

Curriculum



Supporting Pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties



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The official DfE definition of pupils with PMLD is:

Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties have complex learning needs. In addition, 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. Their attainments are likely to remain in the early P scale range (P1-P4) throughout their school.

Introduction

Langside is a Non-maintained Independent Special School for pupils aged 2 to 19 years with PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) and complex medical needs. Langside can support up to 32 children who have an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) and provides a caring environment alongside one which will stimulate and challenge every pupil. The school provides a fully integrated sensory and therapeutic approach to education; each pupil has an individually tailored curriculum which focuses on personalised approaches to learning. This ensures pupils are motivated to learn and will enable them to develop their personality, self confidence and ultimately enable them to become as independent as possible, in preparation for the time when they will leave school.



ImPACTS assessment and curriculum model

- ImPACTs is an assessment tool and curriculum that has been developed to ensure the pupil is at the centre of the assessment and planning process. It provides target setting information to improve individual learning as well as the potential for whole-school improvement.*
- The ImPACTS programme offers Langside pupils a specialised curriculum in four Key Skill Areas: Communication, Cognition, Environmental Control Technology and Personal Social and Emotional Well Being.*
- The curriculum is delivered in a wholly integrated manner, incorporating learning, therapy and health needs with input from the multidisciplinary team, parents and carers to enhance the content, accuracy of the assessments and curriculum delivery and to ensure we meet their individual needs.*
- Assessment is a continuous process and forms a fundamental part of creating a bespoke curriculum for our pupils while highlighting an individual's progress through termly assessment (Progress to Attainment).*
- The personalised approach to our curriculum means pupils experience a variety of approaches to learning; breadth & balance, quality interactions, stimulating experiences, promotion of independence, at the same time as nurturing their natural curiosity and positive engagement with the world around them.*

From Langside's Latest Ofsted Report

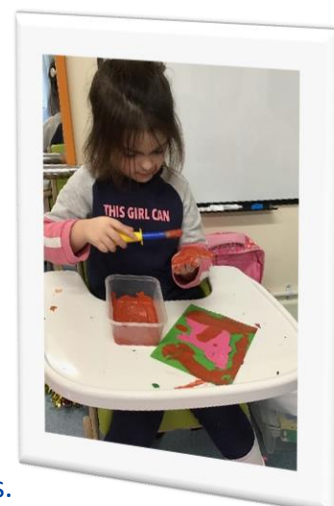
- Pupils' attitudes to everything that goes on in school are exceptional.
- Leaders' high expectations ensure that staff are all highly trained to meet the needs of the pupils.
- Pupils thrive because of the high-quality care and support they receive.
- Close attention is given to pupils' physical and medical well-being and staff are quick to identify and respond to pupils' needs.
- Parents have full confidence in staff to look after their children and ensure that they are safe and well cared for.
- Parents greatly value the help and support they and their children receive.
- The curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs of each pupil and, as a result, pupils have a broad range of experiences.

Curriculum - Intent

- To provide an appropriate and stimulating education for pupils who have PMLD.
- To provide an effective learning environment where, through assessment, a detailed and shared understanding of a pupil's needs is known by all those supporting them.
- To provide a highly responsive environment where Inclusive Communication is evident and every pupil's ability to communicate is respected, responded to and developed.
- To provide a range of consistent routines and meaningful activities to enable pupils to develop awareness, control, and independence within their learning environment.
- To provide exciting learning opportunities through broad range of experiences and activities.

Breadth and Balance and Inclusion

At Langside, we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is stimulating, enriching and fulfilling. We strive to meet the needs of the 'whole' child and promote good communication skills and independence.



