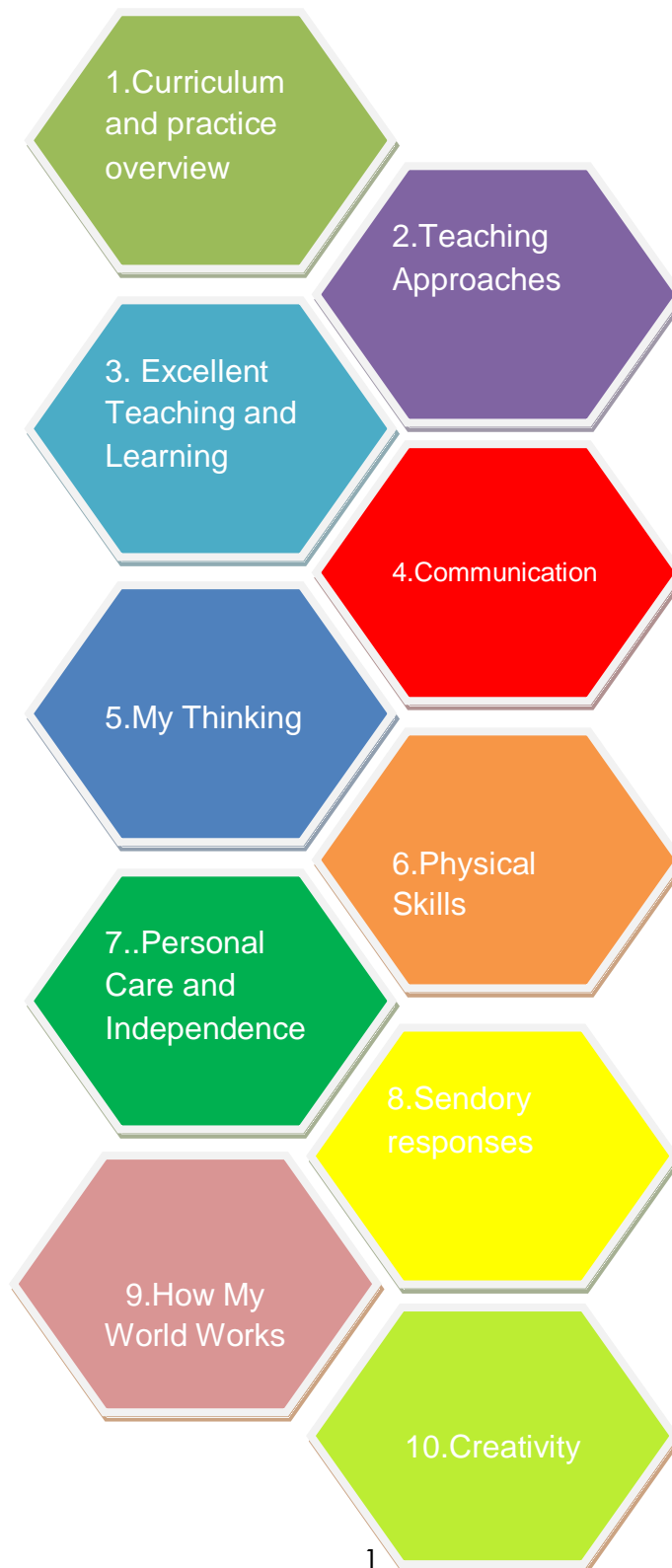


Sensory Department Curriculum Document July 2017



Curriculum and Practice Overview



The Sensory Department

The sensory department was formed in September 2015 to respond to the changing population and needs of the pupils at YMH. The sensory department currently consists of 4 classes and spans the full age range of the school. Two classes broadly cater for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and there are two classes for pupils with complex communication difficulties, including those with autism. The pupils in the sensory department have either profound or severe learning difficulties with additional needs, such as sensory and / or mobility impairment or require additional support for behavioural or medical needs.

All pupils in the department follow personalised learning programmes to meet their academic and communication needs. In addition to this, each pupil accesses relevant therapies throughout the week. Pupils with ASC will access specific therapies to develop their social and interaction skills, whereas those with PMLD will undertake sensory stimulation type interventions to develop awareness and responses. There are specialist teaching staff across the department in the fields of PMLD and ASC and our teaching assistants have received additional training in areas such as augmented communication, autism and therapeutic interventions. There are high staffing ratios in each class across the department to meet the needs of each individual pupil. All pupils in our PMLD classes are supported by a key worker on a 1:1 basis.



Definitions

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 remain in the early P scale range (P1-P4) throughout their school.

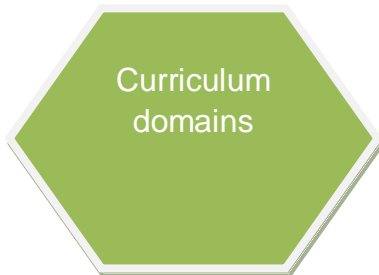
The national autistic society defines **autism** as:
A lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them.
The characteristics of autism vary from one person to another, but in order for a diagnosis to be made, a person will usually be assessed as having had persistent difficulties with social communication and social interaction and restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviours, activities or interests since early childhood, to the extent that these "limit and impair everyday functioning".



Most pupils placed within the sensory department are functioning at the early stages of development. It is widely acknowledged in that pupils who are beginning to take the first steps in learning do not learn through a subject down approach. Rather, they require a personalised curriculum that is carefully structured to take account of their communicative and cognitive level, sensory functioning and motivations. The Routes for Learning guidance document (2006) supports a personal approach to learning:

“Learners will not make sense of a fragmented curriculum, divided somewhat arbitrarily into subject categories. Tasks must be relevant and purposeful to maximise motivation and to help learners make sense of the world around them.”

Pupils in the sensory department will undertake personalised programmes to develop their communication and cognitive skills based on priority objectives from their statement of special educational needs, Routes for Learning / NLF assessment and ongoing observation. In addition to this we believe in bringing the 'hidden curriculum' to the forefront as much time is spent developing self help skills through personal care routines, mobility skills, body awareness and self regulation. Programmes of work for the curriculum domains are delivered through a termly theme. See [appendix 1](#) for 8 year rolling programme This is to ensure curriculum breadth and balance and to promote the development of skill acquisition and generalisation. More able pupils within the department will develop their academic skills through target related work linked to subject areas relevant to the pupils needs. Our curriculum is content free, flexible and based on the individual needs of our pupils. This document serves to provide guidance practitioners at YMH.



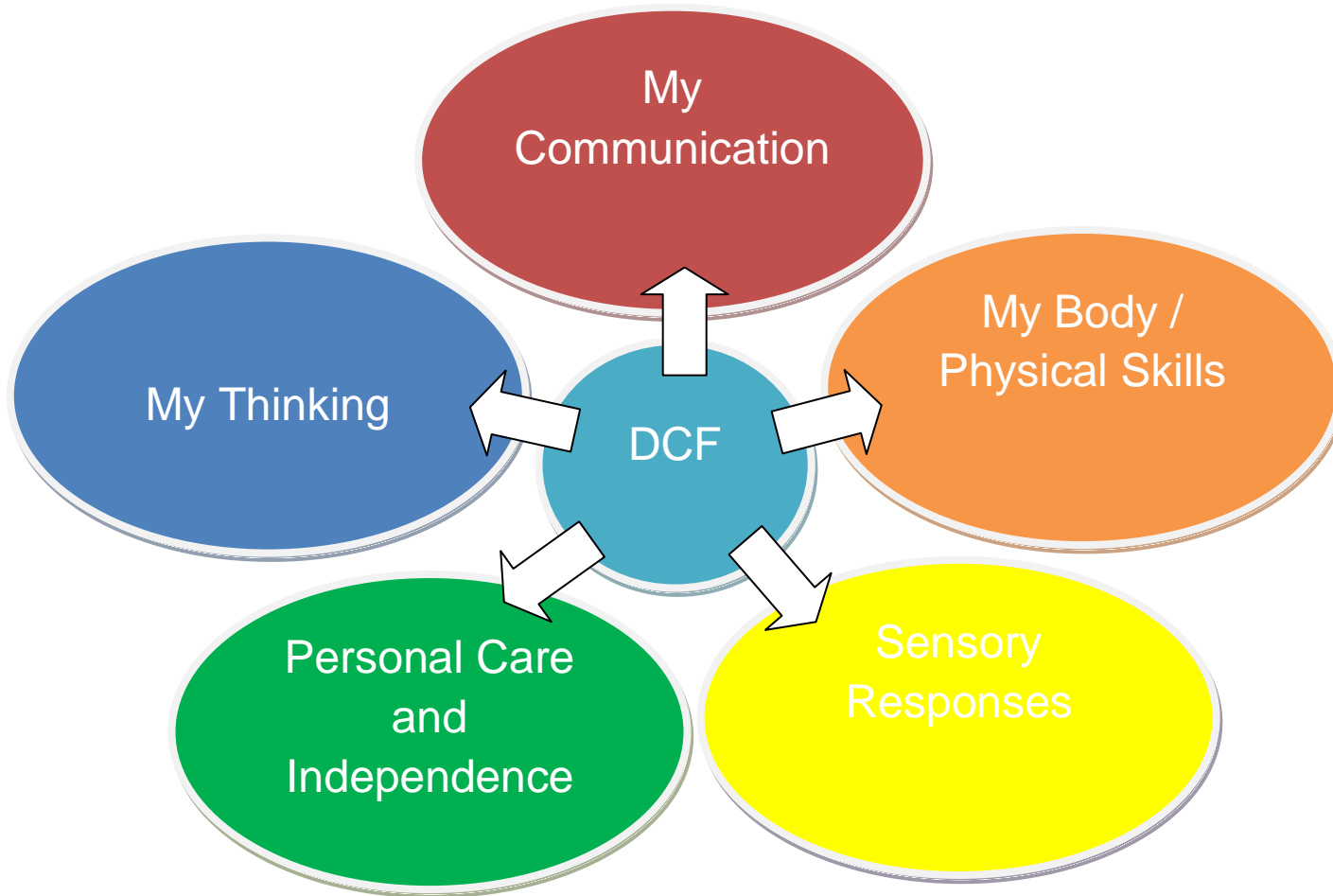
There are two curriculum pathways that pupils will follow depending on their needs and ability. Our PMLD pupils will follow an **informal** pathway. This involves five core curriculum domains which is linked to the Donaldson curriculum review and includes DCF. These domains include:

- My Communication
- My Thinking
- Personal care and independence
- My body / physical skills
- Sensory responses

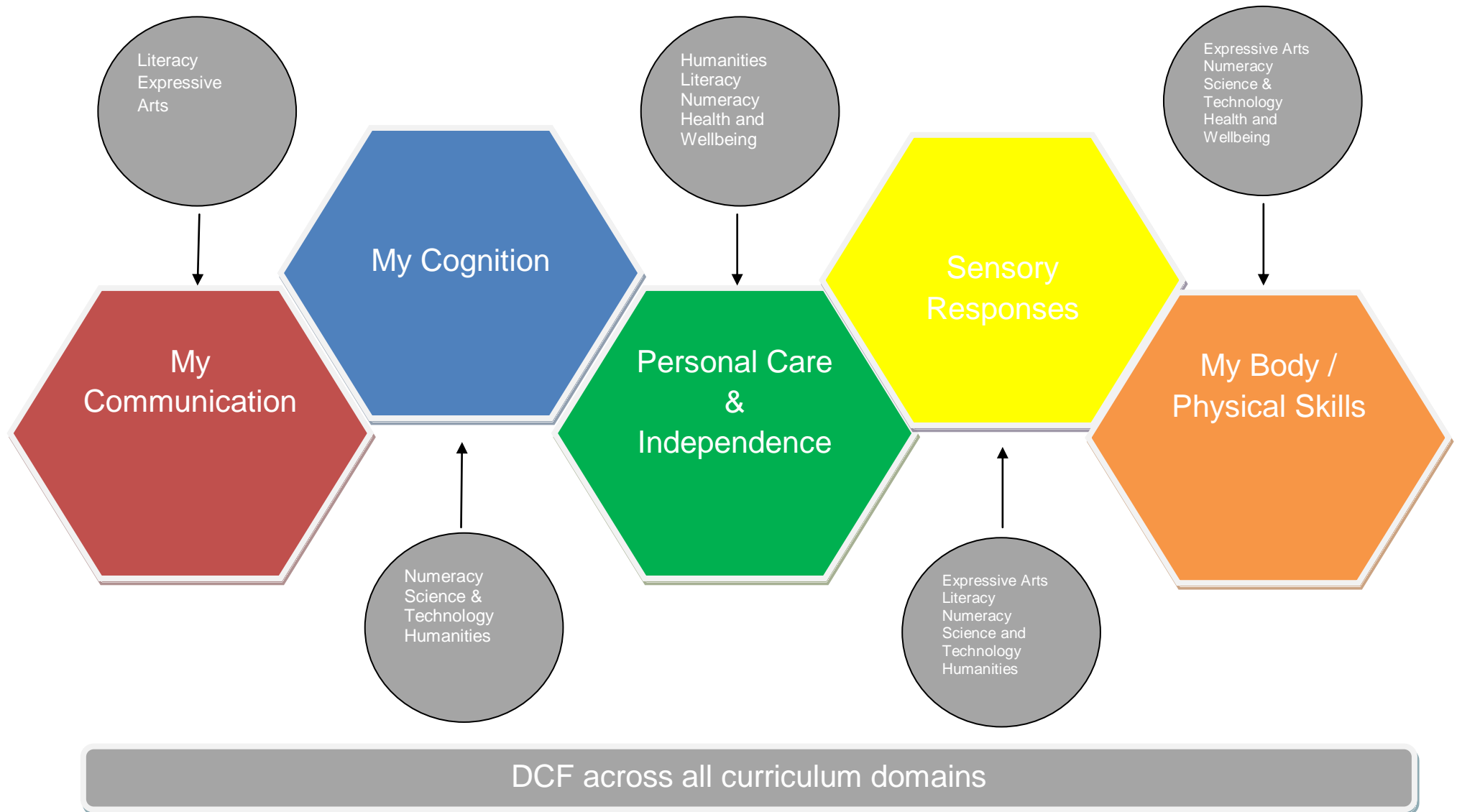
Pupils with SLD will follow a **semi-formal** pathway. This involves six curriculum domains and again is linked to the Donaldson review and DCF. These domains include:

- My Communication
- My Thinking
- Personal care and independence
- My body and sensory responses
- How my world works
- My creativity

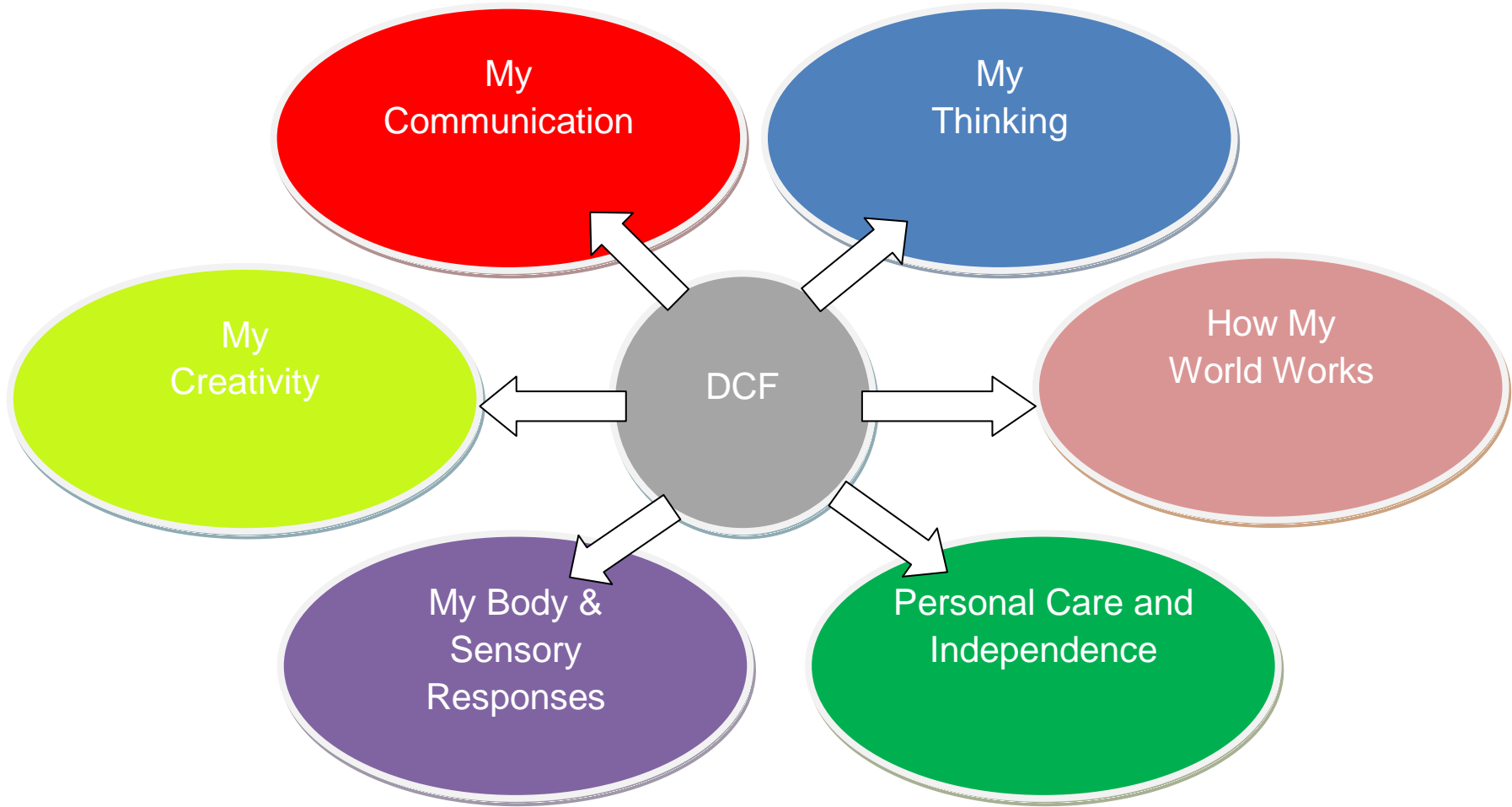
Informal Curriculum – PMLD Curriculum Domains



