, secure in all environments, and seek to establish a sense of security for all learners.
- We believe that all adults who work, study or visit our school need to respect the learners as individuals, understand and seek to get to know them as a person, care for and develop them as an individual and be responsive to their needs.
- We believe that every learner should be; **Celebrated, Appreciated, Respected** and **Encouraged**.

Managing Complex Needs

All of our learners have some level of physical disability and associated learning, sensory or other medical related difficulties resulting in complex needs. This means we need to have a range of procedures in place to ensure learners' individual needs are identified and met to guarantee maximum access to the curriculum and learning opportunities.

Individual Health Care Plans will be written by the class team in conjunction with the parents and Specialist School Nurses which will highlight the child's needs, the training and the ongoing support required to ensure a safe and full school life in a holistic way. In addition to medical needs, plans will also take into account any known long term pain issues and muscular-skeletal discomforts (alongside a treatment plan) and may require input from specialised therapists (e.g. SALT, Physiotherapy or OT).

The Specialist School Nurses will ensure that appropriate and individualised training for specific health needs are provided to class staff; ensuring adequate and safe provision throughout the year. The support required from the nursing team will vary from learner to learner and may change at any time (and may include direct pupil support when required).

Teaching and Learning

Organisation of the school day

Through extensive research, we know that learners with PMLD learn best through routine; we therefore provide a daily plan with consistent routines within a responsive environment. We also know that the needs of the learners, as assessed through the engagement model, can be achieved through daily routines. The timetables used by PMLD classes reflect the routine, individual and group requirements of the class. The timetable format shows how some learning opportunities, provided through routines, appear throughout the school day. [Appendix 1](#) shows an example of a PMLD daily class timetable.

The remainder of the timetable reflects the planning expectations and activities set within the **Curriculum section of this policy**.

Preparation for Learning

The significant physical needs, of all our learners, mean that positioning and the use of orthotics is a significant part of their day. The choice of position that meets physical need and allows for learning opportunities is fundamental to effective teaching and learning. For some learner's the choice of position may not be functional to acting on the environment but fundamental to their physical well-being. At such times, a learner may appear to be unoccupied but may actually, physically be highly challenged to sustain the position.

Schemes of Work are written and personalised to cover all aspects of a learner's day. All of these have been cross-referenced to the learners EHCP targets and Engagement model to ensure they provide learning opportunities across all curriculum areas.

Support Staff

People are our most valuable resource in school and are still the most responsive resource we have available.

At times support staff will be required to work with an individual or small groups following teacher designed activities and daily routines that provide learning opportunities. All staff are required to contribute to learner records, recording both

general observations and against targets set by the teacher. These are regularly read and monitored by the class teacher.

Support staff attend regular class meetings where they are actively encouraged to be involved in contributing to discussions on all aspects of the learner's learning and sharing their views on how effectively the class is achieving its aims. Some of the more experienced staff may also be acting as a key person to one or more learners and maintain aspects of the learner's Pre-Formal curriculum assessment and be actively involved in target setting based on these assessments.

Multi-Disciplinary Working

Woodlands Meed works very effectively with on site and visiting professionals, for example- in Annual Review meetings, medical meetings/clinics, social care meetings or any emergency meetings; the school hosts Multi-disciplinary meetings for each learner as required.

Primarily, therapy and education staff attend these meetings to agree the priorities for learners and plan actions required to ensure all needs are met and by whom. The use of the Pre-Formal curriculum as a shared assessment tool supports and enhances multi- disciplinary working as shared target setting can be achieved and priorities clearly identified.

Inclusion

Woodlands Meed school promotes inclusion and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that children/young people are not discriminated against or treated less favourably than other learners. The school will work in partnership with the family and other agencies in the best interests of the learner and to maximise educational opportunity.

Learners with PMLD at Woodlands Meed will be included in all school activities, for example, Christmas plays, assemblies and sports days and every effort will be made for the pupils with PMLD to mix with other students at appropriate times within the school day/week.

