



OPPORTUNITY WITH DIGNITY

DEVELOPMENTAL CURRICULUM

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1. Developmental Curriculum

1.1. Introduction

At Breakspeare School we have implemented and designed our own Curriculum Framework to ensure that all our students can access a curriculum that is inclusive, accessible and relevant for them.

The students in the school with PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) are a significant cohort in the school that have unique abilities and ways of learning. The official DfE definition of pupils 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 be within Engagement Model levels throughout school.(which at Breakspeare is Pathway 1).

Our ambition is that all of our students will reach their full potential in school but we recognise that students with PMLD need a more focussed curriculum starting at their individual needs rather than a curriculum written for typically developing children. In order for this to happen the school community is aware of the need to :-

- Set suitable learning challenges
- Respond to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

1.2 Description of Learners

Students who are working at the earliest levels of physical and cognitive development have specific teaching and learning needs. It is important to focus on developing skills and capabilities rather than 'working towards' subject related targets.

Students who are learning at this level experience **significant barriers** to their learning. Their learning can be more challenging due to their:

- sensory abilities
- physical abilities
- communication
- behaviour
- significant health care
- use of an alternative method of communication

Therefore they need:

- a significant adaptation to the curriculum
- a high level of specific multi – agency support
- a modification of the physical environment
- high level of special resources
- a high level of individual care and support

Within this group we include all pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities, whether or not they are wheelchair users or have sensory impairments. It is also likely that there are other pupils who

do not have their 'primary need' defined as PMLD but will require teaching and learning environments suited to pupils with PMLD in order to meet their needs.

1.3 Curriculum Requirements

It is important to capture the students learning and enable them to move forward. We need to find new ways to get in to their world and bring the world to them. We need to engage the students so that they want to learn and this necessitates a creative and flexible approach. The individualised curriculum is constructed from an in depth understanding of each and every student.

We consider our PMLD students to be operating within a pre-formal phase of learning which at Breakspeare School is classed as pathway 1, where pupils are operating at Engagement Model level. The principles guiding our approach to the PMLD curriculum align with the 'Routes for Learning' frameworks.

At Breakspeare School the teaching and learning of these complex needs students relies on the following essential features:

1. Students learn through interaction.
 - Our curriculum is based on the understanding of what the individual student needs. Aspects of comfort, security, stimulation and motivation have to be accounted for in all learning contexts to make interaction possible.
 - The importance of building a good relationship is paramount to the students learning experience. Through a variety of interactions students can learn to trust the adults and the adults can learn about the students' abilities, interests and preferred communication approaches as well as their feelings.
2. All subjects happen at the same time.
 - The curriculum structure consists of four main areas; Cognition and learning, Communication, Physical and Sensory, and Self Help and Independence. These areas are interrelated and dependent on each other.
 - The students' curriculum is not restricted by subject boundaries but flows organically as the student engages in their learning throughout the school day e.g they express a choice (communication) about how to move (physical) in order to find a hidden object (cognition and learning).
3. The curriculum promotes independence.
 - It is imperative that students are able to explore the physical world as independently as possible. There are many times in the school day when physical, gestural and verbal support needs to be given to the student in different activities. This practice relates to their targets and our assessment system of moving the students along a continuum from dependence to independence.
 - Developing independence in this setting looks very different for each student. In more structured curriculum time it may be operating a switch to control their environment and this might be through pressing with their hand or using their eyes to pinpoint an object on a screen. At other times, as learning happens all through the school day, a student may assist in rolling in a personal care routine or transfer into a wheelchair from a walker or class chair.

At Breakspeare School the Developmental curriculum is divided into four **Programmes of Learning**:

1. Communication
2. Cognition and Learning
3. Physical and Sensory
4. Self Help and Independence
5. Social and Emotional

2. Programmes of Learning

2.1 Communication

The ability to communicate is central to learning and life. At Breakspeare School we strive to find ways for every student to be understood. Therefore the development of communication and language is central to the work we do at school. This is reflected in the school's Total Communication Policy. We use a variety of communication methods including verbal communication, Makaton signing, touch cues, objects of reference, photographs, and symbols.