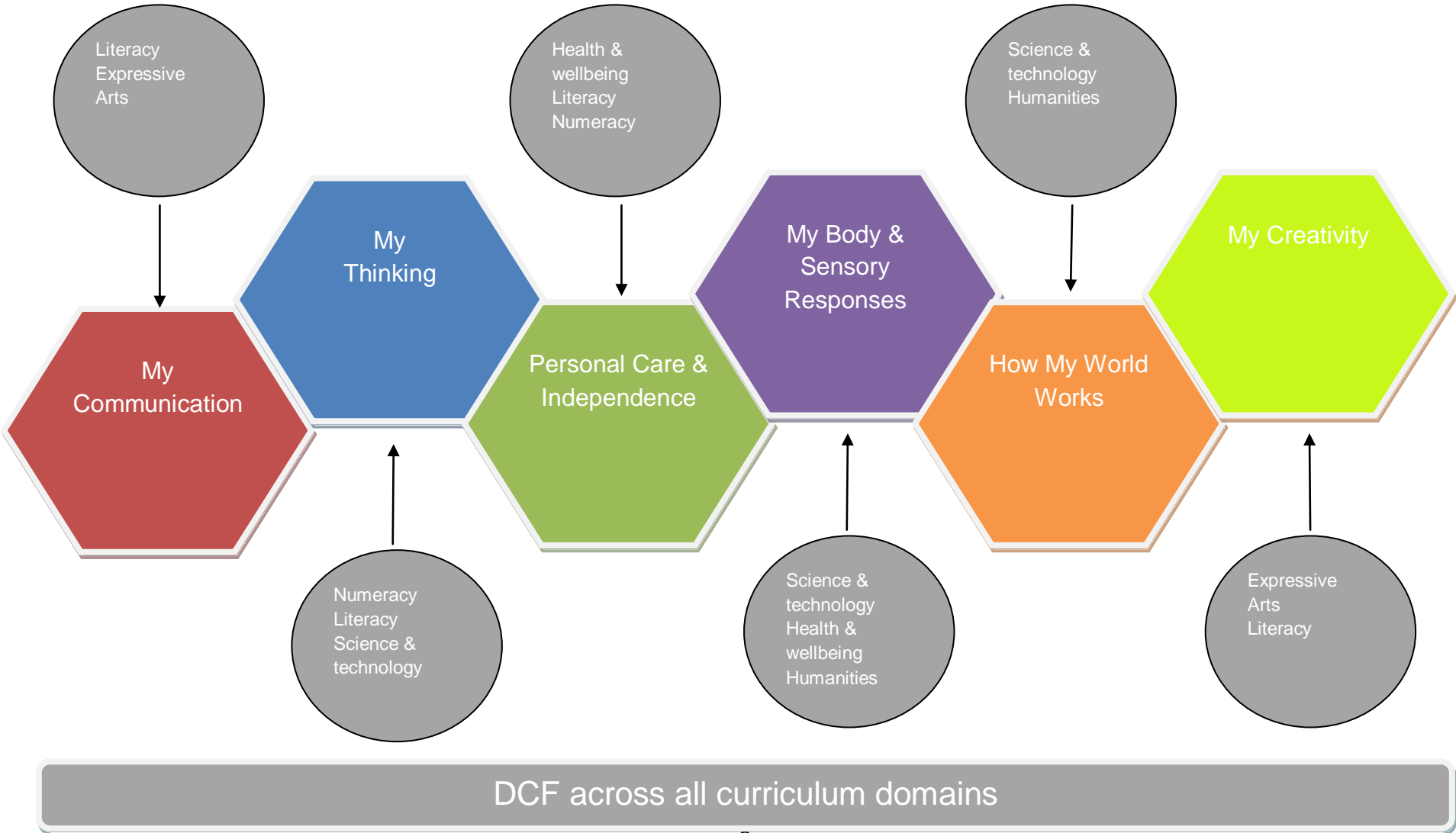
Informal Curriculum (PMLD) and the Donaldson Report



Semi Formal Curriculum (ASC) Curriculum Domains



Semi - Formal Curriculum (ASC Classes) and the Donaldson Report



Digital Competency Framework

The four strands of the DCF will be delivered through the various informal and semi formal curriculum domains. They are presented in the table below. Teachers will identify activities they delivering in their planning in each curriculum domain linking to the relevant strands of the DCF. There is guidance in each curriculum domain as to the various activities they can reference. This list is not exhaustive and will continue to develop over time with the introduction of new technologies and curriculum growth.

DCF Strand	Curriculum Domains	Informal / Semi-Formal
Citizenship	Communication	I/SF
	Personal Care & Independence	I/SF
Interacting and Collaborating	Communication	I/SF
	My Body / Physical Skills	I/SF
	Sensory Skills	I/SF
Producing	My Creativity	SF
	How My World Works	SF
	My Thinking	I/SF
Data and Computational Thinking	My Thinking	I/SF
	How My World Works	SF




Class Groupings

The class groups will crudely be based on pupils at an informal or semi formal stage of development. The class teacher will decide which pathway is most appropriate for each pupil and if necessary, pupils may straddle between the two pathways in one class. There is one class group of discrete Post 16 pupils to ensure access to relevant qualifications such as ASDAN and other work related learning opportunities.



Therapeutic Intervention

All pupils in the sensory department access therapies throughout the week to meet their individual needs. Pupils with autism will receive daily (or near daily) sessions in Venturing into Play and Lego therapy to develop their social interaction and communication skills. Pupils with PMLD will receive regular therapies to develop their body awareness and responses to sensory stimulation through programmes such as Tac Pac and Sensory Dance Massage (see teaching approaches).



IEPs and Individual Learning Programmes

For pupils working at both informal and semi formal stages, teachers will write targets for IEPs broadly linked to the curriculum domains of the pathway. For those on the autistic spectrum, pupils may also have specific social communication and sensory targets to address their personal needs linked to the relevant domains. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties may also have targets to address their physiotherapy and/or sensory needs, such as developing visual awareness. See [appendix 2](#) for sample IEPs. Teachers will use the Routes for Learning and Numeracy / Literacy Frameworks to inform target setting for 'Communication' and 'My Thinking' domains. IEPs will be evaluated and updated each term.

Teachers will produce individual programmes of work for each curriculum domains linked to IEP targets for pupils to undertake on a daily / regular basis. Programmes will be updated on a needs basis in line with progression to with their IEP targets. See [appendix 3](#) for examples.



Pupils will undertake their individual programmes during morning sessions throughout the week on a 1:1 basis with their keyworkers. Programmes for 'communication' and 'my thinking' will be priority areas for morning sessions, whilst programmes relating to personal care will be undertaken on a needs and context specific basis. Pupils will undertake group sessions in the afternoon. They will continue to follow personalised target work but linked more specifically to the departmental thematic modules. See [appendix 4](#) for examples.



Pupils are biannually assessed against the LNF which includes RfL and routes into literacy and numeracy. Their progress is recorded and tracked using an in house system. Pupils can progress laterally and hierarchically through the LNF and their progress is tracked on a three point system:

- **Acquisition** – in which learners learn correct new responses through demonstration, modelling or physical prompting with an emphasis on developing accuracy. At this stage learners need a great deal of support.
- **Fluency** – in which learners, through repeated doing, reach a level of mastery combining speed and accuracy.
- **Generalisation** – in which learners develop and achieve mastery in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or materials or with different staff.

Pupils will be assessed by teachers against different frameworks relating to the various curriculum domains so that targets can be used to inform IEPs. See below:

- **Communication** – RfL / NLF/ DCF
(Communication / English strands)
- **My Thinking** - RfL / NLF / DCF
(Cognitive / Numeracy strands)
- **Physical Skills** – MOVE assessment,
Winstrada

- **Personal Care and Independence – See appendix checklists**
- **Sensory Responses – MDVI assessments, sensory profile**
- **How My World Works – DCF**
- **My Creativity – Sounds of Intent / NLF / DCF**



All sessions, including individual programme work should be tracked and progress monitored through a recording sheet devised by the class teacher. Where a pupil has produced a piece of work, this should be annotated and kept in their pupil file. Photographic evidence may also be kept in pupils files and should be annotated to indicate the level of support required to complete the task. Work should be filed under the domains of the pathway, including any additional sessions delivered. Each pupil also has an individual therapy file which includes recording / tracking sheets.

Evidence of pupils progress towards their NLF targets will be captured via photograph or video each term and uploaded onto the iCloud through the Evidence for Learning app. Teachers should upload a minimum of 1 piece of evidence for Literacy and Numeracy each term for each pupil. Evidence should relate to IEP targets.



Class teachers will produce a report at the end of the summer term for parents / carers to give an account of their child's progress towards the targets they have been working on in their IEP and through other relevant curriculum areas. Objectives from the pupils statement are also reviewed annually and various relevant professionals may contribute reports regarding progress. Sometimes additional or changing needs can be identified during annual reviews and these may be documented for action.



Working with
other
professionals

Transdisciplinary teamwork is essential in meeting the needs of our pupils within the Sensory Department. Pupils are supported by a large transdisciplinary team consisting of school staff, onsite health staff and other visiting professionals. These include teachers, teaching assistants, school nurse, Health workers, specialist nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapist, paediatricians, teachers of the visually impaired and hearing impaired and mobility officers.



The Welsh
Curriculum

Pupils in the sensory department have difficulties processing verbal information due to the extent of their learning difficulties. They require information in a few key words, supported by signs and symbols. The majority of pupils in the department are from homes where English is their first language. There are some pupils where English is an additional language. There are currently no pupils where Welsh is the first language at home in the department. Therefore, a considered approach to teaching Welsh is required so that pupils are not confused or overloaded with another language when they are still at early stages of learning their first language. Pupils will experience the Welsh language through key points of the day, such as morning greeting routines and end of day routines. Pupils will be exposed to Welsh language through short captions on display boards and other opportunities for incidental Welsh throughout the day, as deemed appropriate by class staff. Welsh culture is fully embraced in the curriculum and the rolling programme of thematic units has been devised with this in mind. There is a termly focus every year on an aspect of Welsh culture, such as history events or landscape.

Teaching Approaches



Pupils in the sensory department are functioning between pre-intentional, early intentional or non conventional stages of communication. They need to be supported by staff who are highly skilled and intuitive in interpreting a range of behaviours as if they were intentionally or appropriately communicated. Staff should respond to these behaviours consistently and support transition of pre-intentional to intentional means of communication. It is important that our PMLD pupils are given time and space to communicate within a consistent routine and that staff respond and give meaning to pre-intentional vocalisations and movements. Daily routines can be used as opportunities to develop communication by staff pausing and then follow up any attempt by the pupil to 'fill the gap'. Each pupil will be assigned a 'keyworker' who will become attuned to the behaviours of their pupil and interpret them as communicative signals. This approach best supports individuals in meeting and developing their communication needs and skills. Pupils throughout the department will access augmented assistive communication methods to support and develop their expressive and receptive skills.



Establishing conventional communication can be a lifelong task for all pupils in the sensory department, particularly those with PMLD. Routes for Learning gives a detailed breakdown of the skills pupils need to master to progress from 'reacting to a familiar adult' through to 'expressing a preference for items not present via symbolic means' (i.e. a picture, symbol or word). This learning is achieved by a typically developing child during the first 12 months.

Routes for Learning assessment will give a clear focus for shaping, developing and teaching communication skills and needs.

Ongoing observation of all pupils' communication is vital in establishing appropriate tools to support their expressive and receptive needs. Assessments will be undertaken by our specialist HLTA, class teachers and speech and language therapist.

Additional assessments include:

- Affective Communication Assessment (ACA)
- The Early Communication Assessment
- The Pragmatics Profile
- Living Language
- Pre-verbal Communication Schedule
- The Communication Matrix



We need to structure our communication so that pupils are able to interpret and make sense of the cues we give them. All adults working with a pupil must use these cues consistently. Cues must be planned to meet the pupil's individual developmental needs. Some or all of the systems discussed below may be appropriate for pupils with complex communication needs, including those with PMLD.

Sensory Cues

Pupils at a very early stage of development, particularly those with sensory impairments, are likely to need to start with 'sensory cues'. Pupils need to be given a consistent routine to help them begin to learn to distinguish activities and people so eventually then can begin to learn to anticipate what is going to happen to them. For example, it might be helpful to adopt the following:

- Staff having a personal identifier, i.e. bracelet to touch or vocal cue so the pupils can begin to recognise different people.
- Squeezing pupil's shoulder before pushing their chairs
- On body signs for 'look, listen, smell, taste, touch' and for moving from chairs to floor

Some cues will be particular to individual pupils, for example singing a particular song. Some sensory cues are built into the activity, i.e. smell of lunch, putting coat on for home time. Use natural cues wherever possible, maybe exaggerating them to help the pupil associate the cue with what is going to happen next.

Ensure the cues happen just before the activity begins so there are only a few seconds between the cue and the activity. Keep presenting your personal identifier each time you are working with the pupil so they can begin to recognise you.

Objects Cues

When a pupil alerts with some consistency from sensory cues we may introduce some object cues to develop their symbolic understanding and anticipation skills. An object cue is based on the actual object used in an activity, i.e. an object cue for a drink should be the cup that the pupil uses. It should be offered as a cue as the drinking activity begins. Object cues need to be personalised to the individual and selected to signal some of their daily routines or activities. Feeding and personal care routines are a good starting point as they happen regularly each day. The range of object cues can be gradually increased over time as it is not helpful for most pupils with PMLD at this stage to have lots of different cues for different activities.

There are visual and tactile considerations to be made when selecting object cues, such as:

- Size and colour of object – can they see it? Is it well contrasted?
- Positioning of object – where is best to present the object in their visual field?
- Touch skills - Are they passive when touching an object or do they actively explore with their hands?
- Tactile preferences – do they like or dislike the material of the object?

If the pupil cannot gain information from the object through vision or touch, consider how their tactual skills could be developed or other senses could be used for cueing. Avoid objects made from materials that the pupil does not like. Miniatures make poor symbols as they require good vision and advanced cognitive skills. Timing is also critical when using an object cue as the activity must happen immediately once the object has been presented. Thus aiding memory and enabling anticipation of the activity.

Some pupils may make symbolic use of objects of reference where the object used is representative of the activity. For example being shown (or feeling) a small red cup but actually using a larger blue cup for drinking. Pupils need to be able to generalise familiar objects before progressing to using objects of reference to communicate both expressively and receptively. Pupils need to be working around step 41 on the Routes for Learning Routemap (expresses preference for items not present via symbolic means) for objects of reference to make sense. Some pupils at this stage might be able to understand and a few words. Pupils may use reduced objects of reference or parts of objects, such as a cup handle to signal snack time.

With all cues and objects of reference, they must be used consistently and must be based on individual needs and preferences to develop memory and prediction skills.

Canaan Barrie Signs / On body signing

A way of communicating through movement and touch for children with multiple disabilities, visual impairment and additional support needs. It is based on building up a relationship of trust and understanding between the adult and child. The system works through touch. Most signs have a specific reference point on the body. The aim is to work out a vocabulary of movement, gesture and touch that reflects the everyday routines, needs and interests of the child. The adult encourages the understanding of language by communicating in a slower, simpler and clearer way.

Makaton Language Programme

Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order. Makaton signs are highly visual, concrete and very iconic (at the early stages). This makes them more motivating for pupils to look at and sometimes easier to understand than spoken words alone. Makaton signing can help to develop attention and listening skills, as well as encouraging engagement at all levels.

Low Tech Assistive Communication

Pupils may use PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) and/or PODD (Pragmatic Organisational Dynamic Display) to communicate. They are both symbol based communication systems to develop initiation and enable conversational communication. Refer to communication policy for further details.

High Tech Assistive Communication

Pupils across the department use a range of high tech devices to communicate, such eye gaze and proloquo2go app. The eye gaze computer works by calibrating a pupil's eye movement to the screen. They can communicate by looking at pictures with a voice over to make requests or comments. Pupils also use a range of voice output aids to give greeting messages or contribute to sensory stories.

Intensive Interaction

Responsive adults are the most important resource to teach pupils communication skills. All adults (and more able peers) working with a pupil at a pre-intentional stage must be responsive to any communication from them, however subtle.

This communication may well be pre-intentional but by responding to the interaction and extending it pupils can learn fundamental skills. This approach is often referred to as **Intensive Interaction**.

First and foremost, Intensive Interaction is highly practical. The only equipment needed is a sensitive person to be the interaction partner. The approach works by progressively developing enjoyable and relaxed interaction sequences between the interaction partner and the person doing the learning. These interaction sequences are repeated frequently and gradually grow in duration, complexity and sophistication.

As this happens, the fundamentals of communication are The style of the teacher person is relaxed, non-directive and responsive. In fact, a central principle is that the teacher person builds the content and the flow of the activity by allowing the learner basically to lead and direct, with the teacher responding to and joining-in with the behaviour of the learner.

This simple principle is the one used by adults in interaction with babies during the first year. The first year is the period of development when a baby carries out intense and very rapid learning of the fundamentals of communication. Much of the development of Intensive Interaction was based on reading of the scientific research on the way in which human beings learn to communicate during the first year. The main aims of intensive interaction are:

- Learning to give brief attention to another person
- To share attention with another person
- Learning to extend those attentions, learning to concentrate on another person
- Developing shared attention into 'activities'
- Taking turns in exchanges of behaviour
- To have fun, to play
- Using and understanding eye contact
- Using and understanding of facial expressions
- Using and understanding of non-verbal communication such as gesture and body language
- Learning use and understanding of physical contacts
- Learning to use and understand vocalisations

The teaching sessions are therefore frequent, quite intense, but also fun-filled, playful and enjoyable. Both participants should be at ease with enjoyment of the activity as the main motivation. A session could be highly dynamic, with a great deal of vocalisation, sometimes with fun-filled physical contacts. A session could also be peaceful, slow and quiet.

Suitable games for Intensive Interaction are likely to be those that are very repetitive such as tapping fingers or making little noises. Either person can introduce a game but the 'teacher-person' needs to choose things that are within the child's repertoire or close to what the pupil already does. Some pupils are very music orientated so suitable games may be familiar songs. Other are much more physical and interaction could be achieved through whole body rocking, jumping or even running about.

When using an Intensive Interaction approach consider:

- Interactions based on individual pupil's communication behaviour (as in Intensive Interaction)
- Adults (or more able pupils) who can interact with pupils at early stages of communication regularly.
- Burst-pause of activities (on-off) so children can insert their responses in the gaps
- Adults who can interact in a 'larger-than-life way'.



All pupils in school who have difficulties in communicating have a one page profile. This is a brief, user friendly document that highlights the pupil's communicative behaviours, targets and strategies. For some pupils who spend time in a range of settings or who have a range of health workers will have a more detailed communication passport ([Appendix 5](#)).



Therapies for PMLD

It is important to enable pupils across the department to learn to use all their senses for learning and so stimulating them is a useful and fun thing to do. It is important though not just to massage a pupil's feet with cream, for example, but to use the activity to teach the pupil the next learning step.

If a pupil is learning to anticipate what is going to happen next in a known routine, then massage for a little while and then stop for a few seconds to see if you get a response such as the pupil looking at you or vocalising (as if to say 'more, please').

Keep the pause very short or it won't be remembered. Another pupil might be learning to take turns with an adult, in which case maybe after massaging the pupil's foot for a while you change places and get the pupil to massage your foot. Sensory stimulation should be more than just a relaxing time (unless the next learning step is to learn to relax). It's a learning opportunity.

At YMH we use a number of specific approaches which include sensory stimulation to develop other skills such as communication. Examples are discussed below:

Tac Pac and Sensory Dance Massage

Tac Pac is an activity that pairs music and touch to promote communication and social interaction as well as sensory, neurological and emotional development.

It is used with people who have sensory or neurological impairments, profound and multiple learning difficulties and developmental delay. During these sessions, pupils / students are paired one to one with a familiar adult. Through linking familiar music consistently with objects, actions and people in a pattern of different activities, the partners communicate with each other.

Tac Pac provides a safe and structured framework for the 'receiving partner' to make contact with their own bodies, their environment and other people, and develop a relationship with these. The 'giving partner' ensures that

each tactile experience is well organised and sensitively offered, and adjusted to suit the receiving partner's responses.

A piece of music is chosen specifically to match the texture, character, and emotional quality of each tactile experience. At YMH, we have made our own music selections with matching textured materials. We refer to this as 'Sensory Dance Massage). Tac Pac and Sensory Dance Massage is one way that we can bring the world to pupils in a meaningful and non-tokenistic way. It provides an ideal opportunity to develop reciprocal interactions and intentional communication.

