Curriculum

Supporting Pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
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 28 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 a curriculum designed by Rosewood Free School for pupils working at P-Levels 1 to 4.
- The **ImPACTs** programme offers a specialised curriculum in five Key Skill Areas: Communication, Cognition, Environmental Control Technology, Personal Social and Emotional Well Being and Physical Skills (Gross and Fine Motor).
- The curriculum recognises the value of learning through routines and provides opportunities for learning in daily activities such as arriving at school, personal care, eating and drinking and departing school.
- The development of each Key Skill includes multi-disciplinary working. The school uses the expertise of relevant professionals to enhance the content and accuracy of the assessments and curriculum delivery.
- The detailed approach enables the school to collate meaningful data that highlights progress and alerts the multi-disciplinary team to areas where pupils are not making expected progress.
- The curriculum offers a variety of approaches to learning; breadth & balance and inclusion is at its heart.
Testimonials

- ‘The outstanding curriculum is well researched and rigorously reviewed. It very successfully addresses learning and therapeutic needs.’ (Rosewood School OFSTED)
- ‘Teachers use the school’s comprehensive teaching and assessment programmes extremely effectively to break down vital key skills, such as communication, into their smallest component parts. This means that teaching can be precisely targeted to encourage each individual to participate fully in lessons.’ (Rosewood School OFSTED)
- ‘The curriculum is outstanding. It is broad and balanced and has been developed as a result of shared research projects with the school’s partners, based on school leaders’ deep understanding of students’ needs, skills and attributes.’ (Rosewood School OFSTED)
- ‘The outstanding curriculum supports learning and teaching well.’ (Jack Tizard School OFSTED)
- The principal has a clear, ambitious vision for the school. With good support from senior and middle leaders, including members of the governing body, he has worked effectively to ensure that the quality of teaching continues to improve and that pupils are making good progress. A good example of this is to be seen in the recent improvements made to the range of activities on offer to pupils. Evidence from the inspection supports school leaders’ views that learning activities planned for each pupil as part of this new curriculum are well matched to specific needs. One parent described the new curriculum as ‘fantastic’ because the chances to visit many different locations outside of school help to prepare her daughter so well for the future. (Langside School OFSTED 2014)

From Langside’s Latest Ofsted Report

- "Leaders and managers have worked successfully to make sure that the school continues to improve. They have introduced a new range of activities which is very closely matched to the needs of their pupils."
- “From their very low starting points, pupils make good progress. They show enjoyment of their favourite activities and cooperate well when trying out new experiences."
- "School leaders have made sure that pupils are able to learn in a very safe environment."
- "The well-led Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good start to school for the very youngest children. Parents speak highly of the help the school gives their children to help them settle in quickly."
- "Students in the good sixth form have personal timetables which give priority to the particular skills they need to work on and this helps them to make good progress."
- "...this new curriculum is well matched to specific needs. One parent described the new curriculum as ‘fantastic’."
Aims of the Curriculum

• 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 him/her.
• To provide a consistently responsive environment within which every pupil’s ability to communicate is respected, responded to and developed.
• To provide throughout the day a range of consistent routines and meaningful activities that allow pupils to develop intentionality and exercise control of their learning environment.
• To provide learning opportunities through broad range of experiences.

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 ensure pupils are able to access learning across a wide range of activities, as fully as possible.
• We support individualised learning programmes and value self expression, choice making and inclusion in community experiences.
• Topics are used to incorporate and focus on 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. Zoo Lab, Sensory Theatre companies, Dance teachers and Musicians.
• Creative elements of our curriculum include Dance, Drama, Art and Craft activities, Cooking and Music.
• The Community Group take part in The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and 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 a local pre-school for joint sessions and upper school meets with pupils from mainstream and other special schools.

**Using ImPACTS**

In order to provide an educational environment which is most appropriate for pupils with PMLD, traditional subject areas are no longer taught.

Rosewood Free School teaches pupils with PMLD and devised the ImPacts assessment tool specifically to meet the needs of these children. Ofsted has scrutinised the work of Rosewood School and judged them to be “Outstanding” on repeated inspections.

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.

*Instead of traditional subject areas, learning at Langside School is organised around ImPACTS targets relating to 5 key Skill areas. These 5 key skills are (1) Communication; (2) Cognitive skills; (3) Physical Skills (4) Personal, Social & Emotional Well Being (PSEWB) and (5) Environmental Control Technology (ECT).*
Assessment Questions

The ImPACTs assessment includes detailed questions about a pupil's ability in each Key Skill area. Pupils are provided with opportunities to demonstrate their skills in play situations and daily routines.

On completion of the assessment, a number of targets will be set for each Key Skill area. Each pupil will have between 8 and 10 personal targets; motivating activities and real opportunities will be provided in which the pupil can work towards achieving the target.