We work closely with speech and language therapists and specialist teachers when planning students' learning programme for developing their communication and language skills. Student's individual therapy targets are integrated in this programme of learning and monitored regularly.

Our students are at the pre-intentional, and anticipatory stages with some moving towards becoming intentional communicators, according to the ELKLAN stages of communication. This means staff learn to be skilled and sensitive when interpreting students' ways of communicating and respond appropriately. Consequently, vocalisations, eye contact, gestures, shivers, a cough or a laugh should be responded to, in order to reinforce any communication attempts that the student is making. This helps the learner realise that performing a particular action causes an effect and interaction from those working with them.

As well as working within their class groups, students have opportunities to develop their socio-emotional skills with peers from other settings. These experiences enable them to develop positive and meaningful relationships with others. We want to open the world to them so visits to the local community provide our students with an opportunity to use and develop their skills in a variety of social settings such as visiting the local shops or visiting the café for a drink.

At Breakspeare School our Total Communication Policy means that we take every opportunity to support students' individual communication styles.

This programme is broken into:

1. Responding
2. Interacting
3. Communicating

The opportunities suggested are roughly in developmental order but should not be treated as steps to be mastered one after another.

1. Responding (to social events and activities, e.g. everyday activities, care routines, sensory stimuli)

Students should have opportunities to:

- Respond when basic needs and desires are met (e.g.: stop crying when discomfort is removed or relax when gently rocked)
- Respond to stimuli presented in on/off pattern (burst-pause) (e.g.: still, widen eyes, increased movement).
- Respond to nearby person (e.g.: still to sound of voice or search with eyes or increased movement)
- Respond to consistent and predictable social routines (offered in the same order in the same environment on a daily basis) (e.g.: by relaxing, stilling, widening eyes or mouth, increased movement)
- Respond to their own names (e.g.: stilling, turning, increased movement)
- Respond with consistent positive and negative reactions to a range of social activities (eg: smiling or turning head away)

- Respond to people talking around them (e.g.: by looking at the speaker or making sounds)



- Respond in different ways to familiar and unfamiliar adults
- Respond to familiar sounds and words, showing understanding of their meaning

2. Interacting (with others)

Students should have opportunities to:

- Interact with familiar people (e.g.: smiling, turning, giving eye contact)
- Show they can work co-actively with familiar people (e.g. use spoon or fork with adult assistance)
- Show anticipation of familiar social activities and events (e.g.: start to rock for 'row the boat' or lean forward to be lifted up)
- Show they have had enough of a social interaction (e.g.: by turning away or looking down)
- Show preference for particular people, objects and activities
- Respond with interest in the actions of others close by (e.g.: make eye contact, turn towards, reaching out, vocalising)
- Engage actively in familiar social activities and events (e.g.: join in action songs or hold up arms for coat)
- Share joint attention in an object or activity (e.g.: looks at object and at person or looks where person is pointing if object close by)
- Actively seek out attention from others (e.g.: vocalise or reach out)
- Actively play with another person (e.g.: hand person a toy or pull at the person's hands)
- Lead an interaction game (e.g.: rolling a ball backwards and forwards)

3. Communicating

Students should have opportunities to:

- Show preferences for objects, activities and events (e.g.: responding with interest to those they like and turning away from those they don't)
- Indicate 'more' and 'no more' consistently through their responses to objects, activities and events (e.g.: looking expectant or smiling to indicate 'more' and pushing away or moving away to indicate 'no more')
- Communicate a choice of object or activity (e.g.: by making sounds, gestures or pointing,)
- Attract someone's attention (e.g.: by making sounds or gestures)
- Make simple meaningful gestures (e.g.: pointing or using simple signs, photographs)
- Use their voices to join in a 'conversation' (e.g.: babbling)
- Attempt simple words and phrases in imitation.
- Use a few words appropriately.

Stages of Development

1. Gaze

- Early stage of communication for students that are pre-verbal.
- Skills in this area give students opportunities to make choices and communicate using their eyes.

2. Imitation

- Where communication begins for students,
- They will have opportunities to copy sounds, gestures made by adults
- Use these sounds and gestures in a meaningful way.

3. Turn taking/social interaction

- Early communication skills for students to develop through interactions with adults.
- Students to begin to be proactive in their responses.