- Our multi-disciplinary team ensures pupils are able to access learning across a wide range of activities, as fully as possible, promoting positive risk-taking and engagement.
- We support individualised learning programmes and value self-expression, choice making and inclusion in community experiences.
- Topics are used to incorporate and focus within key skill areas.
- Outings are arranged to support a multi-sensory experience.
- Enrichment weeks focus on one of the curriculum key skill areas; specialists are invited in to bring new experiences and opportunities for learning, to the pupils e.g., Sensory Theatre companies, Dance teachers and Musicians.
- Creative elements of our curriculum include Dance, Drama, Art and Craft activities, Cooking and Music.
- The OPTIONS class take part in The OPT Award, developed by Langside School, specifically designed for students with SEND replacing our previous accredited Duke of Edinburgh Award. The pupils have attended residential holidays in order to experience outdoor pursuits such as abseiling, zip wire and tree top trails.
- Langside promotes British values and recognises festivals from different cultures throughout the year. We hold services of worship marking Christian festivals at our local church and meet at the end of each week for a whole school assembly to celebrate individual achievements.
- Langside strives to make events inclusive. Parents and visitors are invited to attend services as well as our school concerts.
- Langside takes part in fund raising events to support other charities and organisations.
- Inclusion is a priority at Langside. It provides opportunities for our pupils to engage in community events and work with children across a broad spectrum of age and ability. Lower school meets regularly with other SEND Early Years providers for joint sessions and upper school meets with pupils from mainstream and other special schools and as part of the Transition Process have regular visits out into the community.

Curriculum Offer - Implementation

In order to provide an educational environment which is most appropriate we recognise children, young people and adults with PMLD have unique abilities and ways of learning.

ImPACTS is an assessment tool and curriculum that supports and develops pupils' strengths and abilities and focusses on developing the learners' understanding of the world around them, and of social interactions and relationships. ImPACTS allows us to ensure the pupil is at the centre of the assessment and planning process. It provides target setting information to support individual learning as well as the potential for whole school improvement through regular moderation.



Instead of traditional subject areas, learning at Langside School is organised across Key Skill areas: Communication, Cognition, Personal, Social & Emotional Well Being (PSEWB), Environmental Control Technology (ECT) and Physical Skills (Fine and Gross Motor)

Assessment is a continuous process and forms a fundamental part of the process of creating a bespoke curriculum. Assessment is intrinsic to the curriculum, enabling professionals from education and therapy to design exciting and effective learning environments for our pupils, supporting them to make progress.

On completion of the assessment, each pupil's score is translated onto a 'profile', which creates an overview of strengths, weaknesses and development points. Once the profile has been completed, staff refer to the Curriculum document for developmentally appropriate objectives, activities and resources. The Curriculum document gives suggestions and is not designed to be prescriptive. This leaves scope to develop activities and resources that reflect the highly individualised needs of pupils and their motivations. A number of short-term targets will be determined based on a pupil's Longer-Term Outcomes from their EHCP, the ImPACTS Assessment and their individual needs.

Next steps and individual targets are regularly monitored, reviewed, and moderated to ensure they remain relevant to the individual. Some pupils progress more slowly, while others more rapidly, this regular monitoring also highlights if they require further support if there has been any regression. Our assessments are ipsative and therefore progress is unique to the individuals we support.



Journey through the School

Langside School has 5 classes which are organised in age bands.

Each class is supported by a combination of highly skilled/qualified education and therapy staff.

Little Acorns has the youngest pupils as part of the Early Years.

Caterpillar and Cocoons Classes have pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Butterflies Class supports pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3.

OPTIONS has pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5.

Langside is the lead centre for the OPT Award, replacing Duke of Edinburgh scheme; pupils work towards this accreditation from the age of 16. This enables the curriculum to be broadened and enriched with arts and physical activities and encourages pupils to interact with the community and hence prepare further for transition.

Transition is a key element and focus for older pupils in the OPTIONS Class. Teachers and staff work closely with parents to help find suitable placements for the start of adult lives and to work alongside newly appointed support teams to pass on all relevant information.



