



PROFOUND AND MULTIPLE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES POLICY

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PMLD Policy – Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose	3
3. Aims	3
4. Wider School Aims/Ethos	3
5. Consultation	3
6. Sources and References	4
7. Roles and Responsibilities	4
8. Planning	4
9. Teaching	5
10. Organisation	5
11. Training/CPD	6
12. Equal Opportunities	6
13. Health and Safety	6
14. Including Parent Carers	6
15. Resources	6
16. Assessment and Moderation	6
17. Monitoring and Evaluation	7
18. Linked Policies	8
19. Assessment and Review	8

1. Introduction

1.1. 'Sensory beings experience the world in a primarily sensory way. Being a Sensory Being affects how you understand the world; experiences can exist in isolation, without association to objects or meaning. Sensory Beings have an exceptional ability to occupy the present moment. Sensory Beings and Linguistic Beings understand experience differently. It is important that we do not assume they see things as we see them, nor should we assume that their understanding of the experiences we share is the same as ours. As we share experiences together, it is important that we do not assume our way of being is their way of being, or impose our way of being onto them. Both ways of being are equally as valid.'

-- Joanna Grace, 'Sensory-being for Sensory Beings', 2018

1.2. It is important to define what is understood by the term 'Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties' (PMLD). The Mencap/PMLD Network's Fact Sheet describes individuals with PMLD as having more than one disability, which will include a profound learning disability, difficulty communicating, and possibly sensory, physical, health or mental health needs. Consequently, they will need a high level of support with most aspects of daily life.

1.3. Some people with PMLD may use a small range of communication techniques such as symbols and signs, but many will rely on other people to interpret their reactions, facial expressions, body language and behaviour. They will often find it difficult to understand the communication of others. Therefore, it is important that those who teach, and those who support, individuals with PMLD find the most effective ways of communicating with each person.

2. Purpose

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline the nature of the education delivered to pupils with PMLD at Chadsgrove School.

3. Aim(s)

3.1. This policy has the following aims:

- To ensure that those who teach pupils with PMLD will encourage them to progress through our school, following their curriculum pathway, in order to enable them to be active citizens within the school community and beyond
- That pupils with PMLD will be enabled to confidently and consistently express their preferences and exert autonomy in a variety of contexts, whatever their future life beyond school may be
- That the wellbeing of all pupils with PMLD will be maintained so that each pupil is supported to be as comfortable and healthy as possible at all times

4. Wider school aims/ethos

4.1. This policy supports our school aim of 'offering a broad, balanced, engaging and enriching curriculum, which is highly differentiated and personalised in order to meet each child's individual needs'. (Chadsgrove School Self Evaluation Form)

5. Consultation

5.1. This policy was written by Melanie Bullivant, Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader, in consultation with:

- Angela Macvie, Deputy Head Teacher and SLT link for the Pre-Formal Curriculum

- Teaching staff within the Pre-Formal Curriculum Department

6. Sources and References

6.1. The following sources and references have been used to support the development of this policy:

- Barrs Court Curriculum
- EQUALS Pre-Formal Curriculum
- Mencap/PMLD Network Fact Sheet, available at: <https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016-11/PMLD%20factsheet%20about%20profound%20and%20multiple%20learning%20disabilities.pdf> (Accessed August 2019)
- Department for Education (2015) Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years. London: DfE.
- Routes for Learning Assessment Booklet (Department for Education, 2006)
- Mapping and Assessing Pupil Progress, Mike Sissons, EQUALS, 2018

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1. The following groups of people are involved in implementing this policy:

- **Governors** are responsible for reviewing this policy triennially, and meeting with the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader where necessary to discuss subject strengths and areas for development
- The **Head Teacher** is responsible for monitoring the work of the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader, through the Performance Management cycle
- The **Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader** is responsible for providing Long Term Planning, monitoring Medium Term Planning and assessment within the department and implementing both internal and external moderation of the subject, as well as ensuring adequate resources are available to support teaching and learning
- **Class Teachers** are responsible for producing Medium Term Planning and implementing this in their classes, as well as assessing pupils' progress
- **Teaching Assistants** are responsible for supporting pupils' learning and well-being, by following the guidance of class teachers and carrying out personal care