4. Social organisation/social skills in relation to language

- Next step on from turn taking.
- To learn more about interactions with others.
- To develop skills in initiating and controlling communication.

5. Receptive language

- Allows students to understand what is happening during their day.
- To understand the words/language/objects that adults use with them.

6. Expressive language

- Allows students to express needs and feelings.
- Allow students to make choices.
- Using objects, signs, symbols/photographs through to verbal language

2.2 Cognition and Learning

Students at a very early stage of development need support to explore and interpret their environment and our role is to help them independently access and experience the world around them and make sense of it. When developing the students' cognitive skills it is paramount that they have a wide range of opportunities to improve their sensory skills. Developing their awareness and ability to respond to different stimuli that they receive through sight, hearing, touch, taste, balance and movement (vestibular) or muscle and joint sense (proprioception) we enhance their further understanding and experience of the world.

Students may need to encounter events many times before they become familiar to them. This will include constant repetition of skills and concepts and support students to generalise learning in new situations. We need to be aware that our learners' responses vary widely from day to day in different contexts.

As children begin to develop the understanding that they can have an effect on their world, they can be offered a much wider range of activities and objects to explore. They are still likely to require plenty of repetition but may be able to cope with different examples of a similar activity. For example a child who is learning how to take objects out of containers could learn from removing a range of different objects from a range of different containers from the top, the side or the bottom.

When cause and effect has been established, early problem solving can begin. For example favourite objects can be hidden or containers can have fasteners to be opened or two steps may need to be completed to find the object. Staff will need to provide a wide variety of activities that give opportunities for students to think and learn.

The programme of learning is divided into 4 areas:

1. Awareness,
2. Exploration,
3. Control and Early Problem Solving
4. Sequencing

1. Awareness (of stimuli - people, objects and activities - All functional senses should be used)

Students should have opportunities to:

- Recognise an obvious change happening very close to self (e.g. stills when hand is massaged or when sees a bright flashing light)
- Recognise when a stimulus starts and stops (e.g. stills, moves limbs,)
- Accept stimuli for an increasing amount of time (e.g. will hold objects or allow feet to be in the foot spa)
- Respond to a widening range of stimuli (e.g. turns to a range of flashing objects)
- Anticipate stimuli that occur over and over again (e.g. smile before being pushed on the swing after several pushes)
- Respond to a range of stimuli that are quieter/ less obvious (e.g. smile at quiet singing)
- Attend to stimuli further away (e.g. hears music a few feet away or smells lunch)
- Transfer attention from one stimulus to another Attend to stimuli in a busy classroom (e.g. watch another child moving around)
- Locate a specific stimulus against a busy background (e.g. find favourite toy in a box of several toys or turn to name.

2. Exploration (of objects, materials and substances - all parts of the body should be used)

Students should have opportunities to:

- Use their senses to register interesting events around them (e.g. listen to drum, watch moving toy) Locate moving stimuli (e.g. track a florescent ball or moves head to sniff perfume as it passes from one side to the other)
- Turns to objects and sounds that are activated but in one place (e.g. turns head to locate flashing light)
- Make things happen when they move randomly (e.g. the space blanket crackles when the child wiggles or arm movement activates a hanging bell)
- Activate toys that provide an interesting effect randomly and without connecting the cause to the effect (e.g. pats a BigMac switch and something motivating happens)

3. Control (of objects and materials)

Students should have opportunities to:

- Make things move deliberately with gross movement (e.g. knock mobile, kick bells, swish water)
- Make things move deliberately with finer movements (e.g. whole hand or head to activate switch or swipe objects that give a strong reward)

- Persist in making simple toys do something (e.g. keep swiping wobble toys or pressing a switch to keep the toy active)
- Operate a toy that requires a single action (e.g. Jack-in-the-box, switch for bubble tube)
- Activate toys deliberately, using different movements for different toys (e.g. shaking bells and banging drum)
- Shift attention between different objects/ actions (e.g. different actions on an activity centre)
- Manipulate objects purposely (e.g. empty and fill containers, stacking and building blocks)
- Press buttons to make toy work (e.g. keyboard, musical toys)
- Look for favourite objects when sees them hidden (e.g. toy in box, under material)
- Look for favourite objects in a box of similar items (not deliberately hidden)
- Open containers to find objects (e.g. lift lid, press buttons, pull top off)
- Use objects and materials according to their function (e.g. brush for hair, shoes on feet,)