Sensology

Sensology is an educational approach emphasising sensory stimulation. It covers the five basic senses (see, hear, touch, smell, taste) but also the movement related sensory systems: the vestibular (balance, head movements and gravity) and the proprioceptive (body positions, body mapping and planning movements). In a Sensology workout, these senses are literally given a warm-up. Sessions can be in groups or one-to-one and can be brief (five minutes) or, if pupils have physical limitations or take time to respond, delivered at a personalised pace. A session begins with music that draws pupils in. Everyone then takes turns identifying themselves in a mirror, or another starting activity, which usually starts the smiles and laughter. Then, one by one, the senses are worked through. Each one is named and indicated (e.g. "I have eyes") and then put to work. Working the eyes might involve bright torches and reflective surfaces such as CDs. The nose might use strong smells on cotton wool, such as peppermint oil or vanilla. The ears would use a drum, played quietly and then loud. The mouth would be tastes: honey or icing sugar. The body would involve movements such as rocking, squeezing or patting, or perhaps tickling. The session winds down with a goodbye song and clapping

Resonance Boards

These plywood boards which reverberate like a huge drum are used to develop interaction as well as body movement, exploration and cognitive skills such as cause and effect. The boards provide immediate tactile and auditory feedback. They can be used to support intensive interaction and body awareness. Resonance board sessions whatever the focus can be used to provide time for fun and noise and also to encourage listening and turn taking.

Sensory Stories

According to Joanna Grace, a sensory story should partner concise text with strong sensory stimuli to convey a narrative. Sensory stories are fun for everyone, but have particular benefits for individuals with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities and / or complex communication. Sensory stories are used to develop communication and cognition skills for those with PMLD. They should be structured in a simple, repetitive way to build memory and anticipation. At YMH we believe that a sensory story should be repeated many times so pupils develop preferences or dislikes to the range of stimuli they encounter. Sensory stories also provide excellent opportunities to socialise and to bond.

Visual stimulation

Many of our PMLD pupils have a visual impairment and benefit from regular visual stimulation sessions to develop their visual skills. There are also pupils across the department who have significant visual impairments and / or poor visual attention skills. Our pupils have access to a dark room to undertake programmes to develop their vision. At YMH, teachers work in conjunction with the local authorities Sensory Support Service to assess and devise visual stimulation programmes for those with light perception. For pupils who have progressed from the sensory room, staff will deliver programmes to develop their visual attention skills.

Rebound Therapy

Rebound Therapy is a form of physiotherapy. It uses trampolines to provide therapeutic exercises to people with a wide variety of disabilities and additional needs. The therapy involves using the moving bed of the trampoline to promote movement in the participant. By carrying out basic through to highly technical physiotherapy techniques on the trampoline, the therapy can provide many therapeutic and physiological benefits:

- Facilitate and promote movement and balance,
- Improve fitness,
- Increase or decrease muscle tone,
- Help relax the participant,
- Improve sensory integration,
- Improve concentration
- and even improve communication skills.

Rebound is delivered by staff who have undertaken the correct training. Pupils progress is also tracked using the Winstrada assessment framework.



Lego Therapy

LEGO based therapy is a social development programme which helps children and young people with autism spectrum disorders and related social communication difficulties, such as Asperger's Syndrome. The programme is based on the highly structured, systematic and predictable nature of LEGO play which makes it appealing to children with social communication difficulties who are particularly attracted to systems.

LEGO Therapy involves building LEGO models in small groups or pairs where the children take on different roles and work together. The children are encouraged to practice turn taking, sharing, joint problem solving and general social communication skills.

Children would take on one of the following roles;

Engineer – this child has the set of directions and initially has to request the bricks required from the supplier and then direct the builder to make the finished product.

Supplier – has the LEGO bricks and supplies the engineer with the required items on request.

Builder – is given the set of bricks and follows the instructions of the engineer in order to create the product.


Venturing Into Play

For those who are at the earliest stages of intellectual development, play and playing games . . . “Are not time out from real work; they are the most intensive developmental work you can do” (Nind and Hewett, 2001)

If we can teach pupils with SLD to play, we can help them to break into creativity, thinking, problem solving, formulating and maintaining relationships, purposeful self-engagement, narrative and storytelling, theory of mind and developing self-confidence, self-belief and self-esteem.


Prior to undertaking session in VIP, pupils are assessed (and continue to be assessed) against the VIP profile. The VIP Play Skills Profile considers both the social and cognitive developmental dimensions of play. It provides a tool for developing important baseline statements about both the social interactions and the developmental levels of children with ASC. On the social dimensions it offers 34 statements about how the child joins with others to play, ranging from isolated play to initiating the play with groups of children. On the developmental dimensions it offers 26 statements ranging from sensori-motor play to the early stages of sociodramatic play.

VIP sessions are delivered in school on a daily basis and pupils work towards individual targets as appropriate to their needs. Sessions are pupil led and staff support where necessary to parallel play to interactive play using a range of resources and equipment that motivates the individual pupils.



Moving and Handling Plan

Pupils with additional physical needs have a moving and handling plan. This gives detailed information about strategies and approaches to support the pupil in physical transfers, for example in getting in and out of the pool, getting on and off the changing bed, getting on and off the floor. The plan should be written collaboratively by staff who know the pupil well and should be shared with the physiotherapist and with parents. The plan should be regularly updated. The plan also acts as a risk assessment for the pupil and for staff.



Hand under hand approach

For some pupils it works better to give them experiences of activities by putting your hand under theirs rather than over. You do the activity with their hand on top of yours. This gives them a better experience of the activity. It is particularly useful when the pupil immediately withdraws his/ her hand as soon as you try to place it on the object. You hold the object and let the child hold you.



Repetition

Pupils with profound and severe learning difficulties need a significant amount of repetition before they are able to anticipate even a familiar activity. It is necessary for sessions to follow the format each day / week, thus developing pupils' memory and prediction skills. Teachers should repeat sessions, such as sensory stories for a minimum of half a term for pupils with more profound learning needs. Where possible, choose a small number of activities to repeat over and over again, rather than give continually new experiences.



Routines

Early learning in very young typically developing children is based on daily routines such as eating, drinking, nappy changing, dressing and undressing and play routines such as peek-a-boo, round and round the garden and row, row your boat.

Pupils with profound and severe learning difficulties need to experience all these kinds of routines over and over again. Because routines happen several times a day, they are ideal for beginning to learn about the way the

world works. It is important that routines are established and supported by cues, i.e. songs or object of reference. A “finished” sign may also be useful to signal the end of certain routines, i.e. snack time.



Although many pupils in the department do not communicate intentionally, or conventionally, we do need to think of them as having a ‘voice’. We need to be very sensitive to all their reactions and responses so their ‘voices’ can be heard.

Almost all pupils with PMLD react to stimuli and we need to heed what they are ‘saying’. The few who cannot yet show a reaction to stimuli need supporters who can ‘put themselves in their shoes’ and estimate how long to work with them, how long to help them to stand, how long to play music etc.

Teaching and Learning



As a school we aim to provide optimum learning and teaching. We need to have a shared understanding of what excellent learning and teaching looks like for all our pupils.

Teaching pupils with PMLD, complex communication and autism may not fit easily within Estyn's or DFE definitions of 'excellent lessons'. Staff should consider the following when reflecting on Learning opportunities for pupils within the department.



Management and Organisation

- The teacher manages staff time so all children have their needs met
- Staff know what they are doing at all times in the day
- Staff work as a team with common aims and practices. They support each other to meet the pupils's needs
- Teachers are responsible for planning documents but all staff contribute ideas to them
- Teachers and support staff meet regularly to discuss individual pupils and the plans for teaching and learning
- They also meet with therapists/ visiting teachers to agree on children's key targets
- Staff are focused on the pupils during the school day
- Pupils are engaged with activities when supported by staff
- If they are able, pupils engage with activities unsupported
- Staff divide their time equitably between pupils
- Waiting times for pupils to be engaged are minimal and individually appropriate
- Pupils are grouped appropriately to support their learning
- Staff know how to work with children's whose behaviour can be challenging
- They have a plan B when Plan A doesn't work
- Pupils have an environment that meets their sensory, learning and personal needs.

Teaching and Learning

- Staff know children's key targets and can provide suitable activities to practise them
- Staff understand what is included in the areas of the curriculum for their pupils
- They know what they are teaching Pupils and why
- Staff know how to challenge pupils sufficiently
- They provide suitable resources for individual pupils
- Staff use their initiative if a resource doesn't work or they need extra activities
- Staff communicate at a level the pupil can understand and know when to use supportive AAC
- Pupils, who can, are encouraged to interact with each other
- Pupils are enabled to learn in an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment

Physical/ Moving/ Handling/Safety

- Staff move and handle pupils safely and respectfully
- They know how to help pupils use their equipment
- Staff encourage pupils to move for themselves as much as they can
- Pupils are enabled to practice self care and independence skills on a daily basis
- Pupil's positions are changed regularly (PMLD)
- Restrictive physical intervention is always a last resort for the shortest duration possible.

In a lesson observation we would expect to see:

- the teacher directing the learning, showing awareness of all the pupils and staff
- all staff knowing exactly what they are doing and why
- resources in the right place at the right time
- good use of the learning spaces both in and out of the classroom
- the use of AAC suitable to individual pupils
- grouping of pupils and adults that enables all pupils to be engaged as much as possible
- learning that directly relates to key targets

- staff focused on the pupils
- staff following the pupil's lead and adjusting what they are doing where necessary
- staff using Intensive Interaction
- interesting and enjoyable activities that the pupils obviously like

Informal Curriculum Programme of Learning – Communication

The programme of learning for pupils working on communication at this pre- formal stage will include the following three areas:

- 1. Responding (to social events and activities)**
- 2. Interacting (with others)**
- 3. Communicating**

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

The communication programme should be the focus of one lesson each day.

Communication work should also be central to every interaction throughout the day, i.e. intensive interaction should be a 'blue print' for every interaction rather than a lesson in itself.

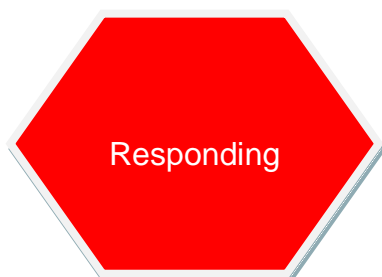
Every pupil should have an individual communication programme identifying their needs and activities that are particularly motivating or crucial to develop their communication skills.

Responding (to social events and activities)

Eg: **Everyday activities**

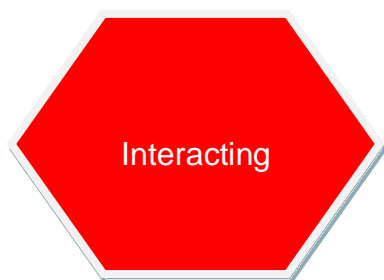
Care routines

Sensory stimuli



Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Respond when basic needs and desires are met (eg: stop crying when discomfort is removed or relax when gently rocked)
- Respond to stimuli presented in on/off pattern (burst-pause) (eg: still, widen eyes, increased movement)
- Respond to nearby person (eg: 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) (eg: by relaxing, stilling, widening eyes or mouth, increased movement)
- Respond to their own names (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 (eg: by looking at the speaker or making sounds)
- Respond in different ways to familiar and unfamiliar adults
- Respond to sensory cues
- Respond to object cues
- Respond to objects of reference or pictures
- Respond to familiar sounds and early words such as brrrm/ woof/ mum, eg: smile and locate sound
- Respond to familiar sounds and words, showing understanding of their meaning (eg: look at 'mum' or the dog)



Interacting (with others)

Pupil should have opportunities to:

- **Interact** with familiar people (eg: smiling, turning, giving eye contact)
- Show they can work co-actively with familiar people (eg: join in 'row the boat' or allow their hands to be used for eating)

- **Show anticipation** of familiar social activities and events (eg: start to rock for 'row the boat' or lean forward to be lifted up)
- Show they have had enough of a social interaction (eg: by turning away or looking down)
- Show preference for particular people, objects and activities
- Respond with interest in the actions of others close by (eg: make eye contact, turn towards, reaching out, vocalising)
- Engage actively in familiar social activities and events (eg: join in action songs or hold up arms for coat) make simple meaningful gestures (eg: pointing or using simple signs, photographs)
- Use their voices to join in a 'conversation' (eg: babbling)
- Attempt simple words and phrases in imitation (eg: mumma, woof, all gone, bye bye, more)
- Use a few words appropriately (eg: more, names, yes, no, mumma – whatever is appropriate for that child)

Semi Formal Curriculum Programme of Learning - Communication

Although the basics of communication are established before children reach P4, there is still a need for adults to interpret often unconventional communication attempts to help shape spoken words and eventually aspects of early literacy.

In speaking and listening, at this semi-formal stage, children gradually build up their ability to understand and use words (spoken, signed or symbolised). They increase their vocabulary and begin to put words together to respond to requests, express their needs and their growing understanding of the world. They learn a range of grammatical structures and use language to help them to think.

Pupils also work on early literacy skills, learning to recognise and name pictures and symbols and eventually some written words. They are learning reading behaviour and handling and enjoying books. They may be able to pick out some words from the text in books, particularly books that are made especially for them. Pupils with SLD are likely to learn to read through a whole word strategy rather than through synthetic phonics (which is very cognitively demanding). However pupils at P7/8 will be beginning to learn about sounds that make up the words they already know (analytic phonics).

Other early literacy skills include activities leading to writing and handwriting. Pupils begin with simple mark making, develop emergent writing and maybe instruct an adult who writes for them. They learn how to sequence an event or story and how to describe what is happening.

In handwriting they learn how to hold a pencil/ pen and make increasingly accurate marks on paper and/or to use the keyboard/ switches to 'write' on the computer. They learn how to write some conventional letters, especially those in their own name.

Literacy at this early stage of development should be interpreted as more than just conventional pre reading and pre writing. Inclusive (accessible) literacy includes picture recognition, storytelling, pretend play, videos, drama and theatre, symbols in the environment (eg M for MacDonalds), drawing and painting. For example, making a video of 'my friends playing' could be seen as inclusive writing. The video is a substitute for conventional text.

'My Communication' at this semi-formal stage is divided into:

- Speaking and Listening
- Inclusive Reading
- Inclusive Writing



Pupils with SLD need a systematic approach to speaking and listening. It is not sufficient just to provide a word-rich environment and hope that spoken language will emerge. Pupils need to develop a vocabulary, grammatical structure and different ways of using their language. Refer to Living Language/ Derbyshire Language Scheme for detail of language development to guide the activities you provide.

Although we may need to be deliberate in teaching spoken language, this should be done in the context of play/ curriculum activities. Language should be embedded in what pupils are doing and not isolated for specific teaching, although you may devise particular games to practice specific vocabulary or grammar.

Some pupils will need to use AAC (Alternative and Augmentative Communication) in addition to or instead of spoken words eg: Objects of Reference, Makaton signs, symbols. They may need to use technology to enable them to express themselves eg: BIGmack, Go Talk. Some pupils will need eye pointing aids eg: Etran Frame or eye gaze technology. Please talk to a Speech and Language Therapist for advice on AAC.

Spoken language is often divided into Receptive, Expressive Language and Pragmatics.

Receptive Language relates to what pupils understand of what is being said to them (both verbal and non-verbal - using words, symbols, signs)

Expressive Language relates to what pupils can actually say (verbal or non-verbal - using words, symbols, signs)

Pragmatics relates to what pupils understand of how to use language/ what language is for (both verbal and non-verbal – using words, symbols, signs)

The programme of learning is divided into 3 areas:

1. Understanding language (Receptive)
2. Using language (Expressive)
3. Communicating and interacting (Pragmatics)

Understanding Language (Receptive)

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Respond appropriately to single words (mainly nouns and verbs at first) eg: coat, drink, book, yes, no, bye-bye, all-gone (anything that interests the child)
- Show understanding of short phrases and sentences around objects and events (2 words then 3 words etc)
- Show understanding of words and phrases used in specific topics eg: snack time, self care, shopping
- Show understanding of words and phrases used to describe properties and relationships eg: colours, textures, sound, shape, size (see Living Language Main Programme)
- Show understanding of simple grammar eg: pronouns, prepositions, possessives, plurals (see Living Language Main Programme for details of grammatical development)

Using Language (Expressive)

- Pupils should have opportunities to:
- Use a range of sounds eg: ssh, miaow, wheeee, brmm
- Imitate sounds and words
- Use single words (mainly nouns and verbs) eg: coat, drink, book, yes, no, bye-bye (anything that interests the child)

- Use short phrases and sentences (2 words, 3 words etc)
- Use words and phrases in specific topics eg: snack time, self care, shopping
- Use words and phrases to describe properties and relationships eg: colours, textures, sound, shape, size (see Living Language)
- Use simple grammar eg: pronouns, prepositions, possessives, plurals (see Living Language)

When planning for language learning clearly state the words/ phrases that are being targeted. Keep a record of the words and phrases understood and used (receptive and expressive language), indicating the number of information carrying words (ICWs) pupils can understand and use eg: where's daddy's car? = 2 ICWs daddy-car or 'wash teddy's face = 3 ICWs (see Derbyshire Language Scheme).

Communicating and Interacting (Pragmatics)

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Attend to people speaking and follow the turn taking between them
- Draw attention to themselves and their needs (with and without words)
- Take turns in a simple conversation (with or without words) firstly with a partner and then in a small group
- Recognise and use gestures eg: waving, pointing, beckoning, patting the chair
- Show they have a shared understanding of an object/ word eg: follow an adult's gaze and look at an object the adult is looking at even if they don't understand the actual spoken word
- Listen to a range of words/ phrases being used in a range of circumstances (adults deliberately demonstrating – but not demanding imitation)
- Direct other people with non-verbal and verbal language
- Call people by name
- Follow simple instructions (at appropriate level of understanding and with appropriate support) eg: sit

- down, eat your dinner, get a book (with or without gestures)
- Show understanding of words and phrases in familiar stories, rhymes and songs
 - Add the last word to a familiar rhyme
 - Answer simple questions (what, where, who?)
 - Ask for what they want eg: biscuit please, more song, no more dinner, read my book
 - Start a conversation
 - Use the 'right' amount of looking at people they are talking to
 - Use greetings and goodbyes
 - Show understanding of contrasting words/ concepts eg: hot/ cold – bigger/ smaller
 - Use appropriate language to share an experience with another person eg: look bike, Sam ball, nice dinner, big bag shopping
 - Ask simple questions eg: where ball? What's for dinner?
 - Tell simple stories eg: 'monkey fell ow, lion bite ow, all gone, the end'
 - Use words and phrases in pretend play/ drama

When planning for and recording progress in Pragmatics, clearly state what is being worked on, how the pupil is demonstrating understanding of language use and perhaps the limitations evident.



Pupils with SLD find learning to read conventional text cognitively very demanding but there are many aspects of inclusive reading in which they can participate. Reading still and moving pictures are important as are identifying words and phrases in the environment and identifying sounds.

The programme of learning is divided into 4 areas:

1. Reading behaviour
2. Pictures and Symbols
3. Sounds
4. Reading Words and Phrases

Reading Behaviour

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Look at books of all kinds eg: picture story books, flap books, personal books, talking books
- Hold books the correct way
- Choose a book from the shelf and replace it
- Turn pages from front to back
- 'Read' the book with an adult
- Point to pictures when requested (in response to known vocabulary)
- Point to pictures and name familiar objects/ people
- Point to individual words (not necessarily reading them)
- Point to words from left to right
- Make and 'read' personal books

Pictures and Symbols

All these activities can be used with different levels of pictures

- Simple photos (one object/ person only)
- Pictures that look like photos (one object/ person only)
- Pictures/ photos with 2 objects/ people and then increasingly more objects/ people
- Pictures/ photos with more background clutter
- Pictures that are more cartoon-like/ stylised

(when planning activities using pictures make sure that the level of picture recognition is clearly indicated.)

