



## The Discoverers Curriculum for PMLD Learners Baginton Fields School

### **Intent:**

PMLD students at Baginton Fields School experience an immersive multi-sensory approach to their learning. These students often have in addition to their very severe learning needs other difficulties such as a sensory impairment, physical disabilities and/or a complex medical condition. Multi-sensory learning is adopted to encourage and deepen student awareness of visual, auditory and tactile experiences supporting them to make sense of their lives and the world around them.

PMLD learners are at the very early stages of development. It is essential therefore that the curriculum they follow is personalised and allows for recognition and celebration of the small steps in learning they make. A combination of high quality teaching, careful planning and constant review of activities ensures students access a curriculum that is accessible and relevant to their individual needs.

### **Implementation:**

To contextualise learning and to allow students to make connections between discrete areas of study students in KS 3 & 4 explore different topics of interest each term. Students participate in a wide variety of imaginative, age-appropriate tasks that make learning engaging and enjoyable by stimulating all senses. To consolidate and embed learning, activities offered are regularly repeated to instil confidence as learners and ensure students experience success.

Our PMLD students rely on adults to access all areas of learning and for personal care, therefore, they spend the majority of their time with the same adults for consistency and with whom they build positive trusting relationships. Staff are sensitive to, and adept at, recognising and responding to individualised means of communication, advocating for students so that their voice is heard and their sensory/physical needs are met. The in depth understanding class staff have of their students through careful observation and their knowledge of prior learning ensures that target setting, assessment and identification of realistic yet challenging next steps are well-matched for each individual and show progression.

Assessment lies at the heart of the processes of promoting student learning. It provides a framework for setting educational objectives and monitoring and communicating progress as well as improving individual and group outcomes.

Assessment is incorporated systematically into teaching strategies to diagnose misconceptions/problems and chart progress. It helps the school to strengthen learning across the curriculum and helps teachers enhance their skills and judgements. Assessment is a daily part of the life of the school. Informal assessments, through the monitoring of engagement and understanding of concepts and their skills are used by teachers to inform their teaching. More formal methods of assessment provide feedback on student progress and ensure a rigorous approach to curriculum delivery.

Learning takes place in the classroom, various specialised rooms in school, outdoor spaces and in the local community.

The curriculum is broad and covers 6 main areas of learning. However, communication and promoting student independence /student voice underpins all lesson activities.

The complex sensory/physical needs of this cohort means that progress is rarely linear, often students present with a 'spikey profile'. Medical needs may result in a high absence rate for a few and so staff focus in the first instance on supporting students to maintain skills. Therefore, the curriculum for each student is sequential depending on prior learning, where they are now and the next important step for them in their development and preparation for adulthood.

We recognise that our PMLD learners “will remain within developmentally early intellectual parameters for the whole of their lives, curriculum development must be specifically related to the difficulties faced. Any model based on linear developmental progression will come nowhere near to explaining or doing justice to the real progress and development which we know that those with PMLD can make, irrespective of their age.” **Equals**

In KS5 students learning and progress is documented and used as evidence towards their ASDAN qualification, Diploma in Personal Progress Entry Level 1.

Examples of the units of study are:

- New creative activities
- Engaging with the world around you: people
- Engaging with the world around you: technology
- Travel within the community
- Encountering experiences: being part of things

Class staff will work with a range of external professionals to support student development and progress

- Speech and Language
- Occupational Therapy
- Children’s Community Learning Disability Team
- Physiotherapy
- Sensory support services

**Impact:**

Dedicated to delivering inspirational learning experiences.

- Students are able to express themselves and interact with others in a supportive total communication environment.
- Students are tolerant of others.
- Students have with support developed their independence.
- Through a range of sensory opportunities students have experienced awe and wonder in the environment to develop their understanding of the world around them.
- Students have developed their physical skills through physio routines and physical activity to maintain their core strength, mobility, motor skills and hand-eye coordination.
- Students have developed their sense of individuality & identity through the discovery and exploration of different creative media.
- Students are prepared for their next destination.
- All students leave with an ASDAN qualification.