ImPACTs Curriculum Guidance

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.

Target Setting

Targets are set by the multi-disciplinary team and shared with parents who are encouraged to give feedback, ensuring that they understand them and can continue with them at home where appropriate. Targets form part of the personalised learning programme for the pupil and activities should take account of the preferences, motivators and interests of the learner and be respectful of their developmental level/age.

Progress towards achieving targets is monitored daily and targets are reviewed at least twice a year (more frequently if needed). When a child achieves a target earlier than expected, parents are informed of this and a new target is set. When a child does not achieve a target in the expected time, a discussion takes place as to the benefit of continuing with a target, and to what might be preventing the child from achieving the target.
**Progress through the School**

Langside School has 4 classes which are organised in age bands.

Each class has a teacher, a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA), 2 Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and a Therapy assistant.

Class 1 supports the youngest pupils and operates with reference to the Early Years framework. Learning in this class is moderated with the guidance of the Poole Early Years Advisor. On admission a pupil is assessed using carefully designed assessment documentation. This base-lining process may take varying lengths of time depending on the age on admission, specific complex needs and number of school days in attendance each week. Every effort is made to complete this assessment within the pupil’s first term. Class 1 pupils are evaluated using the ImPACTS assessment system, which has been accepted by the Early Years Advisor as suitable to take the place of more common Early Years assessment systems.

Classes 2 and 3 pupils continue to be assessed using the ImPACTS system and individual targets are set accordingly. Activities designed to develop skills relating to targets are devised and modified in the light of student responses to previous target-based activities. This is important to note because experienced practitioners working with children with PMLD insist that target activities need to be at least partially “student-led” and designed with reference to individual idiosyncrasies and motivators.

Community Group typically takes pupils aged 16-19 years of age. The word “Community” reflects the fact that work with these pupils, focuses on their leaving school and taking their places in the wider community. The aim is to involve pupils in more visits outside school and provide opportunities for interaction with groups beyond Langside staff and pupils. This can be challenging, given the very complex needs of our students, their need for close medical supervision and participation in daily therapeutic interventions.

Community Group pupils continue to follow the ImPACTS curriculum but there is a change of emphasis, moving away from whole school starter activities towards Individual Learning Plans. These provide a framework of how he or she might be encouraged to move towards achieving the target. Plans are subject to constant revision but will be used in regular one to one sessions, everyday throughout the week.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is also a key feature of the Community Group.
Langside is an accredited centre for the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and pupils work towards achieving the Bronze award. 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 for older pupils in Community Group. 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.

Curriculum Key Skills

Communication

Pupils with PMLD may be at a stage before communication is fully intentional. This is referred to as Pre-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 and Language 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 choices between activities.

Some students may develop early language skills and start to use communication for different functions e.g. to make requests, ask questions, tell people how they feel. The extended Communication Curriculum and the Speech and Language 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, to lead an interaction, to control the actions of his/her partner and to take turns and enjoy the act of communicating.

- Multi-sensory cues

Langside School believes that every pupil should have an understanding of 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** 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 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 interaction strategies such as eye contact, gestures and tactile signing.

Communication Profiles

Each pupil has a communication 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.

Each pupil will have two Cognition Targets. Resources, teaching styles and activities will match the individual learner as far as possible. All our pupils require access to learning opportunities that are unique and relevant to them.

Cognition Targets will be reviewed constantly and progress points to achievement are considered weekly.

Targets will cover the assessment areas of Engagement, Object Permanence, Action on Objects, Cause and Effect and Problem Solving.

Pupils learn through repetition and structure. The school day includes daily routines, timetables and a consistent use of Touch cues across the classes.

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.
**Personal, Social, Emotional and Well-being**

The PSEWB Key Skill targets 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 have mapped out how all strands of learning are achievable through well delivered routines

**Environmental Control Therapy (ECT)**

The Environmental Control Technology Key Skill provides opportunities for our students to access, be aware of and have an affect on their immediate environment through the use of various technologies enabling them to become less dependent on adult intervention.

The technologies currently used at Langside School are:

- Eye gaze
- Interactive whiteboards in each classroom
- Switches
- Remotes
- Ablenet boxes/Powerlinks
- iPads
- iPods
- Sound Beam
- Opti music centre

One IEP target is identified in the area of ECT for each of our students. The students work towards completion of their target through discrete 1:1 sessions, whole class ECT sessions and through incidental learning during other sessions where appropriate.
# ImPACTs Curriculum Offer Overview