8. Planning

8.1. The curriculum for pupils with PMLD, which is delivered through the Long Term Plan, builds towards pupils being able to confidently and consistently express preferences and to be able to exert autonomy in a variety of situations. The Long Term Plan is delivered through the three focus areas of the Barrs Court Curriculum, namely:

- Early Thinking Skills
- Early Communication Skills
- Early Motor Skills

8.2. Medium Term Plans are produced termly, which detail the intended learning in each of these three focus areas (Curriculum Intent) as well as suggested activities from the EQUALS Pre-

Formal Curriculum (Curriculum Implementation). In addition, meaningful targets (Impact) are set for pupils in the areas of:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Sensory and Physical development
- Social and Emotional development

These are linked closely to pupils' outcomes as stated in their Education, Health and Care Plans and their Individual Education Plan.

9. Teaching

- 9.1. Pupils with PMLD are provided with learning opportunities in each of the seven strands of the EQUALS Pre-Formal Curriculum:
- Sensory
 - Physical
 - Creative
 - Self-Determination and Independence
 - Cognition and Challenge
 - Well-Being
- 9.2. The curriculum as a whole is designed to be inter-connected; strands are not separate from each other but learning occurs holistically, within a thematic approach to teaching.
- 9.3. Repetition is recognised as being an essential part of education for pupils with PMLD so that, with familiarisation, pupils can begin to anticipate, participate, communicate preferences and make requests.
- 9.4. Intensive Interaction, an element of communication, is seen to be essential to the curriculum.
- 9.5. Other learning opportunities can be selected according to pupils' individual needs and preferences, and planned according to the themes outlined in the Long Term Plan.
- 9.6. In addition to the curriculum, pupils with PMLD have access to a range of interventions to support their physical and mental wellbeing, including regular opportunities for changes of position throughout the school day, appropriate support with personal care and the chance to access a variety of sensory experiences - for example, pupils have the opportunity to access facilities such as the Multi-Sensory Room and therapies including Hydrotherapy, Music Therapy and Rebound Therapy.
- 9.7. Pupils experience a 'total communication environment', which includes aspects of using on-body signing, sensory cues and objects of reference to support pupils' receptive language
- 9.8. Pupils are encouraged to engage with a range of assistive technology, including the use of 'switches' and Eye Gaze computers in order to develop their understanding of 'cause and effect'.

10. Organisation

- 10.1. Pupils access a range of opportunities in each of the areas of learning, for example:
- Cognition and Learning: Sensory exploration/messy play, sensory cookery/messy food play, technology/ICT, music, art

- Communication and Interaction: Intensive Interaction, communication cues, sensory stories, Touch and Communication (TACPAC)
- Sensory and Physical Development: positional changes, massage, Sherbourne Developmental Movement, movement to music
- Social and Emotional Development: Inclusive community awareness, routines, personal care

10.2. As well as being taught in their own classrooms, pupils also have lessons in other areas of the school such as the Music Room, Art Room, Food Technology Room, Multi-Sensory Room, Hydrotherapy Pool and Rebound Therapy Room. Some of their lessons will be taught by their class teachers and some by specialist teachers in these areas.

10.3. Some pupils also access further support from specialised staff, such as in Music Therapy or personalised sessions for pupils with Multi-Sensory Impairments.

11. Training/ CPD

11.1. Internal and external training opportunities are offered to all staff, in order to develop their expertise in teaching and supporting pupils with PMLD. The impact of this is that pupils experience a rich diverse curriculum resulting in improved outcomes. The Senior Leadership Team ensure good practice is disseminated and staff skills enhanced.

11.2. The Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader has completed a Masters Degree in Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties at the University of Birmingham.