4. Sequence

Students should have opportunities to:

- Take turns in repetitive games where adult stops to wait for a response (e.g. Intensive Interaction)
- Anticipate routine events – that is see a pattern in the event (e.g. action songs, eating, being hoisted)
- Recognise familiar places (e.g. look up at the lights in sensory room, go straight to a favourite object in the hall)
- Explore objects that are used in familiar routines (e.g. spoon, cup, hair brush, drum)
- Take turns actively (e.g. rolling ball to partner, passing objects backwards and forwards)
- Choose between two or more motivating toys
- Respond to object cue (e.g. sits down for a drink when they see the cup)
- Select appropriate resources for a familiar routine (e.g. spoon for eating, ball for game)
- Assist in putting away resources used in a familiar routine
- Operate toys that require more than one action to complete (e.g. bubble tube controlled by latched switch, CD player knobs)
- Operate toys that need to be pulled apart and put together (e.g. stickle bricks, Duplo)
- Follow objects that move within the toy (e.g. cars down a slope, balls in a tube)
- Put objects into a container one at a time (e.g. balls down a tube or helter-skelter)
- Select preferred objects from a mixture of objects (e.g. in a box)
- Use objects that require two or more actions to complete (e.g. posting shapes or simple form boards)
- Use early problem solving for a familiar event

2.3 Physical and Sensory

'Movement is the foundation on which all learning is built' - Van Dijk

For students who have not developed speech or sign, communication is most effective through movement. Physical control gives students a degree of independence, allowing them to access objects, places and activities. Students are assisted to join in with play, leisure and learning activities and to participate in social and self-care activities. Students who are able to maintain and change position are healthier, more comfortable and therefore more likely to learn.

The priorities for our students are to develop body awareness and physical control and to establish which positions are most physically comfortable for them.

Students who are physically impaired or who are still learning to move need lots of opportunities to move around both supported and freely. They may require a range of equipment for lying, sitting, standing, walking. They may be having active treatment from a physiotherapist and/ or an occupational therapy and/or be on an ongoing treatment programme. Always consult with therapists and ensure that you have physical/ health targets that have been agreed between all the people who work with each student.

The programme of learning is divided into four main areas:

1. Body awareness
2. Fine motor movement
3. Gross motor movement
4. Mobility

1. Body Awareness

Progress within body awareness should begin with children allowing a range of different things to happen to their bodies. It is hoped that passive 'allowing' will become more active 'enjoying'. The ultimate aim is that they will be able to move their bodies voluntarily and with control. Remember that in this programme, the emphasis is on the physical movement, not on the understanding of the use of that movement. As part of the physical programme, children should have a range of different positions in which they can comfortably work. Consult with the physiotherapists on the positions suitable for individual children and the length of time they should be in that position.

Students should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of massage of hands/ feet/ arms/ legs (maybe with aromatherapy oils), and various sensory stimulation on different parts of the body (e.g. foot spa, silk material, fan)
- Show awareness of a range of total body movements (e.g. swinging, floating, rolling)
- Show awareness of a range of different body orientations (e.g. flat, bunched up, upside down)
- Show awareness of a range of pace of movement (e.g. slow, quick, jerky, smooth)
- Show awareness of their limbs to be moved passively (e.g. stretching in exercises or as part of action songs)
- Show awareness of objects that touch different parts of the body when moving
- Move their hands and arms with hand-under-hand support and / or co-actively
- Show awareness of body awareness songs and games (e.g. Heads, Shoulders Knees and Toes)
- Actively move as part of body awareness activities

2. Fine Motor Movement

This part of the programme can be divided into 4 areas: *reaching, grasping, releasing and manipulating*. The programme is about physical development only (in relation to arms and hands) and not about how and when to use these movement, although the child's developing cognition and communication will enable them to use their movements intentionally to achieve specific ends.