<b>Timetabled Lessons</b>	<b>Learning Opportunities</b>	<b>Core Strands</b>	<b>Steps to success</b>
<p>Teachers will deliver a variety of timetabled lessons to support the development of skills, knowledge and understanding within the 6 key areas.</p> <p>These areas are not mutually exclusive and allow for necessary opportunities to repeat &amp; practice tasks.</p> <p>The below list is not exhaustive but ensures students receive a 'rich educational diet'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory storytelling, poetry &amp; drama</li> <li>• Maths counting and games</li> <li>• Sensory science</li> <li>• Sensology</li> <li>• Sensory cooking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Intensive Interaction.</i></li> <li>• <i>Objects of reference.</i></li> <li>• <i>On body signing.</i></li> <li>• <i>Total Communication.</i></li> <li>• <i>Call &amp; response.</i></li> <li>• <i>ICT including switches, eye gaze and suitable AAC devices.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Students have the opportunity to express themselves and interact with others through a total communication environment.</i></li> </ul>	<p>By end of KS 3 most will have explored and tried out different means of communication and will interact with their unfamiliar staff and peers in their new school. They will be familiar with cues for their school day.</p> <p>By end of KS 4 most will have developed preferred means of communication and are responding to and interacting with the staff and peers that they have built social relationships with. They will respond with recognition to cues for the school day.</p> <p>By end of KS 5 most will have an established means of communication in place in preparation for communication and interaction in different contexts, environments and people outside of school.</p>
	<p><b>Citizenship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community visits.</i></li> <li>• <i>Residential visits.</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal care.</i></li> <li>• <i>Choice making.</i></li> <li>• <i>Turn taking.</i></li> <li>• <i>Animal care.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Citizenship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Students are supported to increase their independence while developing tolerance of others.</i></li> </ul>	<p>By end of KS 3 most will show how they can co-operate and be involved in their care routines and everyday tasks with their unfamiliar adults. They begin to show what they can and cannot tolerate when being supported and when around others. They are showing awareness of their peers and may be showing behaviour that needs modification.</p> <p>By end of KS 4 most will show what helps them to be independent and tolerant of social situations and support during care and everyday tasks. They show awareness of sharing and turn taking with their peers and they show how their behaviour can be supported to be positive with their peers.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebound</li> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• Sensory art and fine motor skills</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Mindfulness</li> </ul> <p><b>A significant amount of time must be scheduled to ensure students therapy and personal care needs are met. These are viewed as important learning opportunities and valued time for intensive interaction.</b></p>			<p>By end of KS 5 most will have established care routines and are cooperative with adults who know their care and independence needs well. They have increased their tolerance of different social situations at BFS and are accepting of new social experiences in the community. They have some long-standing positive friendships that may continue when they leave school.</p>
	<p><b>Curiosity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sensory learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Building Learning Power.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sensory exploration through maths &amp; science.</i></li> <li>• <i>Magic carpet.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Curiosity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Students are inspired to discover awe and wonder in the environment whilst developing their senses and understanding.</i></li> </ul>	<p>By end of KS 3 most will show curiosity of and enjoyment of their new school environment and adventures. They show how they use their senses, how they respond and are beginning to show recognition of the Baginton experience and how they can influence it.</p> <p>By end of KS 4 most will show consistent responses to familiar adventures and show their preferred sense when they are exploring. They show recognition and delight in the experiences they are interested in and show how they solve problems.</p> <p>By end of KS 5 most will show their confidence, curiosity and sensory engagement in community environments. They can try out their problem-solving skills in other settings.</p>

	<p><b>Emotional &amp; Social Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory diets.</li> <li>• PSHE - relation / friendships.</li> <li>• Lunchtime clubs.</li> <li>• Enrichment opportunities.</li> <li>• Play.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Emotional &amp; Social Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Student voice is promoted to ensure all feel safe, respected, happy, in control and valued.</i></li> </ul>	<p>By end of KS 3 most will be beginning to show their preferences and how they make a choice. They are beginning to show how they express their basic emotions and can be supported to regulate.</p> <p>By end of KS 4 most will have consistent preferences and consistent way of showing their choice. They are consistent in the way they show their basic emotions and have developed strategies for self or supported regulation to help them feel calm, comfortable and engaged.</p> <p>By end of KS 5 most will have definite preferences that are known by adults around them. They show their choices in their own way and have effective self or supported regulation strategies to help them feel calm, comfortable and engaged.</p>
	<p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physio/OT.</li> <li>• Body awareness.</li> <li>• Massage.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Students are supported through their physio routines and physical activity to maintain their core strength, mobility, motor skills and hand-eye coordination.</i></li> </ul>	<p>By end of KS 3 most will becoming familiar with their physio routines with their familiar or updated equipment. They will show their physical abilities and their potential for physical development.</p> <p>By end of KS 4 most will be co-operating with their physio routines and trying their best to tolerate using their equipment for the desired time. They will be taking part in physical activity at their own level of challenge and showing their preferences.</p> <p>By end of KS 5 most will have matured physically and adapted to the changes to their physio equipment and physio routines. They will be taking part in physical activities that they prefer and show their favourite physical 'past time'.</p>

	<p><b>Creativity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Music.</i></li> <li>• <i>Food technology.</i></li> <li>• <i>Drama, sensory stories.</i></li> <li>• <i>Expressive arts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Write Dance.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Creativity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Students are provided with creative activities to develop and express their individuality through the discovery and exploration of different creative media.</i></li> </ul>	<p>By end of KS 3 most will be discovering and exploring new creative and expressive experiences including with visiting artists.</p> <p>By end of KS 4 most will convey their creative talents and strengths and show joy in sharing these with others.</p> <p>By end of KS 5 most will show their individuality and character through their consistent choices and creative output. They will have developed an interest or hobby in an area of the arts.</p>
--	---	--	---

## **What is intensive interaction?**

Intensive interaction is an approach that aims to support learners who are at the very early stages of communication or who appear reluctant and disinterested in those around them. It aims to support learners enjoy being with others and to give their attention to another person in a concentrated way no matter how fleeting to begin with.

Staff will work with the student to encourage communication and interaction between themselves and the learner in a 'conversational' way, this could be through gesture, vocalisation, movement, facial expression, language.

The approach is led by the learner, the member of staff is their communication partner. As the partner the adult observes the student carefully and responds to the student by joining in with the behaviour. At the beginning of the relationship the adult might repeat or mirror the student's actions/vocalisations. As in any conversation they will pause after their response to allow the student to 'reply' then offer another response. In this way a dialogue is established.

As students develop confidence and recognise that their behaviour can influence another, the adult can gradually start to share the lead in a natural, reciprocal way so that there is genuine opportunity for turn taking. They may extend the length of their responses, they may become more animated in gesture/tone/pace so that the exchange starts to develop and imitate the natural rhythms of conversation.

The adult can use a range of motivators they know the student likes to engage their interest i.e., music, sensory toys.

<https://www.slideshare.net/IntegratedTreatmentServices/intensive-interaction-28924926>

### **Other relevant documents:**

Assessment policy  
Curriculum Policy  
PMLD Pathway