Communication

Pupils with PMLD may present with Pre-intentional or emerging intentional communication. Langside school uses the Affective Communication Assessment (ACA) and ImPacts to help in the assessment of children at this stage of development. The emphasis at this stage is to identify how a child expresses likes and dislikes and to provide opportunities where pupils can learn that what they do affects the behaviour of those around them; even at this early stage of development pupils are learning that they can control what happens to them.

As pupils develop intentional communication and more formal methods of communication, the Speech, Language and Communication Therapist can support with more formal communication assessments. At this stage, the emphasis is on the pupil taking more control of the communicative environment; they will be encouraged to: gain the attention of adults, using voice or other appropriate means; to ask to do more of an activity or to finish; to make early requests and to make choices between activities. They will be encouraged to express how they feel non-verbally.

Some students may develop early language skills and start to use communication for different functions e.g., to make requests, ask questions, describe things and events, and tell people how they feel. The extended Communication Curriculum and the Speech, Language and Communication Therapist will help to inform staff and families, of the most appropriate methods for individual pupils. Where appropriate both low tech communication aids (communication books, charts) and high-tech communication aids (voice output communication aids) may be used.

Strategies to aid Communication Development

- Inclusive Communication

Inclusive Communication means that every pupil will be given opportunities to develop his/her understanding and expression using whatever strategies are most appropriate.

Langside School provides an environment where communication is fun, functional and has immediate consequences. Staff are expected to observe and respond to the communicative and potentially communicative behaviours of pupils throughout the day. Staff are familiar with the principles of Intensive Interaction and will use these to help the pupil become aware of his/her partner, extend his/her attention, lead an interaction, control the actions of his/her partner, take turns and enjoy the act of communicating.

- Multi- sensory cues

Langside School believes that every pupil should understand what is happening to them throughout his/her day. Multi-sensory cues, including visual, auditory, tactile and smell

cues, can help a pupil to make sense of their environment and are used to provide structure to the day, to introduce a change of activity, a change of environment and a change of person.

Objects of Reference (OoR) provide visual, tactile, and sometimes smell, as feedback to a pupil.

Sounds or Songs of Reference (SoR) provide auditory feedback to a pupil.

Tactile signs provide tactile feedback to a pupil, who is unable to see or who is unaware that his/her partner is interacting with them using speech or other keyword signing vocabularies. Staff and pupils at Langside use TaSSeLs (Tactile signs for Sensory Learners); TaSSeLs provides tactile signs 'on body' for those pupils with limited hand function and 'co-active' signing for students who need support to sign.

Keyword signs (Signalong) are used to support pupils with good vision and intentional communication. When a pupil enters school using a particular keyword sign vocabulary, staff will familiarise themselves with the system and use this as the preferred method of communication.

Photographs and symbols provide visual feedback to pupils with good vision and an understanding of symbolic material. The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), PODD and The Grid are all used in school according to a pupil's individual needs. Where pupils with cerebral visual impairment (CVI) use pictures and symbols, every effort is made to make these more accessible.

- The Communicative Environment

Staff at Langside are responsible for creating situations that enable a pupil to communicate. Pupils who are beginning to communicate will need:

-something to talk about; staff will need to provide interesting and motivating 'topics' or objects for pupils. Sometimes the staff member will be the most interesting 'topic' for the student.

-someone to talk to; staff will need to ensure that the pupil has their full attention during communication.

-a means of communication; this will be entirely pupil led and might include voice, facial expression, hands, body, eye gaze, photos, objects, voice output communication aids.

-opportunities to practise skills; the use of repetition and routine is particularly important to children with PMLD. Routines help pupils to remember what happens in a situation and provides them with opportunities to use the most appropriate communication strategy for them.

Communication Profiles

Each pupil has a communication care plan and profile which describes the best way in which to communicate with him/her. It details how staff can help the pupil to understand what is happening in the environment, and at what level he/she can express himself/herself. It details a pupil's likes and dislikes and describes how staff can recognise these.