Reaching

Students should have opportunities to:

- Bring their hands into midline (this might be easier initially when children are lying on their sides where gravity can help to bring the top hand down to meet the lower hand)
- Have objects of various kinds placed in their hands
- Touch objects of various kinds with their hands
- Touch objects in midline/ on left/ on right
- Touch objects with one hand/ with two hands
- Bend and straighten their arms
- Reach for objects just out of reach – midline/ right/left – one hand/ both hands
- Reach for objects and bring them close (not necessarily grasping them) – one hand/ both hands/ midline/ left/ right
- Reach for objects and grasp them (whole hand)
- Reach for objects and grasp them (pincer grasp)

Grasping

Students should have opportunities to:

- Swipe objects (e.g. hanging on activity arch)
- Open and close their hands
- Close their hands round an object
- Locate a hand-sized object and try to grasp it
- Hold hand-sized objects with palmer grip (increasing amount of time)
- Squeeze objects in the whole hand
- Use whole hand to press switch
- Pick up objects using a whole hand grasp
- Pick up and put down objects with several fingers and thumb
- Locate small objects and try to grasp them
- Hold objects using a pincer grip (increasing amount of time)
- Move at the wrist whilst holding objects
- Rotate arms (hands up and hands down) while holding objects
- Hold onto a bar (e.g. to hold themselves up) (increasing amount of time)
- Hold objects and put them in contact with another (e.g. bang two objects together, put objects in a box, bang drum with stick)



Releasing

Students should have opportunities to:

- Allow people to take objects from their hands
- Let go of hand-sized objects
- Put down objects using a whole hand grasp
- Pass objects from hand to hand
- Hold objects with two hands, stabilise them in one and take other hand away
- Rotate arms and drop objects

Manipulating

Students should have opportunities to:

- Take objects to their mouths
- Use their hands to manipulate objects (e.g. shaking, banging, pushing, throwing)
- Use whole hand/ several fingers at once to press switches/ buttons/ keys on keyboard
- Use index finger to press buttons or poke objects
- Grasp felt tips/ brushes etc (e.g. to make marks)
- Raise arms and drop objects into containers
- Post objects into containers (e.g. posting box)
- Place objects in specific places (e.g. simple jigsaw) (increasing precision)

3. Gross Motor Movement

This is divided into 3 areas: *sitting, standing and walking.*

Sitting

Students should have opportunities to:

- Maintain head control
- Move their heads in all directions
- Sit in a fully supported position
- Sit in a chair with sides
- Sit on a classroom chair (no sides)
- Sit on a range of different kinds of chairs
- Sit on a stool, edge of the bed, PE form (no back or sides)
- Move their limbs in a sitting position
- Move their trunks in a sitting position
- Pivot round sideways in a sitting position
- Push or pull themselves to sitting from lying

Standing

Students should have opportunities to:

- Stand fully supported
- Stand with hands held or holding on
- Stand unsupported
- Moves their limbs whilst standing
- Pivot whilst standing (with less and less support)
- Pull themselves to standing
- Stand up from a chair or stool
- Stand up from the floor
- Sit down with hands being held or holding on
- Sit down on chair or stool
- Lower themselves to the floor from standing



Walking

Students should have opportunities to:

- Walk full supported (in walker)
- Walk with two hands held
- Walk with one hand held
- Walk unsupported
- Take steps backwards (e.g. to sit on a chair or toilet)
- Change directions when walking (supported)
- Change directions when walking (unsupported)
- Walk on different surfaces
- Walk up and down slopes
- Walk up and down steps

4. Mobility

This part of the programme can be divided into:

Indoor Mobility

Students should have opportunities to:

- Crawl
- Slide on back/ tummy (maybe in a blanket)
- Roll (e.g. across a mat)
- Rock/ row backwards and forwards (e.g. Row Your Boat)
- Push and pull (people and objects)
- Bounce (on trampoline)
- Throw and roll objects (balls, beanbags)
- Catch objects (from bigger to smaller)
- Move forwards and backwards
- Move in and out of objects (e.g. tunnel, den, tent)
- Move slowly and quickly (maybe being pulled in a blanket at different speeds)
- Move over and under objects/ onto and off objects

Outdoor Mobility

It is important to give our students opportunities to be mobile in outdoor environments and be supported to engage in outdoor and adventurous activities e.g. sailing, carriage riding.