PMLD Learners can access all specialist rooms, outside areas and classrooms within Woodlands Meed. This also includes being able to access the minibuses to have trips off site and accessible equipment. PMLD students will be given the opportunity to have their thoughts and ideas listened to by staff and the student council concerning future ideas and plans at Woodlands Meed.

The PMLD Curriculum

AIMS

1. To provide an effective learning environment where, through assessment, a detailed and shared understanding of a learner's needs is known by all the professionals from an education and therapy setting.
2. To provide a consistently responsive environment within which every learner's ability to communicate is respected, responded to and developed.
3. To provide throughout the day a range of consistent routines and meaningful opportunities that allow learners to develop intentionality and exercise control of their learning environment.

The PMLD curriculum at woodlands Meed school makes use of the **Pre-Formal Curriculum** with support of the **Engagement Model** outlined by the DfE. Please see the attached appendix to view the link between the two frameworks and areas of learning. ([Appendix 2 and 3](#))

The Pre-Formal Curriculum

The Pre-Formal curriculum at Woodlands Meed School is created for pupils who require sensory-based provision. The main goal of our Pre-Formal curriculum is to help each of our students become independent, capable individuals who can act in and on their world. Each of our pupils has a voice, and with the right encouragement, they can learn to use it to take charge of their surroundings and the people in them. For each pupil, everything we do is planned and thoroughly thought out across all curricular areas to ensure that it adds to their sense of self and gives them the chance to grow in their awareness of how they can change the world around them.

We make it a point to listen to, acknowledge, and correctly respond to each pupil's activities throughout every learning opportunity. These regular responses will help our students grow in their understanding of how they can influence their world. We want to give our pupils the opportunity to actively engage in their learning across the board.

The Pre-Formal Curriculum has five curriculum domains:

- My Communication
- My Cognition
- My Body
- My Care and Independence
- Me and My Community

- My creativity

Our pupils

Pre-Formal pupils are incredibly curious and excited about the world and all it has to offer. We are determined to give our students the opportunity to develop these qualities throughout all of their learning because they are tenacious, persistent, communicative, and social. We encourage active participation from all of our pupils in all facets of school life.

Each pupil has unique talents and needs, thus individualised learning opportunities and teaching strategies are necessary for them to advance in our programme.

The Pre-Formal Curriculum supports our Pupils to become:

1. Engaged learners: Pupils who are motivated to participate in learning and are suitably empowered to access what is being taught
2. Communicators: Pupils who are actively communicating with others and/or their immediate environment using whatever form of communication is appropriate for them.
3. Problem Solvers: Learners who are sufficiently resilient in their attention to experiment and identify a solution to a new learning challenge
4. Unique Learners: Learners who have very distinctive, idiosyncratic learning styles that are in direct relation to their individual profiles of learning difficulties, sensory impairments and disabilities
5. Immersed Learners: Learners who are demonstrably responsive to the specialist, personalised provision we provide with respect to their individual circumstances
6. 21st Century Learners: Learners who can use modern technology to help overcome some of their difficulties and enhance their potential for learning
7. Acquirers of knowledge: Learners who can use literacy skills to access information from their environment and express and apply their new-found knowledge

The Engagement Model

The 5 areas of engagement

The model breaks engagement into 5 areas, which are interrelated. They are not hierarchical, and there is no expectation that pupils need to demonstrate progress in all 5 areas. In summary, the 5 areas are:

- **Exploration** – whether a pupil can build on their initial reaction to a new stimulus or activity (e.g. they display more than an involuntary or startled reaction, and may notice it or reach out to it)
- **Realisation** – how a pupil interacts with a new stimulus or activity or discovers a new aspect of familiar ones (e.g. they display behaviours that show they want more control)
- **Anticipation** – how a pupil predicts, expects or associates a stimulus or activity with an event (e.g. they anticipate a familiar activity is about to start or finish by interpreting cues or prompts)
- **Persistence** – whether a pupil can sustain their attention in a stimulus or activity for long enough that they can actively try to find out more and interact with it
- **Initiation** – how much a pupil investigates a stimulus or activity in order to bring about a desired outcome, acting spontaneously and independently without waiting for direction

Data collection and progress analysis

Data collection and progress analysis is purely for the schools and teachers own purpose to identify the learners level of engagement. This information will not be sent to the DFE as outlined in 'The Engagement Model guidance manual'.