Cognition

Pupils at Langside learn and develop their understanding of the world through a wide range of sensory experiences. Their responses, however small, are recorded and individual targets are set. Resources, teaching styles and activities will match the individual learners. All our pupils require access to learning opportunities that are unique and relevant to them and reflect their engagement profiles.

Pupils learn through repetition and structure. The school day includes daily routines, timetables and appropriate communication strategies across the classes. There are a variety of environments designed to stimulate learning, these include: the Imaginarium, Outside Space, Music Therapy Room, Soft Play, Hydrotherapy and Rebound Therapy.

Physical

Physiotherapy activities and interventions including daily passive, assisted and independent movements, hydrotherapy, postural management and monitoring of respiratory status, are embedded into the entire school daily timetable to enable individual pupils to achieve their maximum potential in all areas of development and learning.

It relies on a multidisciplinary approach and collaboration between class teachers, assistants and the other therapists working in school.

The Physical area of our curriculum is a clinical approach coordinated and monitored by our Therapy Professionals and delivered by a highly skilled therapy team.

Personal, Social, Emotional and Well-being

PSEWB consists of two important areas of development, supporting pupils '*Towards Self-help*' and '*Towards Self Advocacy*'.

Self Help focuses on engagement with personal care tasks such as eating, drinking, bathing or oral hygiene, whereas *Self Advocacy* looks at a pupil's awareness, attachment and enjoyment. PSEWB targets are often taken from other key skills, particularly Communication.

Delivery through Routines: We know that pupils with PMLD are most likely to learn through the repetition offered in routines. The school has mapped out how all strands of learning are achievable through well delivered routines.

Our pupils' emotional wellbeing is monitored through the engagement profile, the use of traffic light interventions, and supported by the use of happiness boxes and sensory integration techniques. Every member of the school team has a responsibility for the wellbeing of our individuals.

Environmental Control Therapy (ECT)

Environmental Control Technology provides opportunities for our students to access, be aware of and to affect their immediate environment with various technologies enabling them to become less dependent on adult intervention.

There are a variety of technologies to enhance pupils learning and are fully integrated into class practise.

Monitoring of the Curriculum

Each term the progress pupils are making towards their Longer Term Outcomes is reviewed and Shorter Term targets are rated red, amber or green dependent on teacher judgement and the evidence collated from observation. The judgements are supported by a summary of the progress they have made towards each target and how they have engaged within the activities to promote their learning, along with photographic evidence within these Progress to Attainment reports. These termly reports are shared with parents and are submitted as evidence for progress at pupils' EHCP Annual Reviews. Factors affecting pupil progress are also reported upon with these documents and provide evidence where a pupil is making less than expected progress.

An overview of pupil targets is updated termly by the Deputy Head and reviewed with teachers individually to discuss anomalies. Levels of engagement are recorded within observations, and these are used to support the achievement of pupils' learning, adjusting activities to enhance pupil engagement where this is necessary. Where a student is not progressing as well as might be hoped an internal Multidisciplinary Meeting will be held, to include the Teacher, Nurse, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech, Language and Communication Therapist and any one to one worker assigned to the pupil. Any strategies to assist the student's learning will be recorded as action points and parents, carers or external agencies will be consulted where this is judged as potentially beneficial.

Moderation meetings are held at least once a month, where teachers examine the evidence collated for pupil achievements across the school, check pupils' learning journeys match the outcomes determined by their EHCPs and check next steps seem appropriate.

External moderation happens on a termly basis where a representative from a local special school will visit to inspect the evidence supporting the achievements of pupils and discuss methods and strategies implemented to enhance the learning of our pupils. There are five other special schools participating in this process and pairings are made each term for this process.

Little Acorns works within the guidelines of the Early Years framework with the support of the BCP Early Years Team. This includes an annual moderation process in keeping with oversight applied to other schools within the Early Years networks.

OPTIONS class incorporates the post-16 provision where the pupils undertake exciting, positive risk-taking opportunities through participation of the OPT Award, formulated by Langside School as an accredited award specifically for young people with profound, multiple and complex learning disabilities.