Students should have opportunities to:

Use playground/ adventure equipment to swing, slide, rotate, climb, ride
 Ride bikes (eventually pushing the pedals themselves)
 Move over a range of different outdoor surfaces (e.g. woodland trail, shopping precinct, grass, shingle)

Water Mobility

Many children with PMLD benefit from the weightlessness experienced in water and can move more freely than they can on land. Many of the movements in standing and walking can be practised in the hydrotherapy pool. The programme is mainly about the specifics of water mobility.

Students should have opportunities to:

- Enter the pool as independently as possible
- Get out of the pool as independently as possible
- Achieve vertical balance in the water
- Back float
- Move from back to vertical
- Rotate in the water – from back to front and front to back
- Control unwanted rotations
- Move arms in the water
- Move legs in the water
- Jump when in the water
- Crawl in shallow water
- Walk in deep water
- Propel themselves in the water

2.4 Self - help and Independence

In this area of the curriculum, students with PMLD need to learn the skills that typical children learn at home before starting school. Learning to use the toilet, clean your teeth, get dressed and undressed, eat with a spoon are all vitally important areas and should not be considered as activities to be completed as quickly as possible between lessons.

Students should be given sufficient time to learn to become as independent as possible in all these personal care areas. For example, going swimming has excellent opportunities to practice skills in undressing and dressing and showering as well as swimming skills. The lesson should encompass all of these and sufficient time should be allowed for them all to take place.

Although the skills in this programme can be performed without understanding, it is only with understanding that independence is achieved. Some students will always need to be prompted and supported, not just because of a physical disability but because their understanding of the purpose of the activity is limited.

The skills are listed developmentally but when they are being taught, (e.g. drinking from a cup) each one needs to be task analysed and then taught step by step.

The Programme of Learning is divided into 6 areas:

1. Eating and drinking
2. Dressing and undressing
3. Using the toilet
4. Cleaning teeth
5. Brushing hair
6. Washing and showering

1. Eating and Drinking

Some students will be tube fed and this section will not apply to them. Please refer to the speech and language therapist for advice on eating and drinking/ swallowing and the occupational therapist for advice on eating and drinking implements.

Students should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of food and drink (eg: by moving the food around the mouth and swallowing)

- Assist an adult when being supported to eat and drink (e.g. by opening the mouth for the spoon/ cup or turning to spoon/ cup)
- Eat and drink pureed food/ thickened drink
- Drink a variety of drinks (e.g. milk, squash, tea)
- Eat mashed food (usually each food mashed separately)
- Eat chopped food
- Eat finger food
- Use a spoon to eat (maybe move on to using a fork)
- Use a two handled cup to drink (probably first with a lid, then perhaps a slanted cup before progressing to a conventional open cup)
- Use a single handled cup to drink
- Use a beaker (with no handles) to drink



2. Dressing and Undressing

Students with PMLD are likely always to need physical support with undressing and dressing.

Students should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of being dressed and undressed (e.g. by eye or limb movement)
- Assist an adult when being undressed and dressed (e.g. relax limbs)
- Offer limbs (e.g. when putting on a coat/ trousers/ shoes)
- Finish taking off clothes once the process has been started by an adult (e.g. wriggle out of shoes once they have been loosened/ pull sock off toes after they have been pulled down)
- Take off their clothes (probably starting with shoes and coats and progressing to other items of clothing)
- Pull up pants/ trousers (e.g. after using the toilet)
- Put on their clothes when handed the correct item (probably starting with shoes and coats)
- Put clothes on the right part of the body in the correct orientation
- Put their clothes on a peg/ on a chair or in a locker
- Put clothes on in a sensible order (e.g. socks before shoes)
- Choose the correct clothes for an activity (e.g. coat to go outside, swimsuit for swimming)
- Put PE/ swimming kit into a bag
- Put socks together/ put shoes together
- Recognise basic clothing vocabulary/ sign/ symbol in context (probably coat and shoes)