12. Equal Opportunities

12.1. Chadsgrove School seeks to create a supportive environment which is free from discrimination and which encourages all pupils and staff to participate fully in the life of the school:

- The school curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to all pupils
- Varied teaching styles are incorporated to suit pupils' learning styles
- All pupils have equal opportunity and choice of extra-curricular activities
- All pupils are offered a range and choice of appropriate leisure activities

13. Health and Safety

13.1. In addition to the general health and safety practices of the school, the following policies may be particularly pertinent with regard to the health and safety of pupils with PMLD:

- Epilepsy (Policy Number 77)
- Medicines and Medical Interventions (Policy Number 91)
- Manual Handling (Policy Number 49)

14. Including Parent Carers

14.1. Parent carers are encouraged to maintain regular communication with class teachers regarding their child's progress and well-being. This includes:

- Daily written comments in each pupils' Home/School Book
- Termly Parents' Evenings
- Annual Reviews and Reports
- Invitations to ongoing events such as Awards Assemblies, Family discos, Coffee Mornings, Family craft sessions etc.

15. Resources:

- 15.1. Pupils have access to a range of resources, including:
- Whole school resources such as the Hydrotherapy Pool, Multi-Sensory Room, Music Room, Rebound Room and Food Technology Room
 - Sensory resources, located in the Pre-Formal Curriculum department classrooms, which particularly include visual, auditory and tactile resources
 - Expendable resources which are purchased on a termly basis, to support particular lessons such as Food Technology or Messy Food Play

16. Assessment and Moderation

16.1. Summative Assessment

Pupils' progress is assessed using Routes for Learning, which is an assessment tool specifically designed for pupils with PMLD. Each pupil follows a range of pathways through the 'Routemap'. Individual targets are set for each pupil in the areas of Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Sensory and Physical development and Social and Emotional development. These targets are set in line with their EHCP Outcomes, as well as linking closely to the numbered steps on their current Band of Routes for Learning, where appropriate.

16.2. Formative Assessment

Pupils' progress towards meeting their targets is recorded using the Engagement Model assessment tool, which allows small steps of progress to be recorded against the five areas of Engagement, Exploration, Realisation, Anticipation, Persistence and Initiation. The Engagement Model is used as part of pupils' formative assessment; future lesson planning is guided by pupils' individual Engagement Model assessment records.

- 16.3. Videos and photographs are used to demonstrate progress; these are uploaded onto the school's online SOLAR site, which evidences their summative assessment each term. Data is collected which enables progress to be tracked and interventions to be put in place where necessary to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential.

- 16.4. As pupils progress through the school, the assessment process allows a clearer picture of their future goals to emerge. This means that pupils can then be supported to work towards an appropriate pathway for their future beyond school, with clearly defined aims. These may include preparing pupils for the next stage in their education, such as by following an accredited course, or supporting pupils in taking their place in community life, ensuring that they have the means to communicate their needs and preferences to those around them.

17. Monitoring and evaluation

- 17.1. Class teachers' Medium Term Plans are monitored on a termly basis by the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader. Evidence of this monitoring is recorded and stored in the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader's File.
- 17.2. Work scrutiny is carried out on a termly basis by the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader. Evidence of this is recorded and stored in the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader's File

- 17.3. Internal moderation is carried out on a termly basis, during Pre-Formal Curriculum Department meetings, to which all teachers in the department are invited, as well as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 17.4. External moderation takes place on a termly basis, during meetings of the West Midlands PMLD Forum, which are attended by the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader.
- 17.5. Evidence of moderation is stored in the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader's File

18. Linked policies

- 18.1. The PMLD Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies
 - The Use of Positive Touch (Policy Number 99)
 - Multi-Sensory Impairment (Policy Number 37)
 - Intimate Care (Policy Number 74)
 - The Use of Physical Restraint (Policy Number 71)

19. Monitoring and Review

- 19.1. This Policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Pre-Formal Curriculum Leader and Governing Body.