Symbols can also be used starting with simple symbols that clearly represent the word.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Match a familiar object or person with a simple photo of that object
- Match pictures that are exactly the same
- Match pictures that are similar eg: different kinds of cars
- Spot very obvious differences between pictures

- Select the right picture/ symbol after hearing the word spoken
- Name the object/s in the picture/ symbol
- Use a picture/ symbol to request something (eg: food or favourite toy)
- Use pictures/ symbols to sequence a simple event/ story (with and without spoken words)

Sounds

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Listen to a range of different sounds eg: environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body and voice sounds
- Locate a range of sounds (usually by turning to them)
- Match sounds to objects, pictures and symbols eg: dog barking, police car siren, drum beat, baby crying
- Name the object that makes a particular sound
- Make the sounds themselves eg: clap, shake maraca, kick dry leaves, make cat miaow sound
- Listen to rhymes and rhythms
- Join in rhymes and rhythms
- Imitate a simple clapping/ tapping voice rhythm
- Listen to alliteration eg: she sells seashells
- Join in simple alliteration
- Imitate simple alliteration
- Listen to letter sounds eg: bbb as a ball is bounced
- Join in letter sounds
- Imitate letter sounds

Reading Words and Phrases

Most pupils will begin with their name and maybe other children's names then mummy/ daddy and any family names. Select nouns and verbs of the greatest interest to the child. Go to the See and Learn website for resources and ideas for teaching reading through whole words <http://www.seeandlearn.org/en/gb/language-reading/introduction/>

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Match familiar written words with objects/ pictures/ symbols
- Match familiar words with words eg: in a bingo game
- Spot the odd one out
- Select the requested word
- Read words
- Match short written phrases to pictures eg: dog ball, daddy wash, red car
- Select the requested short phrase
- Read short phrases
- Read words and phrases with clear understanding of the meaning
- Use their reading in everyday practical contexts eg: shopping list, menu, birthday card, message from mum

When pupils can read about 50 words, it may be possible to start breaking them down into sounds (analytic phonics) so these pupils should have opportunities to:

- Match sounds to letters (eg: first sound of their names and familiar words)
- Match rhyming words eg: cat and bat
- Spot the odd letter sound out
- Read/ say individual phonemes (see Letters and Sounds for a suggested order of learning)



Pupils with SLD find learning to write very demanding and they often do not make much progress in conventional letter, word and sentence forming. There are however, other ways in which children can express themselves and record what they want to say, especially using technology.

The programme of learning is divided into 2 areas:

1. Writing
2. Mark Making and Handwriting

Writing

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Use spoken words/ objects/ pictures/ symbols to 'write' a story
- Tell an adult what to write for them
- Experiment with their own emergent writing
- Attach emergent words and phrases to their drawings
- Write/ type their own names (and addresses)
- Put words side by side to form a phrase (perhaps using a sentence maker eg: Breakthrough to Literacy stand style or PCS Velcro book style)
- Write short phrases using whole word selection software (eg: Boardmaker)
- Write words supported by an adult (see handwriting)
- Write words and phrases independently
- Label objects/ pictures with written words
- Use writing for practical purposes eg: birthday cards, shopping lists, messages

Handwriting

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Hold a pencil/ pen in a whole hand grip to make marks
- Hold a pencil/ pen in a tripod grip to make marks
- Make different shaped marks (eg: straight and curved lines, dots and dashes)
- Make large scale and small scale marks
- Draw approximations of familiar objects
- Colour their drawings
- Make marks in a row (emergent writing)
- Write over the top of marks of different kinds
- Write over letters (written in yellow)
- Start at the red dot and traces round a letter
- Copy underneath letters and words
- Free write letters and words

BREADTH OF LEARNING

As reading and writing conventional text takes a very long time to learn (or not at all), there need to be plenty of opportunities for children to be engaged in literacy activities, even if they cannot read and write or cannot read and write more than a few words.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Access fiction and non-fiction books/ e-books/ talking stories/ Powerpoint stories eg: Pete Wells stories
<http://www.whiteboardroom.org.uk/learningsystem/portalhome/predefault.asp?Resource=C23ABDA3-335B-4161-9746-FB4C8F763623&ResourceId=7041>
- Make choices between favourite stories/ books
- Make and read personalised books
- Listen to and join in familiar stories, poetry and songs
- Tell familiar stories (supported by props/ people/ pictures)
- Tell personal stories (ditto)
- Role play and play drama games/ act out stories/ sound stories
- Watch and make their own videos (acting out a story, stop frame, pictures)
- Use computers to find pictures/ games and songs
- Play interactive games around episodes in stories/ poems/ plays (see Keith Park's book 'Interactive Stories, Nicola Grove's book 'Ways into Stories', Mencap 'Reading For All')
- Go to live theatre/ listen to a professional storyteller/ go to the cinema
- Use their reading and writing for practical purposes eg: label things or their own work with their names or send picture emails or make a video diary to take home to their families

Communication and DCF Links

Citizenship

Identity, image and reputation

Activities to support this include:

- Interactive display of pupils photographs, i.e. greeting routine on smartboard, touch screens, iBoards
- Pictorial / symbol based communication apps
- PODD / PECS books
- Pupils using iPads, cameras etc... to take photos of themselves / others
- Name labels – words and symbols
- Symbol word processing, i.e. clicker, communication in print, boardmaker
- Attend to symbols connected with themselves and known people/objects/activities
- Make selections such as a name label to communicate meaning
- Select letters or images for their own names
- Pupils with VI to use take back symbols, keyboards, voice output aids
- Switch it maker

Interacting and collaborating

Communication, Collaboration,

Storing and sharing

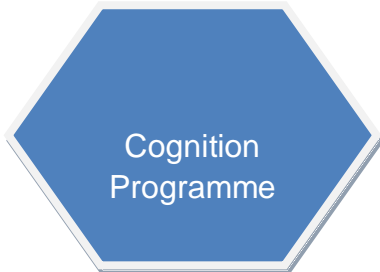
- Hi Tech communication such as Eye gaze, i.e. Communicator 4 (Tobii)

- Communication apps such as Proloquo2Go / Sono Flex, PECS and PODD apps
- Low Tech, i.e. PODD and PECS books
- Voice output aids i.e. 4 talk, big mac
- Clicker (producing sentences with symbols)
- Talking books
- Ebooks
- Online sensory stories, i.e. Pete Wells which includes switches
- Choice boards
- Single switch programs to build images
- Mark making apps, touch screen, i.e. colour magic and painting apps

Informal Curriculum

Programme of learning –

My Thinking



Pupils at a very early stage of development need people around them who can help them to explore and interpret the world. They have difficulty in making sense of that world and need many opportunities to handle and test out objects, look for patterns and sequences in experiences and generally extend their focus from the immediate to things further away.

Pupils at this very early stage need to experience the same activities over and over again if they are going to be able to learn from them. Hand **UNDER** hand can be useful as well. The adult does the activity with the child's hand lying on top so the activity can be felt.

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. When cause and effect has been established, early problem solving can begin.

The programme of learning is divided into 4 areas:

- 1. Awareness**
- 2. Exploration**
- 3. Control and early problem solving**
- 4. Sequence and pattern**

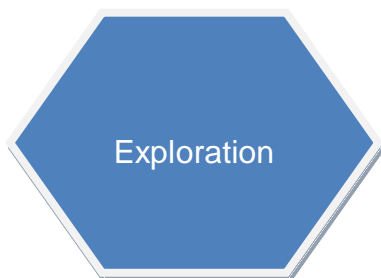
The opportunities suggested are roughly in developmental order but should not be treated as steps to be mastered one after another.



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

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Recognise an obvious change happening very close to self (eg: stills when hand is massaged or when sees a bright flashing light)
- Recognise when a stimulus starts and stops (eg: stills, moves limbs, turns after the stimuli start or stop)
- Accept stimuli for an increasing amount of time (eg: will hold objects or allow feet to be in the foot spa)
- Respond to a widening range of stimuli (eg: turns to a range of flashing objects)
- Anticipate stimuli that occur over and over again (eg: smile before being pushed on the swing after several pushes)
- Respond to a range of stimuli that are quieter/ less obvious (eg: smile at quiet singing)
- Attend to stimuli further away (eg: hears music a few feet away or smells lunch as the trolley comes in)
- Transfer attention from one stimulus to another (eg: look at jumping dog and when it finishes look at moving car)
- Attend to stimuli in a busy classroom (eg: watch another child moving around)
- Locate a specific stimulus against a busy background (eg: find favourite toy in a box of several toys or turn to name in a noisy room)
- Persist in making simple toys do something (eg: keep swiping wobble toys or pressing a switch to keep the toy active)

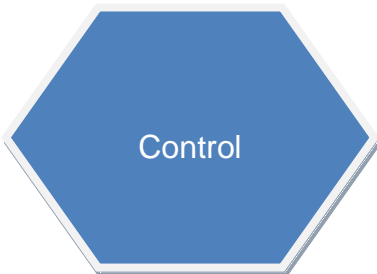


Exploration (of objects, materials and substances)

(all parts of the body should be used, especially those parts that pupils can move independently, however little)

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Use their senses to register interesting events around them (eg: listen to drum, watch moving toy, touch gloop)
- Locate moving stimuli (eg: 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 (eg: turns head to locate flashing light)
- Make things happen when they move randomly (eg: the space blanket crackles when the child wriggles or arm movement activates a hanging bell)
- Activate toys that provide an interesting effect randomly and without connecting the cause to the effect (eg: pats a BigMac switch and something motivating happens or kicks the key-board and sounds happen)

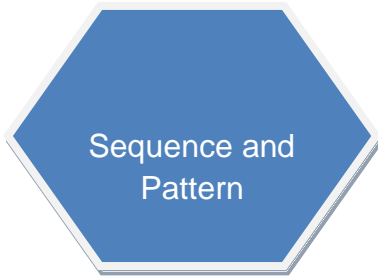


Control (of objects and materials)

Although physical manipulation of objects and materials is vital for developing understanding of what those objects do, children with physical disabilities may use eye pointing or technology to aid their explorations. Unfortunately, eye pointing and switch operation does not enable pupils to do all the activities suggested below and it may be difficult to assess pupil's understanding accurately unless or until they are competent eye pointers or switch users. When planning to use switches remember to keep the cognitive process you are encouraging firmly in mind. Learning to use a switch is not the target. Refer to the switch progression document to assess and plan switch use ([Appendix 6](#)).

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Make things move deliberately with gross movement (eg: knock mo-bile, kick bells swish water)
- Make things move deliberately with finer movements (eg whole hand or head to activate switch or swipe objects that give a strong reward)
- Persist in making simple toys do something (eg: keep swiping wobble toys or pressing a switch to keep the toy active)
- Operate a toy that requires a single action (eg: button on Jack-in-the-box, switch for bubble tube)
- Activate toys deliberately, using different movements for different toys (i.e. shaking bells and banging drum)
- Shift attention between different objects/ actions (eg: different actions on an activity centre)
- Manipulate objects purposely (eg: empty and fill containers, stacking and building blocks)
- Press buttons to make toy work (eg: keyboard, musical toys)
- Look for favourite objects when sees them hidden (eg: toy in box, under material)
- Look for favourite objects in a box of similar items (not deliberately hidden)
- Open containers to find objects (eg: lift lid, press buttons, pull top off)
- Use objects and materials according to their function (eg: brush for hair, shoes on feet, paint on paper)



Sequence and Pattern

Again, it can be hard for children with physical or sensory impairments to show their true level of understanding.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Take turns in repetitive games where adult stops to wait for a response (eg: Intensive Interaction, action songs)
- Anticipate routine events – that is see a pattern in the event (eg: action songs, eating, being hoisted)
- Recognise familiar places (eg: 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 (eg: spoon, cup, hair brush, drum)
- Take turns actively (eg: rolling ball to partner, passing objects backwards and forwards)
- Choose between two or more motivating toys
- Respond to object cue (eg: sits down for a drink when sees the cup)
- Select appropriate resources for a familiar routine (eg: spoon for eating, ball for game, shoe after soft play)
- Assist in putting away resources used in a familiar routine
- Operate toys that require more than one action to complete (eg: bubble tube controlled by latched switch, CD player knobs)
- Operate toys that need to be pulled apart and put together (eg: stickle bricks, Duplo)
- Follow objects that move within the toy (eg: cars down a slop, balls in a tube)
- Put objects into a container one at a time (eg: balls down a tube or helter skelter)
- Select preferred objects from a mixture of objects (eg: in a box)

- Look at the bottom of a sliding/ tumbling toy for the object to appear when it can't be seen travelling down)
- Use objects that require two or more actions to complete (eg: posting shapes or simple form boards)
- Use early problem solving for a familiar event (eg: selecting a car or ball to roll down the slope rather than a piece of material or paper)
- Solve simple problems where understanding the pattern is important (eg: when there are 4 pegs to a toy and 3 are in place, look for the fourth if out of sight)

Semi-Formal Curriculum Programme of Learning – My Thinking

The Programme of Learning is divided into:

1. Thinking skills
2. Patterns
3. Numbers
4. Inclusive maths / DCF (delivered throughout all aspects of the curriculum)

Pupils will undertake daily individual programmes for 'thinking skills' to work towards targets set against the LNF (or relevant assessment). Teachers will also plan an additional weekly session to ensure coverage of the semi formal curriculum. Teachers will plan with a termly focus. See below:

Autumn Term	Thinking Skills
Spring Term	Patterns
Summer Term	Numbers

Teachers will reference DCF links in their planning. Below are activity ideas / suggestions that can support each of the areas.

Thinking Skills

The main thinking skills programme is divided into six areas:

1. **Predicting and anticipating**
2. **Remembering**
3. **Understanding cause and effect**
4. **Linking objects, events and experiences**
5. **Problem solving**
6. **Understanding how others think**



The learning opportunities are listed roughly in developmental order but be guided by children's strengths and interests when deciding what to teach next rather than the next opportunity on the list. Build on what children can already do.

Predicting and Anticipating

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- anticipate routines, events and activities
- anticipate new activities after a few examples
- predict the end point of familiar activities as they unfold
- predict an event based on past experience
- follow simple instructions to find a hidden object
- make sensible guesses and then check if they are correct
- correct themselves when wrong

Remembering

Pupils have opportunities to:

- remember familiar people, activities and events
- recall events and experiences from the near past
- carry out a routine remembering the different steps
- remember items in a list (verbal or visual)
- use a strategy to remember (talking out loud/ repeated looking)
- respond to clues to help to remember

Understanding cause and effect

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- connect their own actions to familiar effects
- connect other people's actions with familiar effects
- connect a sequence of effects to a cause

- connect a delayed cause and effect
- test out whether a cause and effect are connected
- indicate why an effect has occurred
- indicate what connects cause and effect (without trying it out first)
- remember cause and effect after single reminder

Linking objects, events and experiences

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- put together 2 actions to make something happen
- link objects with a particular routine
- recognise an activity from a small part of it
- link together different stages of a known activity
- indicate what comes next in a known activity/ event

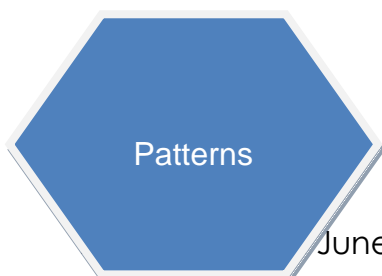
Problem solving

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- recognise simple problems and try obvious strategies
- persist until the problem is solved (simple problems)
- put together two or more strategies to solve the problem
- plan (verbally or pictorially) a strategy before trying it out
- ask for help with a problem
- indicate what worked and what didn't
- indicate how process can be improved
- try old strategy in a new context
- copy new strategy after demonstration

Patterns

The first step in learning mathematics is recognising patterns in the world. Pupils learn



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about the properties of objects: that they are small or big, smaller or bigger, the same or different, can fit into a box, are too heavy to carry and so on. They need lots of opportunities to handle objects, pictures and people.

The Patterns programme is divided into 4 areas:

- 1. Object properties (smell, taste, colour, texture, shape, size, weight, volume)**
- 2. Shape and Space**
- 3. Sense of Time**
- 4. Measurement**

Object Properties

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- handle a large variety of objects with different properties from small to large, light to heavy, long to short, fat to thin, rough to soft etc
- recognise and use the language of comparisons eg: big/ little, long/ short
- match objects that are exactly the 'same'
- find the odd-one out – 'different'
- indicate 'same' and 'different' when objects are similar eg: different kinds of cars
- sort objects into different property sets eg: clothes for the laundry or toys into different boxes
- arrange objects in order eg: by size, weight
- make patterns with threading beads or peg on a boards eg: patterns of colours, shape or size
- respond to what happens when eg: you throw balls into a parachute or into a tree or behind you

Shape and Space

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Build with different shaped and size bricks/ junk/ interlocking construction toys/ pieces of wood/ squishy things/ hard things

- Fill and empty containers
- throw/ post objects into containers eg: welly wanging into a hoop, posting shapes
- Complete a range of form boards and jigsaw puzzles
- Match shapes that are exactly the same (not only triangles and circle but also socks, shoes and gloves, apples, bananas and toy animals)
- Match shapes that are similar eg: trousers of different sizes and colours
- Sort shapes into different properties (shape, size, colour, weight, thickness)
- Move their bodies in, out and on different shaped spaces eg: tunnel, slide, den
- Hear and use shape language eg: 'circle', 'triangle', 'round', 'long', 'corners', 'sides'
- Hear and use space language eg: in, on, under, up, down, over, in front, behind
- Solve simple problems related to shape and space eg: how do you put a small hat on a large head or 2 people into a box or can I balance a ball on top of a brick tower?

Sense of Time

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Join in a variety of rhythms in music
- Join in with a sequence of actions
- Move 'slowly', 'quickly' / 'fast'
- Watch things drip slowly or pour fast
- Respond when a pattern is interrupted eg: protests when everyone gets a piece of fruit except him/her
- Copy rhythms and lead a rhythm game
- Recognise products they have made (eg: in art)
- Join in setting up the daily timetable (using objects, pictures, symbols)
- Contribute to their own home-school diaries about what they have been doing
- Use the microwave and wait for it to ting before getting the food out
- Use a sand timer and wait for it to run out before doing an activity

- Remember what happened earlier or yesterday (maybe using scrap books/ photo albums of their activities to help them to recall what they did)
- Indicate what's going to happen next/ plan an activity for 'later'
- use language 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow'
- Solve simple problems related to time eg: can I put all these balls in this box before the sand timer runs out or what happens when we miss the bus or what shall I tell mummy I did today?

Measurement

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Pour water at different speeds and through sieves and water wheels etc
- Fill containers of different shapes and sizes
- Use words such as 'full', 'empty'
- Compare what containers can hold/ sets of objects/ people using the words 'more' and 'less' and 'same'
- Compare the length/ height of objects using the words 'long', 'short', 'tall', 'high', 'low'
- Compare speed of people and objects using the words 'fast', 'slow'
- Compare the weights of objects using the words 'light' and 'heavy'
- Judge amounts eg: which car will travel faster
- Collect simple data about the weather
- Solve simple problems related to measurement eg: how many small jugs do you need for a whole carton of milk or how do you fit all the pencils into the box or how can I move this heavy box?