3. Using the Toilet

Students should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of having their pads changed (e.g. by or limb eye movement)
- Assist an adult when having their pads changed (e.g. relax limbs or lift bottom)
- Sit on a toilet regularly.
- Transfer from chair to toilet or from standing to toilet
- Use toilet appropriately if taken by an adult regularly
- Indicate the need to change their wet/soiled pads (e.g. cry with discomfort)
- Move to the changing bed when shown their pads / wet wipes.
- Stand to have their pads changed.
- Recognise the word/ symbol/ sign 'toilet'/ bathroom in context
- Indicate a need to use the toilet (e.g. go to the door or use sign/ symbol)
- Take themselves to the toilet when they need to use it
- Flush the toilet
- Shut the toilet door
- Complete the whole toilet sequence (probably with adult support and prompting each step)

4. Cleaning Teeth

Students have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of teeth being cleaned (e.g. by eye blinking, pulling a face)
- Assist an adult when their teeth are being cleaned (e.g. opening mouth)
- Hold an electric toothbrush in their mouth but probably only on front teeth
- Use a conventional brush (or electric toothbrush) (probably on front teeth first, gradually learning to include all teeth)
- Put the paste on the toothbrush (beginning with just squeezing the toothpaste but then learning to twist the top off and on)

5. Brushing Hair

Students should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of having their hair brushed (e.g. eye blinking or head turning)
- Assist an adult when their hair is being brushed (e.g. holding head up)
- Hold hairbrushes (but not necessarily brush their hair)
- Brush someone else's hair or the hair/ fur of a toy
- Brush their own hair (probably one side first and then learning to brush all over)

6. Washing and Showering

Students should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of being washed and dried - usually hands, face and - or being showered (e.g. by eye or limb movement)
- Be helpful when being washed and dried/ showered (e.g. hold out hands or turn up face)
- Wash and dry their hands in the sink / shower
- Wash and dry their faces in the sink/ shower
- Wash and dry their bodies whilst taking a shower
- Complete the whole showering sequence (with adult supporting and prompting each step)



2.5 Social and Emotional

1. Social

Students should have opportunities to ;

- interact with pupils in class and the wider community of pupils in school
- interact with less familiar people in school and develop confidence to greet them
- respond to unfamiliar staff in the local community
- develop turn taking
- develop engagement with peers and tolerance of others
- develop friendships
- indicate preferences for their own personal care
- understand personal care routines
- understand and learn about good and inappropriate touch
- learn about and practice giving consent
- understand and develop their use of yes and no to communicate effectively

2. Emotional

Students should have opportunities to ;

- learn about and express their own emotions
- learn to respond to and recognise other peers and adults' emotions
- access Zones of Regulation through colour, music, visual and touch mediums
- appreciate awe and wonder and recognise their surroundings and environments
- be aware of grief, loss and illness
- be aware of their disabilities, abilities and medical needs
- celebrate achievements and birthdays

3. Planning and Assessment

3.1 Routes for Learning

When assessing pupils with PMLD we will use **Routes for Learning** for Communication and Cognition. This is an assessment tool arranged into 43 milestones assessing a learners' developmental journey in their Social interaction and Cognitive Development.

The students can progress through the steps by using either the main route or alternative routes but there are 7 Key Milestones that the student must achieve before they move on to the next step.

Routes for learning; -

- ensures that the main purpose of assessing a learner is to enable them to make the best possible progress in developing skills, knowledge and understanding;
- considers the complex interaction between the sensory impairments, motor disabilities, medical problems and cognitive processing difficulties the learner experiences;
- takes a holistic view of learners by: focusing on how they learn; and acknowledging their different abilities and achievements;
- takes account of learners' preferred sensory and learning channels and their ways of processing information;
- focuses on the early communication, cognitive and sensory skills that are the foundation of all future learning and crucial to an improved quality of life;
- supports the development of learner-centred approaches and the focus on emotional well-being from the Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 4;
- celebrates the different abilities of learners with the most complex needs (it does not try to fit them into an existing framework that was not developed with their needs in mind);
- recognises interactions in new settings and situations as valid progress, similar to the learners' development of new skills;

- is aware of atypical patterns of PMLD development that impact on: how new information and stimuli are processed; how new experiences are accommodated into existing schemes; learners' approaches to problem-solving situations; and their ability to form attachments and interact socially; and recognises external environmental factors/family circumstances.