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<th>IMPACTs Curriculum Area</th>
<th>Delivered Via</th>
<th>Ongoing Learning Through Routines</th>
<th>Cross Curricula Learning Opportunities</th>
<th>Equivalent National Curriculum Subjects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Language Literacy</td>
<td>Termly Thematic Multi Disciplinary Approach</td>
<td>Preparation for Learning Visual Development and or compensatory skills for both Areas. Listening skills Assemblies Object / sound cues, tactile signs Storytime books / bags Expressive / receptive activities – Intensive Interaction / Listening activities</td>
<td>Therapy is integrated across the 5 curriculum areas Social Skills / Interaction Visual Development Hearing Development Compensatory skills Development Music Switch access &amp; use TAC-PAC Dark / light rooms</td>
<td>English Reading Writing Speaking Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td></td>
<td>Body awareness Positioning Physio OT input</td>
<td></td>
<td>History Geography Science RE Art DT Music Problem Solving Reasoning, Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal, Social, Emotional, Wellbeing</td>
<td>Termly Thematic Multi Disciplinary Approach</td>
<td>Toileting Eating / Feeds Drinking Body awareness Life skills Play / socialisation Developing / accessing facilities – making links for later life</td>
<td>Sensory rooms &amp; Sensory Play Activities Soft play Role Play</td>
<td>PSHCEE Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Development</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mobility Rebound Therapy Swimming Hydrotherapy Yoga</td>
<td>Resonance Board Activities Sensory gardens</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECT / ICT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Switch/access assessments Control of switch Motivation for effects Cause and effect Independence Communication</td>
<td>Community access / experience Skills for life Planned Visits out Planned visitors in</td>
<td></td>
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**Topic Cycle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term/Year</th>
<th>1st Half Term</th>
<th>2nd Half Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Term/Year 1</td>
<td>Harvest: Colour</td>
<td>Winter/Christmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Term/Year 1</td>
<td>Change <em>(with ‘Celebrations’ Week)</em></td>
<td>Spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Term/Year 1</td>
<td>Water <em>(with ‘Activities’ Week)</em></td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Term/Year 2</td>
<td>Harvest: Weather</td>
<td>Winter/Christmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Term/Year 2</td>
<td>Animals <em>(with ‘Celebrations’ Week)</em></td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Term/Year 2</td>
<td>Environments <em>(with ‘Activities’ Week)</em></td>
<td>Summer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn Term/Year 3</td>
<td>Harvest: Growth</td>
<td>Winter/Christmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Term/Year 3</td>
<td>Favourites <em>(with ‘Celebrations’ Week)</em></td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Term/Year 3</td>
<td>Opposites <em>(with ‘Activities’ Week)</em></td>
<td>Summer</td>
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**Monitoring of the Curriculum**

Each of the 5 Key Skill Areas has a teacher assigned to act as a **Key Skill Coordinator**. These Coordinators oversee their assigned areas and produce annual **Key Skill Development Plans**, which are submitted to management and available to the Governing Body. Each Coordinator will lead a Teacher Meeting focusing on their Key Skill Area in the course of each year.

Termly **Progress Meetings** take place, in which class teachers meet with the Deputy Head Teacher to discuss whether each individual student is making good progress. Reports from these meetings refer to numbers of targets achieved and any apparent obstacles to progress, such as problems with medical well-being, engagement with learning activities, etc. Where a student is not progressing as well as might be hoped an internal **Multidisciplinary Meeting** will be called, to include the teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech & language therapist and any 1 to 1 worker assigned to the relevant student. 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.
Each term teachers will participate in an **Internal Moderation Meeting**, in which they examine the evidence for skills achieved by pupils in other classes. The aim is to arrive at agreed criteria for acknowledging achievement and to standardise accepted levels of evidence. Management will also make periodic investigation of class records and evidence bases supporting target achievement in one of the 5 Key Skill Areas.

Each term there will be an **External Moderation Visit** by a representative from a local special school (probably a Deputy Head Teacher). The visitor will inspect the evidence supporting the achievements of 1 pupil, discuss methods used with the relevant teacher and meet the specified student. The schools work together in 3 sets pairs over a year as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autumn Term</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>Summer Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langside &amp; Victoria</td>
<td>Montacute &amp; Victoria</td>
<td>Langside &amp; Montacute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montacute &amp; Winchelsea</td>
<td>Langside &amp; Winchelsea</td>
<td>Victoria &amp; Winchelsea</td>
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A school representative (teacher) also attends periodic meetings involving other local special schools and focusing on the teaching of Mathematics and English (Cognition and Communication at Langside). This includes some scrutiny of teaching and assessment systems operating in each school.

Class 1 works within the guidelines of the Early Years framework with the support of the Poole Early Years Advisor. This includes an annual moderation process in keeping with oversight applied to other schools within the Early Years networks. The Early Years Advisor has carefully examined the suitability of ImPACTS as a tool for assessing young children with complex needs and judged the system as an effective assessment tool for the purposes of the Early Years framework.

Community Group, the post-16 provision in Langside School, carries out activities in line with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The requirements of certification afford a level of external accreditation to these particular activities.