Numbers

The numbers programme is divided into 3 areas:

1. Rote counting
2. Counting objects
3. Numerals

Rote Counting

Pupils learn to rote count (say 1,2,3) before they understand what counting is for. Later they learn to count objects and gradually understand that each object should be counted once and only once and the number name you finish with can be the response to 'how many?' Only then can they begin to understand simple adding and subtraction.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Discriminate between sets of objects in the range 1-3 eg: choose the plate with 2 sweets over the plate with 1 sweet
- Hear and join in rhythms, rhymes and chants using numbers (before recognising that the order of the words is always the same) eg: build a tower '1,2,3' and then child knocks it down or count '1,2,3' before pushing on the swing
- Recognise objects/ people are 'all gone' or there are 'lots' of them
- Join in rhythms in number patterns using instruments (stick to 1-3 to begin with)
- Join in simple numbers games using number 1-5
- Say number names 1-5 and later 1-10 in number rhymes and games
- Count backwards 3-1 and later 5-1 and 10-1 in games eg: 321 blast off!

Counting Objects

Very young typical children can understand quantity if the numbers are very small (1-3) but struggle with larger numbers for some time. For pupils with SLD, keep to 1,2,3 until you think they have a good understanding of them as quantities. Then you can move on to 1-5 and 1-10.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Count a very small number of matching objects when they are placed in a line 1-3 first then 1-5 and then 1-10
- Respond to the question 'how many' by counting (even if inaccurately)
- Count by putting them in a line themselves or pulling them towards themselves
- Count objects that are not exactly the same
- Share out objects between people eg: drinks or pieces of banana
- Increase the number of objects by a set number (1-3 first)
- Hear and use the words 'first', 'second', 'third', 'last'
- Add more or take away some objects and count again to find out 'how many now?'
- Share out objects between people eg; 'one for you and one for me'
- Hear counting on and count on themselves with prompting
- Play simple games with dice/ cards with dots/ pictures using 1-3 first. These are likely to be homemade games
- Solve simple problems involving quantities eg: how can I pick up 3 balls or how can I get all these bricks into one box or what do we do when there are no toys in the box?

Numerals

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Match numerals eg: posting the right 'letter' with the numeral on into the right letter box with the numeral on or numeral lotto
- Match numerals to the correct number of items (1-3 first, then 1-5 and 1-10, 0)
- Identify written numerals 1-3, 1-5, 1-10 then 0
- Play games with the numerals 1-3 (then 1-5 and 1-10, 0) eg: dice with numerals on or cards with

numerals on. These are likely to be homemade games

- Copy numerals/ use stamp with numeral on to label the set with the corresponding number of objects/ pictures
- Solve simple problems using written numerals eg: fill in the missing numeral in a number line, treasure hunt to locate the numerals, follow set of picture exercises eg: 1 arm stretch, 2 jumps, 3 knee bends etc

Inclusive Maths

As learning to count, adding up and subtracting numbers takes a very long time to learn (or not at all) there need to be plenty of opportunities for pupils to be engaged in maths activities, even if they cannot count or can only count by rote.

There are suggestions below for embedding maths across the curriculum.

- Access books that use patterns/ shape and space/ time and numbers in stories, rhymes and poems
- Play a range of musical instruments using different rhythms
- Sing and play counting games eg from <http://www.preschoolrainbow.org/preschool-rhymes.htm>
- Play homemade board games aimed at individual children's specific understanding
- Play movement games involving maths concepts eg: skittles/ obstacle course/
- Tell stories that include maths concepts eg: the Hungry Caterpillar
- Watch and make videos around maths concepts
- Play games and sing songs using websites such as CBeebies Numberjacks <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/numberjacks/> or Poisson Rouge <http://www.poissonrouge.com/>

- Go into the community and find shapes, space, numbers
- Role play and use drama games around maths concepts
- Dance using different sequences and patterns (folk dancing is really good)

My Thinking and DCF Links

Producing

Planning, Sourcing and Searching

Activities to support this include:

- Selecting a piece of music / DVD / Image on screen.
- Attend to devices with sequences of effects, such as using switches to change the colours in a bubble machine
- Take pictures on school camera / iPad
- Find favourite songs / resources using online websites, such as priory woods.
- Exploring apps on iPad to make a choice.
- Make connections between the mouse and the screen to operate a simple simulation programme.
- Anticipate events such as an image appearing when pressing a switch.
- Select a photograph / sound effect that can be added to a multimedia program.
- Electronic keyboard with a range of sounds and the ability to store and play sequences.
- Explore various sound effects on SoundBeam or Midi Creator.
- Contribute to powerpoint presentations by selecting images, sounds, videos.
- Select sound icons and add to a prepared grid by dragging and dropping the icon.
- Explore 'Noodle' software to make compositions
- Type letters into a search engine to find a website / gather a range of specific information
- Select an image on a webpage
- Respond to simple instructions to use internet tools such as the back button and scroll bars to navigate.
- Explore websites using touch screen, mouse and switch

Creating

- Pupils to create pictures of themselves and others using painting programs, Face Paint (SEMERC) or My World – Getting Dressed
- Pupils to create their own sequences by operating devices in turn, e.g. lights and buzzers
- Programming a floor robot to travel
- Create procedures to control multiple devices, e.g. switch on different lights in a model house, raise and lower a Lego Technics car-park barrier.
- Use Clicker to produce text / simple sentences
- Use multimedia to produce animations
- Use multimedia to create and reinforce stories
- Record sounds in the classroom / around school, i.e. water running from a tap, music, bell
- Use multimedia to create 'All About Me' stories
- Use multimedia - Produce powerpoint presentations with sounds, images, videos
- Use multimedia – Produce Switch it Maker resources
- Contribute to making own talking book with sounds and images
- Use switches to operate food processors to make foods, i.e. fruit smoothies, soup
- Create various effects using switch technology, i.e. fan linked to powerlink
- Create various effects using cause and effect apps, i.e. finger paint, sensory lightbox, sensory soundbox, Fluidity etc...
- Creating compositions using SoundBeam, Noodle Software, keyboard.
- Use 'painting' computer programs with tools to change colour / effects.
- Use switches to create effects on environment, i.e. operate footspas, fans, aroma diffuser, moving toys

Data and Computational Thinking

- Matching and sorting activities, i.e. sound lotto
- Matching everyday objects and pictures, i.e. colour, shape, size
- Touch screen and mouse programmes to sort and match at an appropriate level
- Drag and drop matching / sorting activities on computer program
- Program movable toys / robots using iPad / relevant software
- Problem solving activities, i.e. dummy switches, less familiar switch settings to operate equipment via powerlink
- Resources in Switch It Maker linked to class themes
- Activities that involve more than one action to create an effect on the environment, i.e. multiple switch pressing, dual switch activities
- 2 talk, 4 talk switches to convey a message (see above list)

Informal Curriculum Programme of Learning – Physical Skills

Pupils 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 have physical/ health targets that have been agreed between all the professionals who work with each pupil.

Pupils who are physically impaired have a moving and handling plan. This plan should be written collaboratively by all professionals working with a pupil.

The plan is both a detailed 'how to' guide for all staff to give them guidance about how to teach pupils physical skills in their daily life and a risk assessment. It is essential that all staff use the mobility plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and of themselves. Plans should be updated annually or in response to any changes, i.e. post surgery.

Aspects of the programme can be based on the principles and practice of:

MOVE, Halliwick Swimming and Sherborne Developmental Movement.

The physical skills programme should be the focus of a lesson each day.

This may be as part of a class PE lesson, as part of a cross grouped physical activity or as a functional part of another activity – for example walking around outside during leisure time.



The programme of learning is divided into four main areas:

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 under-standing of the use of that movement.

As part of the physical programme, pupils 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.

In the programme the phrase 'show awareness of...'
requires a record of what the pupil actually does to indicate they are aware that something is happening to them as this will vary from pupil to pupil. Some might move their eyes, some their limbs, others might stiffen or become more relaxed. Please make a record of what each pupil does to show that they are aware of being moved.

Pupils 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 (eg: foot spa, silk material, fan)
- Show awareness of a range of total body movements (eg: swinging, floating, rolling)
- Show awareness of a range of different body orientations (eg: flat, bunched up, upside down)
- Show awareness of where their body is in space (eg. On top, under, crawl through)
- Show awareness of a range of pace of movement (eg: slow, quick, jerky, smooth)
- Show awareness of different textures touching body (eg. Cold, soft, rough)

- Show awareness of their limbs to be moved passively (eg. stretching in exercises or as part of action songs) (eg: During Sing and Swing, Music and Movement or Sherbourne Developmental Movement SDM)
- Show awareness objects in designated spaces to touch different parts of the body when moving even if only slightly (eg: on a Resonance Board)
- Move their hands and arms with hand-under-hand support/ hand-overhand support and/ or co-actively (eg: During Three Ways Music and Movement)
- Show awareness of body awareness songs and games (eg: Heads, Shoulders Knees and Toes or Round and round the Garden)
- Actively move as part of body awareness activities (eg: During SDM)

This part of the curriculum can be divided into 4 areas:

Reaching	Grasping	Releasing	Manipulating
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Again, 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 pupil's developing cognition and communication will enable them to use their movements intentionally to achieve specific ends. Reference can be made to the Kidderminster Curriculum for specific teaching strategies to develop fine motor movements.



Reaching - Pupils 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 / cross midline
- Touch objects with one hand/ with two hand
- Bend and straighten their arms
- Reach for objects just out of reach – midline/ right/left – one hand/ both
- Reach for objects and bring them close (not necessarily grasping them) – one hand/ both hands/ midline/ left/ right /cross midline
- Reach for objects and grasp them (whole hand
- Reach for objects and grasp them (pincer grasp)
- ‘Reach’ / aim with feet to hit target / obtain object



Grasping - Give opportunities for pupils to grasp with the left hand/ the right hand and both.

Start with objects very close to the dominant hand and give practice on the child's left and right. Again, refer to the Kidderminster Curriculum for specific teaching strategies for individual pupils where necessary.

Pupils should have opportunities to do:

- Swipe objects (eg: 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 (eg: to hold themselves up) (increasing amount of time)
- Hold objects and put them in contact with another (eg: bang two objects together, put objects in a box, bang drum with stick)
- Crawl with object in their hand
- Grasp objects that are unseen (eg from in a feely bag – stereo genesis)



Releasing - Pupils 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
- Swap objects from hand to hand (combine grasp and release)
- Pick up and put down repeatedly– grasp and release sequences



Manipulating - Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Take objects to their mouths
- Use their hands to manipulate objects (eg: 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 (eg: to make marks)
- Raise arms and drop objects into containers

- Post objects into containers (eg: posting box)
- Place objects in specific places (eg: simple form board/ jigsaw) (increasing precision)
- Rotate objects in their hands
- Re orientate objects in hands



Gross Motor Movement

This part of the programme can be divided into:

Sitting	Standing	Walking
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Pupils should be supported and encouraged to be as independent as possible to get to their starting point. Refer to the Kidderminster curriculum assessment teaching strategies and school physiotherapist for support with particular pupils.



Sitting - Children 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 and vice versa



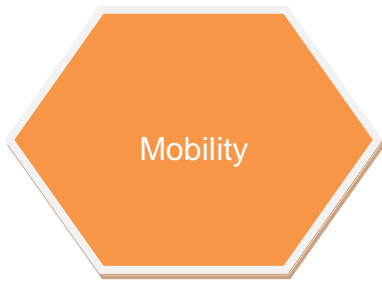
Standing - Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Stand fully supported, e.g. Rachel Harness
- Stand with hands held or holding on
- Stand unsupported
- Moves their limbs whilst standing
- Pivot whilst standing (with less and less support)
- Pull or push up to standing themselves
- 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 - Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Walk full supported (in gait trainer) or facilitated
- Cruise along class furniture
- Walk with two hands held
- Walk with one hand held
- Walk unsupported
- Take steps backwards (eg: 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 holding a rail
- Walk up and down steps holding a rail
- Walk up and down slopes
- Walk up and down steps



Mobility- Although some of mobility has been included in the sections above, we also have a separate section to encourage children to move in any way they can and to use that mobility in a range of different situations. If a particular child has physical disabilities, consult with the physiotherapists before planning mobility activities.

This part of the programme can be divided into:

Indoor Mobility	Outdoor Mobility	Water mobility
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Indoor Mobility - Children should have opportunities to:

- Crawl or bottom shuffle
- Slide on back/ tummy (maybe in a blanket)
- Pivot on bottom or knees on floor
- Roll (eg: across a mat)
- Rock/ row backwards and forwards (eg; 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 (eg: 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
- Orientate themselves ready for mobility programme
- Develop awareness of familiar routes, i.e. touching landmarks



Outdoor Mobility

Many of the indoor mobility opportunities can be offered outdoors as well so this section includes the sorts of opportunities usually experienced outdoors. Again consult with physiotherapists when working with pupils with physical disabilities. Some pupils will need full support to be able to join in the activities.

Even though pupils with PMLD may not be able to engage fully in outdoor and adventurous experiences, there is usually a way in which they can be supported to be involved (eg: wheelchair round-a-bout, sailing, horse riding)



Water Mobility

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Use playground/ adventure equipment to swing, slide, rotate, climb, ride
- Ride bikes or trikes (eventually pushing the pedals themselves)
- Move over a range of different outdoor surfaces (eg: woodland trail, shopping precinct, grass, shingle, cobbles)

Many pupils 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 water. The programme is mainly about the specifics of water mobility. Water mobility programmes will be delivered under the direction of the physiotherapist. At YMH water mobility sessions are delivered at Pen Coch. Pupils are supported by their keyworkers or familiar class staff.

Pupils 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
- Tolerate face getting wet
- Blow bubbles in the water

Semi Formal Curriculum Programme of Learning – Physical Skills

The Programme for Learning is divided into:

1. Physical development
2. Health and self-care



1. Physical Development

Physical Development This part of the Programme of Study covers body awareness, fine and gross motor skills. Dance is included in 'My Creativity' curriculum domain. This programme follows on from the informal curriculum for pupils with PMLD, so it assumes that the basics of grasping, holding and manipulating, sitting, standing, walking and transferring from one to the other have been achieved. If these skills have not yet been achieved then follow the programme of study 'Physical' written for the informal curriculum. The Programme of Study is sub-divided into:

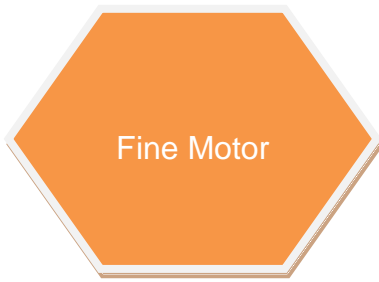
- 1. Body Awareness**
- 2. Fine Motor Development**
- 3. Gross Motor Development**



Body Awareness

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Move the parts of their bodies e.g. in follow my leader or songs, sequences of movement, dance moves
- Recognise themselves in the mirror, photographs and videos
- Be aware of their own bodies in space and the space around them on land and in the water
- Respond by joining in whole body activities e.g. swinging, swimming, sliding, rolling
- Move confidently and safely in a range of different spaces



Fine Motor Development It is hard to separate purely motor skills from cognitive skills, so the list below contains some suggestions for the purpose of the skill e.g.: flat hands can be used for touching people and objects. The motor skill is, however 'making a flat hand'.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Move their arms and hands purposefully and gradually more accurately
- Use their hands to touch objects or people – flat hands, swiping movement, fists, pointing finger
- Grasp objects with a range of hand grasps e.g.: whole hand grasp, all fingers, pincer movement with finger and thumb, tripod grip to hold a pencil Hold and transfer objects – range of sizes, weights, places to transfer to e.g.: put hand-sized play bricks into a box or transfer toy car from left to right hand
- Pick up objects and turn them around to get alignment and then place them e.g.: complete a form board or post shapes
- Build blocks into a tower, learning how to balance them securely e.g. from small wooden blocks to large soft play shapes
- Open and close a range of fasteners e.g.: lift the lid of a box, open a door, pull Velcro apart, press a button, turn a knob, twist the lid on a jar, undo and do up zips and buttons
- Carry a range of objects from one place to another – different sizes, weights, shapes, number
- Use their hands and arms appropriately and with control e.g. to pour drinks, use a hammer, turn pages in a book
- Use one and two hands to complete a range of tasks e.g.: throwing and catching balls, brushing teeth, moulding clay, making hand prints, eating snacks, wiping the table, brushing the floor, holding onto and steering a bike, cutting with scissors, sticking things with sticky tape
- Use their preferred hand for deliberate mark marking (lines and circles and later letters and numbers) with a range of different tools e.g.: felt pens, pencils, paintbrushes



Gross Motor Skills

This section assumes that learners will develop gross motor skills as typical children do but of course pupils with specific physical impairments will have limitations.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Use their whole bodies to move freely in a range of different kinds of spaces e.g. in the classroom, around the school, hall, soft play, swimming pool, outside in the playground, in the park, in the woods
- Walk, run, jump, stomp, creep and bounce
- Squat down and crawl into small spaces e.g. play house or tunnel
- Walk up and down steps
- Walk up slopes with different gradients e.g. to use the slide or go over the bridge
- Walk over stepping stones
- Push, pull, pat, squeeze and move large objects with their arms e.g. push another child on a bike or push a wheelbarrow, pull a heavy box across the floor
- Roll, slide, wriggle and somersault with their whole bodies
- Throw and catch with their hands/ arms in different ways e.g. push ball along the floor, throw beanbags up in the air, bowls the ball as in bowling
- Kick balls of different sizes in different ways e.g. to people, at a wall, a short kick and a long kick
- Rides bikes and scooters, cars and other outdoor toys, using both scooting with the feet and pedalling
- Move in a range of different ways e.g. slowly, quickly, changing speeds, along the floor, taking big steps, tiptoeing, imitating an animal or person
- Climb on equipment e.g. climbing frame, PE bench/table and soft play
- Balance on equipment e.g. PE bench, balance board, wobbly board, hopper
- Use equipment to play a simple game, taking turns with another person e.g.: push or kick a ball backwards and forwards with another person, use a bat to hit a ball, throw a large ball to knock down skittles
- Use equipment with some motor accuracy e.g.: kick ball into a goal or throw a beanbag at a target



2. Health and Self-Care

This programme follows on from the informal curriculum for pupils with PMLD, so it assumes that the basics of eating, drinking, toileting, dressing, undressing, washing, teeth cleaning and hair brushing have been achieved. If these skills have not been achieved then follow the programme of study 'Self Care and Independence' written for the informal curriculum.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Use the toilet as independently as they can, removing and replacing clothes, wiping, flushing the toilet and washing and drying hands
- Choose a range of things to eat and drink (from healthy alternatives presented to them)
- Dress and undress in context e.g. for swimming, PE, as independently as they can
- Undo and do up a range of different kinds of fastenings e.g. Velcro, zips, buttons, shoelaces
- Brush their hair and teeth in context e.g. after swimming or dinner, as independently as they can
- Use tissues to wipe their noses and throw it away appropriately
- Take turns and wait for others to finish their activity e.g. wait for someone to get off the swing
- Play a game with a peer, recognising that the other pupil is playing e.g. kicking a ball to a friend or sharing a two-child bike
- Show they can take care of property, get it out and put it away safely (usually with direction)
- Learn a bit about cleanliness and why we clean our teeth, wash our hands etc
- Learn about safety and dangers e.g. when climbing, swinging or kicking balls, moving heavy things and crossing the road
- Learn about private personal space, appropriate and inappropriate touching and dignity, and show how to practice them in the toilet and when dressing and undressing
- Recognise physical changes in the body e.g. hot after exercise, cold and need more clothes
- Learn about physical and emotional changes at puberty

- Recognise healthy foods and when to stop eating e.g. understand that seconds of vegetables is more healthy than cake
- Learn about the importance of a healthy, active life style, getting enough sleep and being hygienic
- Learn about going to the doctor's, hospital, dentist, optician, hairdresser's

DCF Interacting and Collaborating

Activities to support include:

- Hi Tech communication such as Eye gaze, i.e. Communicator 4 (Tobii) to communicate choices, talk about different parts of the body, actions etc...
- Communication apps such as Proloquo2Go / Sono Flex, PECS and PODD apps to communicate choices, talk about different parts of the body, actions etc...
- Low Tech, i.e. PODD and PECS books to communicate choices, talk about different parts of the body, actions etc...
- Use high and low tech systems to communicate about clothes, personal care items
- Use visual schedules using high or low tech systems to share sequencing / backward chaining approaches

Informal Curriculum

Programme of Learning – Personal Care & Independence

The skills are listed roughly developmentally but when they are being taught, each skill (eg: drinking from a cup) needs to be task analysed and then taught step by step. Pupils should have individual targets for relevant areas of personal care and personalised programmes to support them.