Data collection will consist of looking at the observation slips written out by a learner's key worker, photographs and video recording evidence. As well as dates of when targets were worked on and achieved, this will also link in with Next Steps. An engagement profile builder is completed (See appendix 4) that will indicate how the learner responded to lessons/activities that are a part of a routine or repeated lesson/activity and the learner should realise the expected outcome form the activity presented. The second part of the profile builder is that of an unknown activity that the learner has had no engagement with. The learners' reactions are recorded. This information will formulate an engagement profile, which is updated termly as to identify any changes in the way the learners reacts to activities. (Appendix 5)

Planning

Planning is carried out in three stages:

1. Long Term Planning

- Identifies the main themes to be covered
- Offers a termly overview of topics
- Ensures continuity and progression

To view the Long Term Plan, please see [Appendix 6](#)

2. Medium Term Planning

The topics that are outlined in the Medium Term Plan will run over a 2 week cycle to follow the 5 areas of engagement outlined in the 'Engagement Model'. The first week will focus more on exploration, persistence and initiation. The 2nd week will focus on all 5 areas but specific focus on realisation and anticipation.

However, learners work on their own objectives, targets and programmes throughout the term. Generally, learners participate in the sessions that are most relevant and of most benefit to them in addition to their individual programmes. This is further developed by adding successful activities/ resources/interactions etc. to personalised curriculums to further develop over time.

To view an example of the Medium Term Plan, please see [Appendix 7](#).

3. [Short Term Planning](#)

It must be noted that the PMLD classes may adjust their planned activity according to the timetable dependant on the learning disposition and readiness of the learners; therefore, the use of a flexible and fluid Timetable, which is not bound by time, is necessary. The main aim of Short Term Planning is to aid the teacher and support staff in carrying out planned activity sessions and daily routines on a day-to-day basis.

To view an example of the daily timetable, please see [Appendix 1](#)

Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment

The Assessment framework that Woodland Meed makes use of for assessing learners with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties is that of observational assessment. This is central to understanding what the pupil knows and what they can do, looking at the learner holistically. Improving learners' ability to use their senses as well as their motor skills and communication. Assessments are conducted regularly throughout the academic year so that they are able to demonstrate whether the learner is able to sustain the new skills, concepts and knowledge taught within the school day.

Recording progress should recognise the learners' individual needs and show their success, however gradual it might be. When evidence of the learners' responses, achievement, maintenance or regression is observed, photographs, Audio or a recorded image can be used to document this.

Reporting to parents should not include a numerical scale or provide a quantitative score. A written qualitative narrative should be composed to report to parents on the outcome of the year's progress, maintenance or regression. This report should be accessible with language that effectively describes the achievements and evidence of progress of the learner in a positive, inclusive and jargon-free manner.

Communication

Communication is the ability to express thoughts, feelings and ideas and to have these understood by another person is vital to an individual's social and emotional well-being and to the development of their personality.

At Woodlands Meed we aim to provide a consistent responsive environment (classroom) where every learner's ability to communicate is respected, responded to and developed, with the intention of supporting their progress from pre-intentional to formal communication. To ensure a consistent communication environment is present in the classroom, time and opportunity for communication exchanges needs to take place. This is done throughout the school day while engaging in daily routines and structured activities with the learners'.

Within the PMLD setting, alternative communication strategies are considered. Objects of reference, photographs, symbols and Makaton signing are used where developmentally appropriate. All approaches of communication are agreed and used consistently and meaningfully with learners'. A communication profile is established and the form of or combination of communication methods and strategies are agreed on to aid in the learners communication development.