3.2 Engagement Model

We strive to transform all our students into active learners by releasing their motivation, unlocking their curiosity and increasing their participation. High quality differentiation should be the hallmark of high quality teaching in SEN. Our work must be to transform these students with PMLD into active learners by releasing their motivation, unlocking their curiosity and increasing their participation. Unless a student is engaged in learning, there can be no deep learning, effective teaching, meaningful outcome, real attainment or quality progress.

'Engagement is the single best predictor of successful learning for children with learning disabilities. Without engagement, there is no deep learning, effective teaching, meaningful outcome, real attainment or quality progress' (Carpenter, 2010)

The Engagement Model is multi – dimensional and made up of 5 areas;

- Exploration
- Anticipation
- Initiation
- Persistence
- Realisation

The school uses the Engagement Model to assess PMLD students who are not engaged in subject specific learning. Each student has an Engagement Profile which highlights their individual responses when they are engaged in learning or activities and how they present. These pupils are assessed using this observational framework twice per term and the profiles can be updated accordingly and displayed in the classrooms.

4. Teaching and Learning Guidelines

4.1 Students' Learning

'Routes for learning' states that creating an **effective learning environment** is fundamental for being able to systematically extend and change students learning experiences;

1. Students need to feel secure with the people around them
2. Learners ability to attend can change at different times of the day
3. Optimum times for learning might need to be planned around students' feeding, care and physiotherapy routines.
4. Use simple communication strategies at the appropriate level to avoid overloading the learners
5. Carefully assess learners to determine the preferred or dominant senses
6. Students need immediate and consistent feedback about their responses
7. Observe early affective, spiritual and emotional development
8. Learners must be emotionally ready to learn
9. Responsive adults are the most important resource to teach pupils communication skills.
10. Make use of the burst, pause, approach – where there is a burst of activity and then a pause to gauge student reaction or wait for communication which informs next steps in activity. Use everyday care routines to pause activity and allow students to fill the gap.

4.2 Teaching Strategies

Structure

For learners with complex needs life can become a fragmented series of events, therefore it is essential to provide a clear, structured environment. Without structure, learners may not develop their anticipation of activities and routines.

Waiting Time, Pausing, Anticipation

Learners with PMLD need time to respond to stimuli. Waiting time is needed to process the information. Giving students adequate time and space to respond and process information enables them to share control and have equal interactions. By building pauses into familiar routines and activities we create opportunities for learners to 'fill the gap' e.g. to make a response that indicates their wish for a desirable activity to continue. The idea is to give them an opening to make a communicative response. It is important to recognise the potential for communication in everyday tasks.

Imitation

Imitation is an ability to copy the actions, sounds, words or facial expressions of another person. This ability occurs very early in life, from the simplest pre-verbal communication and is refined over the time. Imitation involves the ability to pay attention to something that another person is doing or saying then trying and gradually learning to copy the action, sound or word.

We can support students to develop imitation skills by:

- Using facial expressions such as smiling and frowning
- Imitating sounds or facial expressions that a student makes
- Making speech sounds changing pitch and volume of our voice
- Making different sounds along with the associated words
- Adjusting our words to be on a student's level
- Talking in single words and short phrases
- Demonstrating how to participate in classroom activities e.g. model or use musical instruments, roll a ball etc. co-actively
- Emphasise imitation during play and activities

Hand under hand – principle

Students need to have opportunities to lead in all activities. Hand under hand means that the student's hand is on the top of your hand when exploring, manipulating or using materials and equipment.

Hand under hand –principle

- gives students a better autonomy to express their likes and dislikes so they can remove their hand easily.
- encourages student's activity
- allows students to lead

Supporting student's exploratory procedures such as the hand's lateral motion, pressure, static and enclosure position give students an increasing amount of information about the world around them.

High but realistic expectations

All staff should have high but realistic expectations when working with students with PMLD. A willingness to make learning and activities accessible and meaningful to these students is essential.

5. Activities and Environments

Students need a wide variety of different activities and in a variety of different environments. These can take place both inside and outside to give students opportunities to develop skills and communication throughout the whole school day. These activities and environments can include; sensory workout, music therapy, soft play, sports hall, bathroom, sensory garden and playground areas.