Pupils should have an individual personal care programme to support toileting/dressing/undressing etc... which is displayed in the bathroom. Pupils should also have individual feeding programmes to be shared with relevant staff and updated on a regular basis. Programmes should include details of gastro feeds or how to support pupils with feeding as independently as possible.

It is helpful to use 'forward chaining' or 'backward chaining' as a teaching approach. 'Forward chaining' implies starting from step 1 and continuing to step 2 etc. 'Backward chaining' implies starting with the last step then the last but one step so that the child completes the task every time. For example, this might be a task analysis for eating with a spoon.

- 1. Picks up the spoon from the plate**
- 2. Loads the spoon**
- 3. Puts the spoon to mouth**
- 4. Opens mouth and puts the spoon inside**
- 5. Closes mouth round the food and**
- 6. Takes the food off the spoon with lips**
- 7. Withdraws the spoon puts the spoon down whilst chewing and swallowing**

This sequence could be taught by either 'forward chaining' or 'backward chaining' or even a bit of both, depending upon the child and what /she can already do.



Eating and
Drinking

This part of the programme can be divided into:

Some children will be tube fed and this section will apply differently to them. Please refer to the speech and language therapy team for specific advice on safe and comfortable eating and drinking / swallowing and the occupational therapy team for advice on eating and drinking implements.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of food and drink (eg: by moving the food around the mouth and swallowing)
- Being helpful when being supported to eat and drink (eg: 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 (eg: 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



Dressing and Undressing

Physically disabled pupils are likely always to need physical support with undressing and dressing.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of being dressed and undressed (eg: by eye or limb movement)
- Be helpful when being undressed and dressed (eg: relax limbs)
- Offer limbs (eg: when putting on a coat/ trousers/ shoes)
- Finish taking off clothes once the process has been started by an adult (eg: 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 (eg: 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 (eg: socks before shoes)
- Choose the correct clothes for an activity (eg: 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)



Although the toilet section is mainly about urination and defecation, menstruation is also involved. Girls with PMLD are unlikely to show awareness of managing menstruation but adults need to be aware of possible mood changes and discomfort.

Pupils should have opportunities to:


- Show awareness of having their pads changed (eg: by or limb eye movement)
- Be helpful when having their pads changed (eg: relax limbs or lift bottom)
- Sit on toilet seats regularly (usually after completing a toileting chart to find any patterns in times for urination or defecation)
- Transfer from chair to toilet or from standing to toilet
- Use toilet appropriately if taken by an adult regularly (i.e. if holding urine for a period of time)
- Indicate the need to change their wet/soiled pad (i.e. cry with discomfort)
- Move to the changing table when shown their pads
- Stand to have their pads/ sanitary towels changed
- Recognise the word/ object of reference/ sign 'toilet' in context
- Indicate a need to use the toilet (i.e. 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)
- Wipe their bottoms



Hair brushing

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of having their hair brushed (i.e. eye blinking or head turning)
- Be helpful when their hair is being brushed (eg: 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)



Showering and Washing

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Show awareness of being washed and dried - usually hands, face and bottom – or being showered (i.e. by eye or limb movement)
- Be helpful when being washed and dried/ showered (i.e. 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 (probably with adult supporting and prompting each step)



Intimate Care

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

All pupils who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the pupil's welfare and dignity is

of paramount importance. Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in moving and handling as necessary) and are fully aware of best practice. Equipment will be provided to assist with pupils who need special arrangements following assessment from a physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences.

Intimate care will be carried out by staff that knows the pupil well, i.e. class staff and a regular midday assistant. Staffing ratios for manual handling and changing are specified on each pupil's manual handling plan and shared with all relevant staff. Changing room doors should not be locked during changing. Supply staff should not undertake changing routines, particularly if they only require one member of staff. Supply staff may assist school staff if necessary, though it is desirable for the pupil that this is kept to a minimum.

Semi – Formal Curriculum

Programme of Learning -

Personal Care & Independence / PSE

Pupils should continue to develop and increase their levels of self help skills with regards to toileting, feeding, dressing etc... as stated above. Backward and forward chaining approaches will support pupils to increase their levels of independence within personal care routines. Refer to [appendix 7](#) for further guidance.

As pupils progress developmentally, they need to be given the right support to identify and manage their emotions, behaviour and develop appropriate relationships. Some pupils in the department will receive emotional literacy interventions to develop their own awareness and understanding and be supported to use strategies to self regulate and manage their own behaviour as much as possible. Refer to the ASD policy for specific interventions for our pupils with autism. At a semi-formal stage, the PSE programme for learning will include the following areas:

- 1. Making Relationships,**
- 2. Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness**
- 3. Managing feelings and behaviour**



The basics of relationship building are contained in the informal curriculum 'Communication' programme of study, so start there if necessary.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Build relationships with familiar people
- Trust and stay close to familiar adults when out
- Show an interest in the activities of others but responds differently to different people e.g. greets a family member but is wary of unfamiliar people

- Interact with other children as well as adults
- Play alongside other children
- Play cooperatively with adults
- Seek out others to share an experience
- Show affection for special people
- Play with other children, taking turns and sharing
- Interact using simple 'language' in response to others (maybe signing or using pictures/ symbols)
- Respond to suggestions from others in their play
- Initiate simple conversations with other people
- Ask questions about activities and people
- Show concern for others and help where appropriate
- Use appropriate greetings e.g. when to hug, hold hands
- Identify feelings in themselves and in others e.g. happy and sad, poorly, kind and helpful
- See how their actions and words can affect others
- Recognise people who can help them in the community
- Learn the difference between people they know and strangers (Stranger Danger)



Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Communicate their needs/ wants (words, symbols, signs, pictures)
- Enjoy and feel confident and comfortable in their own and other's company
- Use now and next boards to make choices and learn about sequences of events
- Move from one activity to another with prompts (words, symbols, signs, pictures)
- Develop self-confidence by exploring new toys and environments and playing with a range of people
- 'Ask' for things they want and show people what interest them
- Do things for themselves and not always rely on other people to do things for them
- Select and use activities and resources with and without help
- 'Ask' for help when carrying out activities

- Make mistakes and be helped to learn from them
- Enjoy being praised
- Take responsibility for doing little jobs
- Show confidence in new situations (perhaps if the activity is well known)
- Show photos of themselves playing and with their families
- 'Talk' about themselves and their families to other people (maybe using signs, symbols, pictures)
- Learn how to keep themselves safe in their environment e.g. traffic, water, cooking, snow and ice, electricity, internet



Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Develop understand of simple boundaries e.g. 'no', 'finished', 'now', 'next'
- Become aware of the feelings of others e.g. looks concerned when someone is crying
- Learn that some things belong to them and some to other people and they may not be able to have those that belong to others
- Seek comfort from familiar adults when needed
- Express their own feelings of sad, happy, cross, scared, worried, unsafe
- Respond to the feelings and wishes of others
- Learn that some actions can hurt or upset others
- Cooperate with others
- Stop themselves doing something they know they shouldn't
- Allow themselves to be distracted when they get upset
- Share resources and take turns
- Accept delay when needs cannot be met immediately
- Learn to adapt their behaviour to different events, situations and changes in routine
- Follow simple rules for acceptable behaviour e.g. the school golden rules
- Learn how to cope when things go unexpectedly wrong
- Learn from their own mistakes (not go into meltdown!)

DCF Links for Personal Care and Independence

Citizenship

Refer to activities listed under Communication and Physical Skills curriculum domains.

Refer to [appendix 8](#) for self help / toileting checklists.

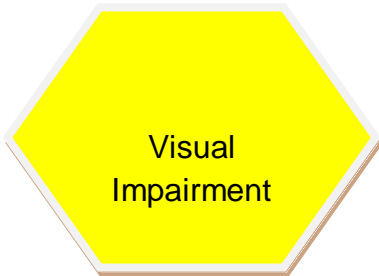
Informal Curriculum

Programme of Learning

Sensory Responses

The development of residual vision and auditory skills is a key area in our school's curriculum with pupils undertaking regular programmes to develop their visual and auditory responses. We have specialist resources, such as sensory rooms and a dark room where specialist programmes can be undertaken. The development of the close senses (touch, taste, smell) is also important, particularly for pupils with visual, hearing or multisensory impairment as they may need to develop a compensatory sense.

Visual Impairment



There is a high prevalence of visual impairment (VI) in our sensory department and several pupils are registered blind. Many of our pupils have a diagnosis of Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI). This means the brain does not process what the eye can see due to damage to the visual pathways. There are 10 classic features of CVI as described by Dr Roman-Lantzy ([Appendix 9](#)). Many pupils with CVI also have an additional ocular defects, such as squints, nystagmus, field loss and macular degeneration. Some pupils with VI may have an ocular defect without a diagnosis of CVI.

Pupils with a visual impairment will be referred to the vision support service. Their functional vision will be assessed by a qualified teacher of the visually impaired. Targets are set and a programme to support the pupils' vision is devised in conjunction with school staff. School may also continue their own supporting assessments and the outcomes of these are regularly reported to the vision support service. Visual stimulation programmes school

staff under the guidance of the VI sensory service. Pupils with low vision follow a 'light awareness' programme in a high contrast environment. Pupils who have progressed from the dark room / sensory room but continue to need support follow a 'visual attention' programme. Some pupils who do not have a recognised visual impairment may also be timetabled for visual stimulation if staff feel they would benefit from this input.

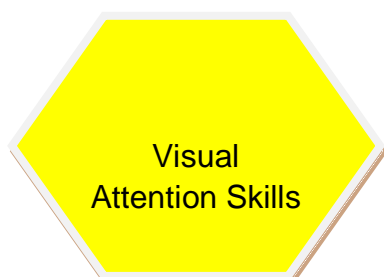


Areas of development – Light Awareness Programme

Information is cited from RNIB publications and Vision for Doing Assessment.

- **Light Awareness** – gives visual response to nearby light source in visual field.
- **Localisation** – means that the pupil, on becoming aware of a visual stimulus, turns their eyes, or head/body towards it.
- **Fixation** – is the “ability to direct gaze on an object or light source and hold it steadily in view”. This means that the pupil locates a visual stimulus and their eyes lock on to it. The duration of the fixation may be brief, or lasting several seconds. Their eyes usually widen and become relatively immobile.
- **Visual field** – It is important to assess the pupil's responses in the upper and lower quadrants of their visual field to establish preferences and / or field loss.
- **Tracking** – means that the eyes stay on target during horizontal, vertical, circular and diagonal movement of the visual stimulus. Tracking may be jerky, i.e. pupil briefly follows stimulus, loses stimulus and then finds stimulus.
- **Accommodation and Vergence** – the eyes stay on target during convergence and divergence, i.e. when the visual target is moved through near, middle, far and distant space, both towards and away from the eyes.

Visual Attention Programme



Depending on the visual skills of the pupil, areas listed in the 'light awareness' section may continue to be focussed on. The key difference is that pupils no longer need to work in such high levels of visual contrast to undertake their programmes. As part of a transition to from 'light awareness' to 'visual attention', the lighting levels in the room can gradually increase from dark to assess if the pupil can continue to maintain their visual focus on the stimulus. Visual stimuli used for visual attention will need to be brightly coloured and not too visually complex, i.e. overly patterned. The complexity of the objects can increase over time in line with the pupil's development. The following skills may also be developed as part of a visual attention programme.

- **Searching / scanning** – to shift gaze between 2 or more objects / people. The pupil looks from one thing to the next to acquire information about their immediate environment, or to locate a desired object or person.
- **Visually directed reaching / movement** – This skill can be learnt at the 'light awareness' stage for those with low vision. In a visually directed reach or movement the pupil uses their eyes in conjunction with their hands and body to swipe, kick, reach or move towards things they see.
- **Visual recognition and discrimination of objects and faces**
- **Visual recognition and discrimination of 2D images**
- **Depth perception**
- **Distance vision**
- **Visual acuity** – the ability to recognise small details and is a measure of how sharp an image is.
- **Contrast sensitivity** – ability to detect objects of low contrast, i.e. seeing an object on a background of the same colour.
- **Background detail** – People with CVI have difficulty with "figure/background" discrimination. Although they

may see low contrast objects on a plain background, they may not notice objects on a busy background.

Auditory Skills



Pupils undertake a listening programme as part of the curriculum offered at YMH if their auditory skills need developing. The programme incorporates a 'free field' type hearing assessment as each pupil's responses (including non responses) to different sound makers are rigorously tracked and monitored. The key areas of the programme are to develop:

- Vocal play – imitation and dialogue
- Attention skills
- Sound location
- Sound tracking
- Preferences
- Establish hearing thresholds

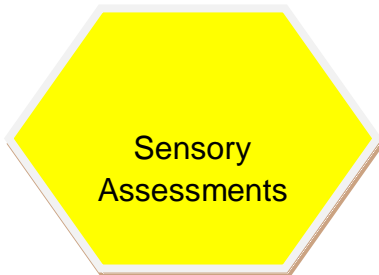
Staff should be aware that pupils with a significant VI will not sound locate as there is no visual reward for turning to a sound. Staff will need to observe their responses closely to identify if they have heard the sound.

Haptic Touch Development



Some pupils with a visual impairment / MSI may have specific programmes to develop their haptic skills, however, the development of touch is encouraged throughout all areas of the curriculum. Pupils who are tactile reluctant or VI/MSI will undertake a touch assessment to establish how they interact with tactile stimuli, i.e. through passive touch or active touch and the properties of tactile stimuli that are tolerated by the pupil. If staff are aware of the properties of materials and objects that are tolerable to individual pupils, the

range can be gradually increased and varied as a means to overcome their reluctance. Careful planning and discussion with the physiotherapist and teacher of the visually impaired will help to plan next steps to develop movements necessary for exploration. A touch profile assessment may also be useful for staff working with individual pupils. For further information on haptic development refer to *'Learning Through Touch: Supporting Children with Visual Impairments and additional difficulties'* by McLinden and McCall.



Sensory Assessments

There are a range of sensory assessments undertaken at YMH to identify pupils' current skills and also for target setting purposes. These include:

- Vision for Doing – Functional Sensory Assessment
- Assessing Functional Vision Children with Complex Needs
- The Kidderminster Curriculum for Children and Adults with PMLD
- MSI Curriculum from the Victoria School
- Sensory Interactive Profiles (SIPS)

Informal / Semi formal Curriculum Programme of Learning Sensory Responses

Many of our pupils have some difficulties with sensory integration, particularly those on the autistic spectrum. Sensory integration (SI) refers to the way the nervous system receives messages from the senses and turns them into appropriate motor and behavioral responses. For many of our pupils information is not sufficiently processed through the nervous system and they therefore may have difficulties with the following:

- Sensory Modulation (feeling 'just right' and staying 'just right').
- Sensory seeking, self stimulating behaviours
- Over-responsive to sensory stimuli (experience a sense of overload, information can be painful, scary, triggering a fight or flight reaction).
- Under-responsive (require frequency or intensity before they notice sensory input)
- Praxis and planning

There are a range of interventions that school can support pupils to undertake to address the guidance of a specialist OT and / physio trained in SI. Each pupil in the department will be assessed using a sensory profiling tool to identify their individual needs. From this baseline, pupils may receive more specific input. This may include:

- Calm / alert activities throughout the day
- Heavy work
- Sensory diets
- Wilbarger Brushing Protocol
- Sensory circuits
- Activities to improve low muscle tone

DCF Links for Sensory Responses

Interacting and Collaborating

Activities include:

- Visual stimulation apps, such as those suggested by Flo Longhorn (see [appendix 10](#))
- Apps for sensory integration such as 'Brain Works App' for sensory modulation designed by an OT. There is 130 apps available from 'Brain Works'. Other apps include 'See.Touch.Learn', 'Talking Tom Cat', 'Falling Stars'.
- Search 'Sensoryapphouse' in iTunes.
- Refer to activities in Communication and Physical skills (interacting and collaborating)

Semi-Formal Curriculum

Programme of Learning

How My World Works

This curriculum area focuses on practical skills and understandings for a functional life. Many aspects have a scientific dimension such as forces, living things, the elements. This curriculum area also emphasises effective engagement with technology, including computers, phones and household appliances. The learning activities that pupils undertake under this domain will be related to the termly curriculum theme and will also have strong links to the DCF.

There are two main components to this curriculum domain:

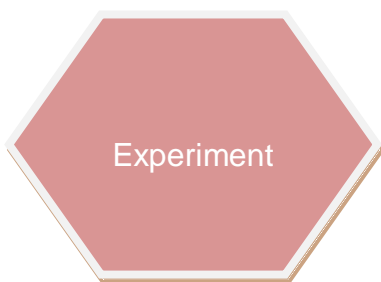
Discovering Interesting Things

Being safe in the world (Technology)

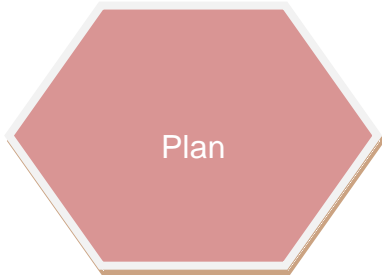
Through this curriculum domain, pupils should have the opportunity to:

Experiment:

- Observe objects, animals and people carefully, using all their senses
- Manipulate objects within simple experiments e.g.: push different objects down a slope or put together Velcro body parts to make a doll or stick paper together with cellotape
- Use simple scientific and technological equipment e.g.: balance scales, magnifying glasses, staplers, scissors
- Compare and contrast objects and phenomena e.g.: rabbits hopping and mice running or dry sand pouring and wet sand sticking together
- Test objects one after another in a simple experiment e.g.: posting shapes to sort them

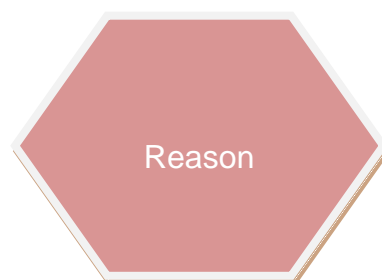


into size or watering one plant but not another to see what happens or trying out a range of torches to see which is the brightest



Plan:

- Use a range of different materials for different reasons
- Use a range of different sources of information e.g.: finding pictures, asking people, looking on the web, watching what happens
- Choose what materials to use e.g.: paper to make an aeroplane and thick card to make a boat
- Plan their experiments by thinking about what might happen
- Decide what action to take in their experiments e.g.: if I can't lift this heavy object, maybe it will slide?
- Decide what kind of evidence to collect e.g.: measure a plant as it grows with a tape measure or put all the plants side by side to observe which is tallest
- Plan fair tests e.g.: trying out all the musical instruments before we can decide which is the loudest



Reason:

- Pick out relevant photos of the experiment they have just been doing
- Communicate what happened immediately after the experiment e.g.: point to the food colouring that had changed the colour of the water
- Provide a very simple explanation for what happened e.g.: the fan came on because it was plugged in or the coke fizzed out of the bottle because we shook it up
- Draw simple conclusions from their experiments e.g.: after experimenting with

freezing, can indicate that the freezer is a good place to keep an ice lolly

- Respond to scientific or technological questions e.g.: what will happen if... or why did....?
- Use vocabulary such as 'experiment', 'because', 'observed'
- Describe the experiment they have just done in simple terms
- Suggest ways in which they might be able to improve next time

Target Setting and Assessment

Teaching staff will refer to the DCF to both assess and set targets for this curriculum domain

DCF Links

Producing and Computational Thinking

Refer to activities from 'My Thinking' curriculum domain

Semi-Formal Curriculum

Programme of Learning

My Creativity

This Programme for Learning covers opportunities for learning in Expressive Arts and Design. There is no separate programme for Design and Technology as most of the opportunities for Design and Technology are included in the four areas:

1. Music

2. Art and Crafts

3. Dance

4. Drama

Other aspects of Design and Technology can be found in Understanding the World. The Programme of Study begins with opportunities that relate to all Expressive Arts and Design.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Use their senses in a range of creative experiences
- Use expressive arts to explore and create
- Use expressive arts and design to communicate and think
- Work with artists, designers, dancers, musicians and actors
- Visit art galleries, theatres, concert halls, museums of art and design
- Use creative equipment, including ICT e.g.: Sound beam, touchscreen, multimedia
- Work solo and as part of a group (cooperating and communicating with others)
- Communicate likes and dislikes in the arts and design



- Appreciate and begin to evaluate their own work and the work of others
- Plan and design using creative processes
- Problem solve in the different arts and design
- Build a repertoire of songs, dances, stories, pictures, models, sculptures and crafts
- Develop personal taste in the arts and design
- Perform or exhibit their work to an audience



Music

Please note that where possible children should have access to good quality instruments. Toy instruments are not sufficient. Pupils who are hearing impaired should have access to low and high tech enhancement of sound e.g. resonance board, amplifiers and loud speakers, or alternatives to sound e.g.: feel the vibrations of the instruments.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Recognise and respond to musical cues
- Respond to music e.g. clapping, dancing, swaying
- Listen to and explore a range of musical instruments (including body sounds, percussion, orchestral and band instruments, instruments from different cultures, electronic instruments)
- Learn to make sounds with control e.g.: play and stop, fast, slow, high, low, loud, quiet and gradations of these
- Clap or play simple repeated rhythms
- Explore and learn how sounds can be changed e.g. in volume, speed, pitch (including using technology, such as a microphone to make the changes)
- Create musical patterns using different rhythms, pace, volume and pitch (including copying sounds as well as inventing them)
- Join in songs and use their voices musically, listen to themselves singing

- Build a repertoire of songs
- Use and create music for a range of purposes e.g.: for relaxation, dance, celebrations, to represent their mood
- Listen to and respond to music from a range of cultures and times e.g.: African drumming, Indian sitar, Mozart Gavotte, monks singing plainchant
- Learn to play school percussion instruments as they are intended to be played
- Make music with noisy objects e.g. rustling leaves, cardboard tubes, metal coat hangers
- Direct music being played e.g.: play follow my leader games, conduct a group
- Use technology to play recorded music e.g.: CD or MP3 player (including finding favourite music)



Arts and Crafts

Pupils who are visually impaired should have access to low and high tech enhancement of brightness, contrast and size e.g. UV light, magnifiers or alternatives to visual arts e.g.: tactile messy play, tactile pictures and sculptures.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Explore and respond to a range of materials, textures and substances (including man-made and natural materials) with a range of body parts and tools both inside and outdoors
- Explore colours and how colours can be changed
- Learn to use lines to enclose a space and begin to use these shapes to represent objects
- Learn to use different materials and tools with control e.g.: make marks, paint and stop, mix colours, cut out shapes, glue material together, fold paper to make a butterfly, roll a sausage out of clay, thread beads, weave different materials, sew simple stitches with a bodkin

- Learn to use non-standard tools creatively e.g. twigs, different body parts
- Work with materials in 2D, 3D, 4D (multisensory experience)
- Create art and craft pieces using a range of techniques e.g.: painting with rollers, moulding out of play dough, decorating a hat, arranging flowers, making jewellery
- Collate their work into a scrapbook or portfolio (across their school career)
- Create art and craft pieces for particular purposes e.g.: calendar, photo album, Christmas present, homemade musical instrument
- Learn about people who use art and crafts in their jobs e.g. artists, designers, craftsmen
- Learn to draw representationally e.g. face with features, body with limbs, tree with trunk, self portraits
- Work on art and craft projects that range in size from tiny to gigantic
- Explore and use technology to create pieces of art e.g.: photography, film, lighting, multisensory environment, animations, virtual reality



Dance

Pupils who are physically disabled should have access to physical support when dancing. Adults or more able peers can help pupils to move their bodies and provide containment for the different kinds of movement.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Move in a range of different ways, using different parts of the body, making body shapes and travelling around the space
- Move at different speeds e.g. running and creeping, and orientations e.g. stretching up high or crouching down low, wiggling across the floor

- Respond to supported dancing e.g. wheelchair dancing or with an adult partner on the floor
- Combine movement in legs and arms
- Play follow-my-leader with body movements
- Move their bodies for particular effect e.g.: take large steps or wave their arms
- Use their bodies to pretend to be a range of people, animals, objects
- Move rhythmically to music
- Explore different types of music and move in different ways
- Learn basic steps of a range of different kinds of dances e.g.: skipping, galloping, side skipping, wiggling the hips, high kicks
- Watch and try out a range of different kinds of dances e.g.: different cultures, eras, pop, classical, country dancing, ballet
- Associate different kinds of music with particular kinds of dances e.g.: Scottish dancing, disco, hip hop, world music
- Combine several steps to create their own dances
- Dance at different speeds and with different intensity
- Use dance steps to tell a story



Drama

Pupils who have sensory or physical impairments should have access to suitable support to enable them to join in drama e.g.: sound or visual enhancement, physical positioning and support from others.

Pupils should have opportunities to:

- Respond to and join in sensory stories
- Create and respond to different atmospheres e.g.: clap and dance in a lively atmosphere and relax quietly when the atmosphere is low key
- Use their bodies and voices to represent a range of people, vehicles, animals

- Pretend things that aren't really there e.g. drink from an imaginary cup or put an imaginary hat on or play in the play house
- Dress up and pretend to be other people, animals • Use an object in an imaginative way e.g.: use a scarf as a tail or a banana as a phone
- Act out familiar scenes and stories e.g.: going shopping, looking for a lost cat, running away from a monster, traditional stories – with and without an adult narrator
- Link role play to their own lives e.g.: going to the dentist, getting ready for bed, visiting a relative
- Make up a simple story to act out – with or without spoken words
- Use props whilst acting e.g.: walking stick, magic wand, phone
- Act in a film and watch themselves performing
- Use puppets in a story/ play – without and without spoken words
- Watch and respond to plays and films in different styles and genres e.g.: slap stick humour, magical, soap opera, chase thriller, cartoons (remember age restrictions!)
- Talk about characters and what they do in plays and films or on the TV e.g.: Toys in Toy Story, Mr Tumble – whatever interest them
- Decide what is going to happen next in a scenario e.g.: the monster is approaching. Shall we fight him with a sword or run away and hide?

Assessment and Target Setting

Teachers will refer to the 'Sounds of Intent' Framework to assess and target set for music. If non music based targets are set, teachers can refer to the DCF or LNF framework to set targets and assess against drama or art based elements of this curriculum domain.

DCF Links

Creativity

Refer to activities from 'My Thinking Strand' as listed below:

- Pupils to create pictures of themselves and others using painting programs, Face Paint (SEMERC) or My World – Getting Dressed
- Pupils to create their own sequences by operating devices in turn, e.g. lights and buzzers
- Programming a floor robot to travel
- Create procedures to control multiple devices, e.g. switch on different lights in a model house, raise and lower a Lego Technics car-park barrier.
- Use Clicker to produce text / simple sentences
- Use multimedia to produce animations
- Use multimedia to create and reinforce stories
- Record sounds in the classroom / around school, i.e. water running from a tap, music, bell
- Use multimedia to create 'All About Me' stories
- Use multimedia - Produce powerpoint presentations with sounds, images, videos
- Use multimedia – Produce Switch it Maker resources
- Contribute to making own talking book with sounds and images
- Use switches to operate food processors to make foods, i.e. fruit smoothies, soup
- Create various effects using switch technology, i.e. fan linked to powerlink
- Create various effects using cause and effect apps, i.e. finger paint, sensory lightbox, sensory soundbox, Fluidity etc...
- Creating compositions using SoundBeam, Noodle Software, keyboard.
- Use 'painting' computer programs with tools to change colour / effects.
- Use switches to create effects on environment, i.e. operate footspas, fans, aroma diffuser, moving toys

Appendix 1

Sensory Department 8 Year Rolling Programme			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Welsh Culture </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #800080; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Northern Ireland Thematic Units </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #0070C0; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Post 16 themes </div>			
	Autumn	Spring	Summer
2015-2016	Weather	People	Nature
2016-2017	Stepping Back In Time	Myths and Legends	Transport, Travel, Tourism – Summer Holiday
2017-2018	Farm / Pets	Knights and Castles	The Circus is in Town (Funfair and Circus)
2018-2019	Diwali and Welsh Festivals	Australia Here We Come!	The Garden Link to Thematic Unit Perfect Picnic Fun
2019-2020	Entertainment	Climates and Contrasting Environments	Olympics
2020-2021	Food Glorious Food!	Welsh Story Telling and Literature	The Beach
2021-2022	Caring for the Environment	Traders and Raiders (Saxons, Stone Age)	Magic Carpet Rides
2022-2023	The Great Outdoors	Celtic Tribes of Wales	A Pirates Life for Me!

Appendix 2
Ysgol Maes Hyfryd
Sensory Department – Informal Curriculum
Individual Education Plan



Name:	Class:	Date:		
		Achievement		
Targets (Linked to each curriculum domain)	Strategies (For TAs, other teaching staff, parents)	Emergent	Acquired in context	Generalised Skill
My Communication 1). NLF / RfL Target (Communication / English strand) 2) SCIP target if ASC / Target from HLTA	Brief explanation of how to support target, i.e. activities and resources	Date and refer to evidence (i.e. EFL app)		
My Thinking 1). NLF / RfL Target (Cognition / Numeracy strand) 2). DCF target (INFORMAL CURRIC ONLY)				
Physical Skills Can be a physio target or rebound target based on Winstrada assessment. MOVE target (once introduced)				
Personal Care and Independence Target Refer to checklist or appendices in sensory policy document. Can include a toileting, dressing, feeding target.				
Sensory Responses ASC – Target must come from Sensory Profile. VI/HI – Target from MDVI / Positive Eye assessment or sensory support service				

Sensory Department – Informal Curriculum Individual Education Plan Evaluation	
Name:	Date of IEP:
My Communication	
Comments:	Next Steps:
My Thinking	
Comments:	Next Steps:
Physical Skills	
Comments:	Next Steps:
Personal Care and Independence	
Comments:	Next Steps:
Sensory Responses	
Comments:	Next Steps:

Ysgol Maes Hyfryd
Sensory Department – Semi - formal Curriculum
Individual Education Plan



Name:	Class:	Date:		
Targets (Linked to each curriculum domain)	Strategies (For TAs, other teaching staff, parents)	Achievement		
		Emergent	Acquired in context	Generalised Skill
My Communication 1). NLF / RfL Target (Communication / English strand) 2) SCIP target if ASC / Target from HLTA	Brief explanation of how to support target, i.e. activities and resources	Date and refer to evidence		
My Thinking 1). NLF / RfL Target (Cognition / Numeracy strand)				
Physical Skills Can be a physio target or rebound target based on Winstrada assessment. MOVE target (once introduced)				
Personal Care and Independence Target Refer to checklist or appendices in sensory policy document. Can include a toileting, dressing, feeding target.				
Sensory Responses ASC – Target must come from Sensory Profile. VI/HI – Target from MDVI / Positive Eye assessment or sensory support service				
How My World Works Must include a DCF Target				
My Creativity Music based targets linked to Sounds of Intent Framework (once introduced) or fine motor / expressive target from NLF.				

Ysgol Maes Hyfryd
Sensory Department – Semi-Formal Curriculum
Individual Education Plan Evaluation



Name:	Date of IEP:
My Communication	
Comments:	Next Steps:
My Thinking	
Comments:	Next Steps:
Physical Skills	
Comments:	Next Steps:
Personal Care and Independence	
Comments:	Next Steps:
Sensory Responses	
Comments:	Next Steps:
How My World Works	
Comments:	Next Steps:
My Creativity	
Comments:	Next Steps:

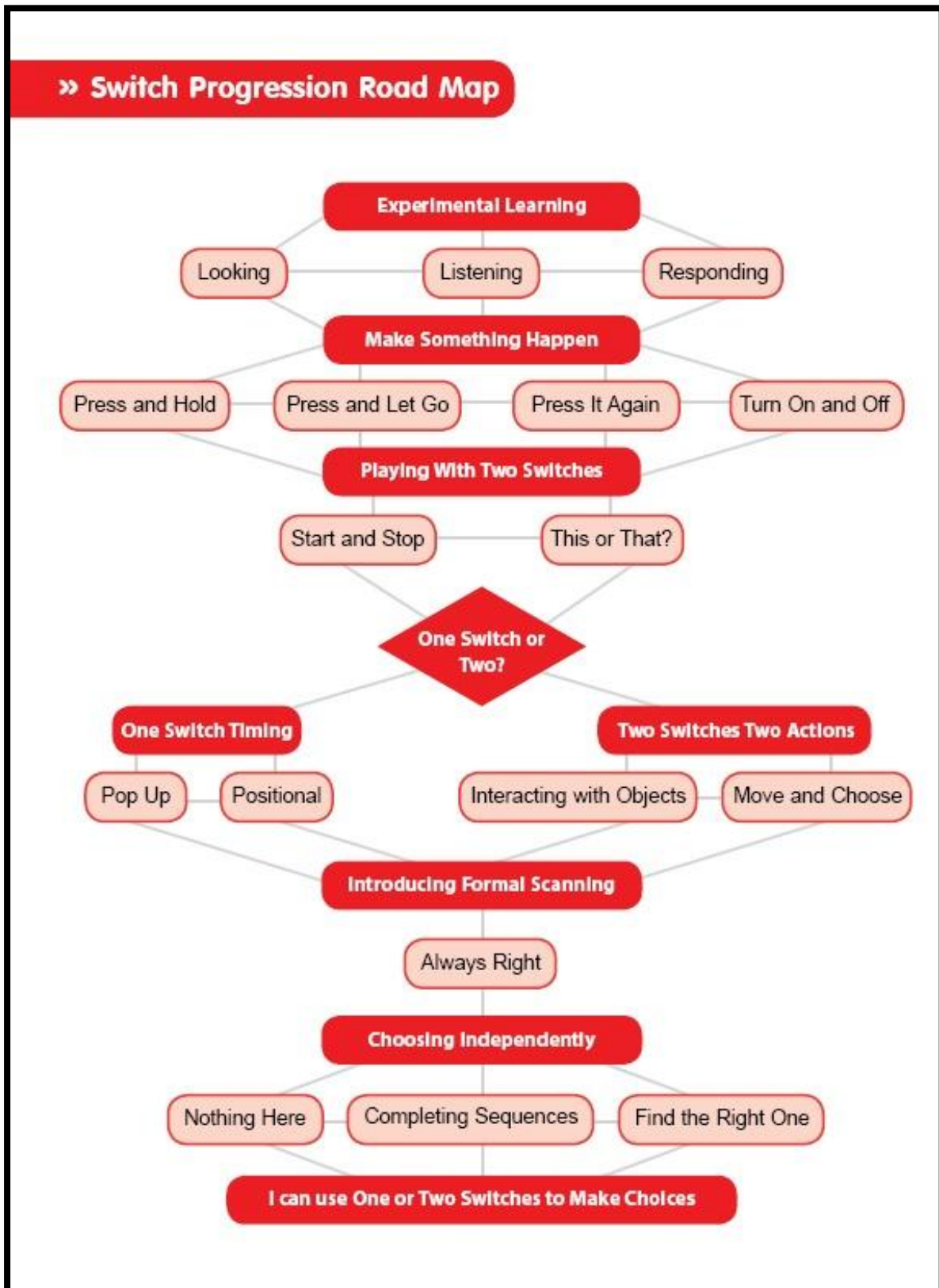
Appendix 3

Individual Pupil Programme – Date:	
Curriculum Domain: <i>My Communication</i>	
Target:	Photo
Curriculum Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short description of barriers to learning, i.e. ASD, Visual Impairment, behaviour• Sensory Processing• Physical impairment etc...	
Equipment I may need: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eye gaze• Switches• Seating / positional equipment• PECS/PODD book• Sloping desk etc...• Photos needed for switches / switch set up	
How best to support me: <i>Tips for staff, i.e,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Burst-pause approaches• Backward chaining• Key words• Strategies, approaches• Environmental factors	
What to Look For: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• List optimum outcomes that describe learning.• i.e. waiting before repressing switch to show contingency responding.	

Appendix 4 - Timetable

Appendix 5 – Communication Passport Template

Appendix 6 – Switch Progression Map



Appendix 7

Backwards and Forwards Chaining

Article from <http://special-ism.com/last-is-first-in-backward-chaining/>

Retrieved from the WorldWideWeb

Typically when teaching a child a skill we start at the beginning, move through the sequence of steps, and conclude with the final step. This is called forward chaining.

The reverse to this is backward chaining. Backward chaining involves teaching the last step first, moving backwards through the sequence of steps, and concluding with the first step.

Forward Chaining

In forward chaining, a child repeats the beginning steps over and over and becomes very proficient with them. She performs the first steps that she is comfortable completing, but then must move onto a brand new step that she was just taught. Often in forward chaining, a child forgets the sequence of steps. She may want to quit because the feeling of success takes too long to attain.

Benefits of Backward Chaining

Backward chaining allows a child to experience instant success. As more steps are added, a child completes the newly taught step immediately, followed by the steps she has already mastered. This can minimize anxiety and provide a child with a sense of accomplishment.

This feeling of success will increase her confidence and keep her motivated to learn and complete the entire sequence of steps. In essence, completion of the steps operates as a natural reinforcer for a child.

To Go Forward or Backward?

Forward and backward chaining has been around for a long time. Whether forward or backward chaining is used depends on the task being taught. Specifically, backward chaining has been used successfully in teaching self-help skills. It often is used to teach younger children or children who are lower functioning.

Example of Backward Chaining

Backward chaining was used to teach my daughter how to tie her shoes. She has always had issues with her fine motor skills and the sequencing of events. By using backward chaining, my daughter learned how to tie her shoes fairly painlessly.

Tying Shoes

We took an old shoe and nailed it to a solid piece of board. The shoelaces were replaced with extra long ones, making them easier to grasp and create bows. As the steps were chunked out, each step was small enough to ensure success, but big enough to lend themselves to a complete action.

Getting Dressed

Backward chaining can also be used to teach your child how to get dressed. When teaching your child how to put on her sock, put the sock on all the way over her heel. This leaves the last step for her – pulling it up. After this step, put the sock on up to the heel and have your child put it over her heel and pull it up. When the sock has been mastered, you can move onto other pieces of clothing.

Bedtime Routine

This same principle can be used at the end of the night. Remove all your child's clothing and let her put them in the hamper. Next time, take all your child's clothing off except for the last item and let her complete this task and put her clothes in the hamper. By the end of this training session, your child should be able to completely undress and put her clothes where they belong.

Summary

I have heard of backward chaining also being used for other life skills. For example, a 12-year old boy with autism and intellectual disabilities refused all liquids and foods. The Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis documents the use of this technique not only to teach him to drink from a cup, but also to slowly increase the amount of water he drank.

So the next time you are struggling to teach your child a basic self-help skill, consider backward chaining. It may be just what your child needs to build her confidence and lead her to success.

Appendix 8

TOILET TRAINING

STARTING OFF

With typical children, it is usually suggested that toilet training is not possible for children under the age of two years. This is partly due to the maturity of the muscles but it is also due to the ability of the child to understand simple instructions and sit still for a few minutes. For children with learning difficulties, the actual age of two may not be significant but the ability to understand simple instructions and sit still for a few minutes will be. The child should also be able to hold his/ her wee for at least 1.5 hours.

Keeping an Initial Record

Before starting the process of toilet training, you need to find out the times of the day at which the child wees and poos. Spend 2 weeks making a detailed record so you can see if there is a pattern.

An easy way to do this is to check the child every hour and record whether s/he is dry, has weed or pooped or both.

Child's Name:

Date started:

Time	Wee	Poo
9.00		
10.00		
11.00		
12.00		
1.00		
2.00		
3.00		

If parents could keep a record too, then home and school could be working together.

Setting up the Schedule

When you have the record you can see if there is any pattern to the wet and dry times.

It is usually better to start with pooing as this happens less frequently and gets the child used to sitting on the toilet/ potty at particular times.

If the records show that a child poos around 9-10 in the morning or around lunchtime and/ or around 5-6 in the afternoon then those are the 3 times to take the child to the toilet.

Be guided by the child's pattern eg: s/he only does one poo a day so you don't take him/her again once s/he has been. However, keep to the original routine for at least a week even if you seem to be missing the right moment. If the pattern has changed then you change your routine.

Some children don't have a pattern, in which case, take them to the toilet every 2 hours.

Once the pooing routine is established then work on the weeing. Look for the pattern in the record and then work out a routine that is based on the most likely times for weeing (as long as they are at least 1.5 hours apart). If the pooing routine has taken a long time to be successful then you may need to collect more records on the pattern of weeing.

If the child is refusing to sit on the toilet/ potty then you may need to spend more time on sitting before using it for toilet training.

Using Rewards

You need to select a reward that is meaningful for each child. Some children like praise and clapping; others like a favourite toy and others a food reward. The reward needs to be given immediately the child wees or poos so s/he associates the reward with the action of weeing or pooing.

Use the reward for whatever stage the child is practising eg: s/he gets the reward for sitting on the potty for 5 seconds, then 10 seconds etc. or s/he gets the reward for weeing on the toilet.

When in the bathroom, try to keep the talk to the matter in hand and minimise distracting events. The child needs to become aware of what is happening to his/her body.

Don't scold or show disappointment when the child wees or poos in the wrong place. Try not to give much attention to this event at all: save it all for when s/he gets it right. In that way s/he learns that getting the attention and rewards is only associated with weeing/ pooing in the potty/ toilet.

You may wish to keep a record of success, especially if the process takes a long time.

Training Pants

Keep the child in nappies whilst training for poo but use training pants or ordinary pants when training for wee, during the day. Keep the nappies on at night.

Consistency

Toilet training needs to be done consistently. You can't train one day and not the next. Once the schedule has been decided, keep to it. However, if it obviously wrong then establish a new schedule based on your records.

Toilet training should be being done consistently across the day so it is essential for home and school to be working together. You need to work out as programme together.

Independent Toileting

Some children will always need a supportive adult to take them to the toilet on a regular basis (toilet conditioned) but others will be able to take the next step and become completely toilet trained.

When the child can indicate s/he wants to use the toilet or even takes him/herself then you can begin to teach them to go independently.

These are the steps for the child to learn:

1. recognising the need to go to the toilet
2. waiting to use the toilet
3. entering the bathroom
4. pulling down pants
5. sitting on the toilet
6. using the toilet
7. using toilet paper
8. pulling pants back up
9. flushing the toilet
10. washing hands
11. drying hands

Each of these steps can be further broken down and may not be taught in the sequence above eg: using toilet paper may need to be taught later than pulling pants back up. Washing hands may have been taught before any attempt at toileting.

You will need to teach the whole routine though if the child is really going to be independent. Start with physical prompts then move to gestural prompts and finally verbal prompts. Eventually the verbal prompts will be little reminders eg; 'what's next?'

Recognising the need to go to the toilet

This first step is often the hardest to establish so the advice is to delay taking the child to the toilet at the routine time for about 10 minutes. If that is too long or too short try 5 minutes or 15 minutes. The child needs to experience the feeling of needing to go. Treat accidents in the same way as before – give as little attention as you can, whilst changing the child and wiping up. Keep the attention and rewards for the successful times.

TEACHING SELF HELP SKILLS

(dressing, hand washing, hair brushing, teeth cleaning, choosing suitable clothes)

Learning to eat and drink, dress, undress, brush your hair and teeth, go to the toilet, wash and generally look after yourself are skills that are usually learned almost exclusively at home. School is the place to put those skills into practice but they are rarely the main emphasis of the teaching and learning.

For children with SLD/ PMLD, it is necessary to teach those skills in school as well as at home. The best scenario is for the skills to be taught in their natural contexts eg: undressing and dressing for swimming or PE, teeth cleaning after lunch but sometimes it will be necessary to 'invent' a reason for practising skills eg: dressing up games, pretend hair brushing with a doll which leads to the child brushing his or her own hair. Children need lots of practice when learning self help skills so you may need to invent a range of scenarios when you can see children are ready to learn a particular skill.

Below are some ideas for practising the self help skills of dressing, undressing, hair brushing, teeth cleaning, hand washing, choosing suitable clothes. Toilet training, eating and drinking are treated separately.

Please refer to the Programme of Learning for advice on how to analyse the skill you want to teach so you know which specific step each child is learning. The learning outcomes in this scheme are very general so you will need to tailor the activities to individual children.

Focus	Learning Outcomes	Teaching Activities	Resources
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<p>Dressing and undressing</p>	<p>Dressing and undressing as independently as possible</p>	<p>At the early stages of development, children are likely to have very limited understanding of dressing and undressing but we need to work on encouraging them to be as helpful as they can eg: relaxing their arms, lifting a leg when touched, looking at the person dressing them.</p> <p>If they have the physical ability they will then move on to doing a bit more for themselves, pulling clothes off themselves and eventually putting them on. Hats, gloves, shoes and socks are the easiest clothes to work with first.</p> <p>Make sure you take advantage of every natural time to take off clothes eg: take off shoes and socks for the foot spa, for MOVE, in soft play, for foot painting. Don't rush with this bit, encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves even if it is only stilling to show that they have noticed someone taking off their shoes and socks for them.</p> <p>Take your time over taking off coats when children arrive at school. Encourage children to be aware of what you are doing and to do as much as they can for themselves. For the most physically disabled, encourage them to be aware of what is happening and encourage them to be as helpful as they can.</p> <p>Play simple interactive games with oversized clothes (so they are easy to get on and off) eg: peepbo, looking for a hand up a sleeve, tickles, tracking</p>	<p>Children's own clothes Adult sized clothes for dressing up Large sized children's dressing up clothes Lots of hats, caps, wigs, hair bands, bobbles, funny headbands with wobbly/sparkly things on them Different kinds of shoes and boots Umbrellas, raincoats, bags and baskets Dolls and teddies with clothes that are easy to take off eg: jumper that is made with Velcro fastenings</p>
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		<p>Include dressing and undressing in simple sensory stories eg: N went to bed (put a nightdress on the child). She was asleep (sign for sleep and snoring noises). It's morning, wake up (alarm clock ring). Let's get dressed (take off nightdress). We're going out. Put on your hat (sparkly hat). Don't you look beautiful (mirror). It's raining (put on wellies). Let's find an umbrella (put up umbrella). Can you hear the rain (squirt water on the umbrella and get a little on the child's face or hands). Oh let's go home. We're wet. Take off your hat. Take off your wellies. Rub yourself dry (with a towel). Ah that's better.</p> <p>Look at themselves in the mirror in a range of different clothes, wigs and hats, hair bobbles etc</p> <p>Encourage them to take off hats, gloves, socks (make sure the gloves and socks are oversized and the hats can be removed easily). Maybe some children could put hats on.</p> <p>Encourage children to take off and maybe even put on hand puppets and then play simple interactive games with the puppets</p> <p>Play with dolls and teddies, taking off hats, socks and shoes. Have other clothes that have Velcro fastenings so they can be ripped off easily. Take off dollies' clothes and give her a bath</p> <p>Encourage children to put clothes on dolls and teddies but they are likely to need a lot of support to</p>	
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		<p>do that. Start with putting hats on.</p> <p>If children are physically able, they may learn to put on their own socks and shoes. Play interactive games with their own socks and shoes eg: get them to take off their socks and shoes, then hide them and encourage them to find them and put them back on again.</p> <p>If children can't do this physically but understand hiding games then do the same game but encourage them to be aware of the dressing and undressing bit and use eye pointing to locate them.</p> <p>If children are on a toilet training programme, then pulling down their pants and maybe pulling them up should be included.</p> <p>If children have the physical ability to deal with fastenings then include those in any of the games above.</p> <p>Make up a story with fastenings in it or a song where you can practice the same action over and over again eg: 'Zip it up, zip it down, turn around and sit down x 2'</p> <p>Some children will be able to dress and undress with little or no support. Encourage this as much as possible, using natural situations and invented games whenever you can. Take time in swimming to enable children to undress and dress as much as</p>	
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		<p>they can.</p> <p>More able children can learn about the order of undressing and dressing</p>	
Hand Washing	Washing and drying hands as independently as possible	<p>Children begin by becoming familiar with water and soap in water play and in the bath. We need to encourage them to join in the activity and offer their hands, pick up the soap, swish the water/ bubbles. Drying hands is a harder skill but it can begin with offering hands to be dried.</p> <p>Later, if they have the physical ability, children can learn to rub their hands together with soap and wipe their hands on the towel.</p> <p>Make sure you take advantage of every natural time to wash and dry hands eg: after messy play, painting, before and after lunch. Don't rush these times and encourage children to do as much as they can for themselves even if they can only indicate by stilling that they are aware of water on their hands.</p> <p>Play interactive games in the water tray with soap and bubbles. Encourage holding the soap, squeezing it and letting it plop in the water, fishing for it and picking it up again. You catch the soap in a cup and pour it into the water. Just have fun with the slippery soap.</p>	<p>Water Soap Towel Cup</p> <p>Bowl, flour, water, towel</p>

		<p>Make up a sensory story that includes hand washing eg: N wanted to make a cake. He got a bowl and some flour. He put the flour in the bowl 'whoosh, whoosh, whoosh' and stirred it round with his hands 'stir, stir, stir'. Then he put the water in 'pour, pour, pour' and stirred it into the flour with his hands 'stir, stir, stir.' Oh yuk, look at his hands. They are all messy. Let's wash them (another bowl with water and soap) 'swish, swish, swish.' Let's dry them 'rub, rub, rub.</p> <p>Sing songs to accompany hand washing eg: This is the way we wash out hands' (Mulberry Bush). Make up little songs eg: 'Swish your hands in the water x 3 until you've got them clean. Rub your hands with the soap x 3 until you've got them clean. Dry your hands on the towel x 3 until you've got them dry.'</p>	
Hair brushing	Brushing their own hair as independently as possible	<p>Hair brushing demands quite a lot of skill and understanding as children can't see what they are doing to themselves. They can look in the mirror but a reverse image can be difficult to understand. Let them practice on dolls and hairdresser's heads as well as on their own.</p> <p>Children who are physically disabled can indicate that they are aware of their hair being brushed and later they can show they can anticipate the process. If they understand seeing themselves in the mirror then that can be another way to involve them.</p>	

		<p>There are a few natural times for hair brushing (swimming, coming in from outside, getting ready to go home) so take advantage of those as well as inventing reasons to brush hair eg: putting on hats or hiding under material, blowing with a hair dryer so hair is all messed up and needs to be smoothed down again. Try to do this on a regular basis so children get used to having their hair brushed or brush it themselves.</p> <p>Use a hairdresser's head to practice brushing movements and/ or encourage children to brush your hair (with your own brush!). Pretend to brush dolls' and teddies' hair.</p> <p>Combine teeth cleaning with hand washing and hair brushing so you create a little routine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush your teeth • Wash your hands • Dry your hands • Brush your hair <p>Always do it in the same order and children will soon be able to anticipate what comes next. This can be done with children who are physically able or disabled. They will all be learning to anticipate what comes next.</p> <p>Use the same routine in pretend play with the dolls in the play house.</p>	<p>Hairbrush (personal to each child) Mirror Hair dryer Material Hats and wigs Clothes that go over the head</p> <p>Hairdresser's head Dolls and teddies</p>
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Teeth cleaning	Cleaning their teeth as independently as possible	<p>Some children will be able to learn to clean their teeth themselves and most children will be able to learn to tolerate having their teeth brushed. There are a few children who cannot have anything in their mouths. Check with the Speech and Language Therapist before working with a child who is gastro fed.</p> <p>Although there is a natural time for teeth cleaning after lunch, it may not be possible to practice at this time. Whenever you timetable it, make sure that it happens regularly, especially when beginning the programme.</p> <p>Sing teeth cleaning songs and generally encourage children as they learn. Make it fun.</p> <p>Teeth cleaning is another opportunity to practice turning taps on and off and filling a tumbler with water.</p> <p>Get the children to look at themselves in the mirror and pull faces where their teeth are prominent.</p> <p>Use pretend play and brush the doll's/ teddy's teeth. Try to encourage the up and down motion needed for efficient cleaning even when pretending.</p> <p>Analyse the steps of teeth cleaning so you are accurate with which step/s the child can manage</p>	<p>Each child should have their own personal toothbrush and toothpaste</p> <p>Mirror</p> <p>Basin</p> <p>Tumbler of water for swilling and spitting</p>

		independently and which they need help with. Make sure this information is available for anyone who supports that child in teeth cleaning.	
Choosing clothes	Choosing the correct clothes for the weather or the event or that belong to them	<p>Once children have learned the physical skills of dressing and undressing, they can learn to choose the correct clothing for the weather or event. Some children may not physically be able to dress and undress but might be able to indicate which clothes are suitable for what.</p> <p>Although there are many naturally occurring opportunities to choose the correct clothing for the weather and events, you are likely to have to practice this skill at other times.</p> <p>Spend time during the naturally occurring opportunities, enabling children to learn to choose. Get them to choose the correct clothing from that and one other possibility; eg: choose from an apron and something quite different for painting. When they are good at choosing from 2, increase it to 3 etc. Get them to choose their own coat from the row on the pegs.</p> <p>Play games with hats that are suitable for different situations or people eg: a hard hat/ woolly hat/ shower cap/ crown etc. Play with the actual objects and then photos and pictures. Sing a song that is associated with the different types of hats eg: 'put on your woolly hat, woolly hat, woolly hat. Put on your woolly hat to keep you warm.'</p>	

		<p>Play games and role play different weather conditions eg: put on a raincoat and get sprayed with water.</p> <p>Dress up teddies and dolls in the correct type of clothes</p> <p>Sabotage the situation once children are able to select the correct clothing easily eg: ask children to get ready to go out to play but you have put swimming costumes on their pegs and have hidden their coats. Ask them to help you to solve the problem and then find their coats. You could then get them to select photos of different places where their coats could be hidden and then go and look. Perhaps there could be one coat in each place and the finder has to give it to the correct child.</p> <p>Choose photos of the correct clothing for particular events</p> <p>Keep school type clothes eg aprons, Forest school waterproofs, PE clothes in specific known places so children can choose these independently or when requested. Label these with photos/ words.</p> <p>Take photos of the children in clothes suitable for an activity and play lotto/ snap with them.</p> <p>Make photos of children in a sequence so they have to choose the right photos to make the sequence for going swimming, horseriding, forest schools. More</p>	
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		able children could include less well practised sequences eg: going to the beach, on a trip to the zoo, going on a picnic or even some that they don't actually experience themselves eg: firemen getting ready to fire fight or a doctor getting ready for an operation.	
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TEACHING SELF HELP SKILLS

(Eating and Drinking)

Below are some ideas for practising the self help skills of eating and drinking.

Please refer to the Programme of Learning for advice on how to analyse the skill you want to teach so you know which specific step each child is learning. The learning outcomes in this scheme are very general so you will need to tailor the activities to individual children.

You will need to keep close contact with the Speech and Language Therapist to ensure that you are teaching eating and drinking skills in the most effective way. This programme is only for children who can eat and drink safely. It does *not* include children who are gastro fed.

Focus	Learning Outcomes	Teaching Activities	Resources
Eating		The programme of study begins with awareness of food. Many children at this early level are likely to be gastro fed but those who can taste/ eat food can enjoy the activities suggested below. These children are likely to be those on the autistic spectrum or any other conditions that cause them to refuse to try food.	

	Being aware of food	If children are not over hungry, try and encourage them to smell the food and watch it being put out in the dishes. Help them to aware of the food being wheeled in on the trolley or brought out of the cupboard. Show them the food and sing songs about it.	Crockery and cutlery – suitable for individual children
	Being helpful in the eating process	Encourage them to touch the food, try it on their lips, lick their fingers and generally be aware of different kinds of foods – both in taste and in texture.	Eg shaped spoons, plates with lips
	Eating pureed food		Variety of food
	Eating mashed food	Use food in messy play situations, encouraging children to taste what they are playing with. Try not to worry that children learning to play with their food might mean they don't learn to eat 'nicely'! For children who are still earning to be aware of food, messing with it is an important step.	Messy play food eg: pasta, rice, jelly
	Eating chopped food		Finger food – Wotsits, rusks, banana
	Eating finger food	Use snack time to encourage them to distinguish between food and non-food and make a note of the range of things they like and dislike.	Place mat with shapes for

	<p>Using a spoon to eat</p> <p>Using a fork</p> <p>Using a knife</p> <p>Laying the table</p> <p>Clearing up their plates and cutlery</p>	<p>Children who refuse to even try food may become more tolerant if allowed to play with it. Children who will only eat one type of food and no other could be encouraged to accept small changes in that food eg: changing the shape or colour of the food but not the taste or the opposite.</p> <p>Children who are learning to move from one consistency to another eg: puree to mashed foods - can be encouraged by including just a little mashed food amongst the pureed rest. You can also puree the food for less long so the consistency is a bit lumpier.</p> <p>Children who are learning to finger feed can have a range of different foods to practice with – long, short, soft, hard etc</p> <p>Learning to use utensils begins with a spoon and pureed or mashed food in a bowl with a lip to help with loading, although the first step is likely to be the adult loading the spoon and handing it to the child.</p>	<p>cutlery</p> <p>Pretend play cutlery and crockery, dolls and teddies, play chairs and table</p> <p>Tobis, photos, symbols, signs related to eating</p>
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		<p>There are various shaped spoons that can be helpful. Ask the OT about what is available.</p> <p>Giving children their own spoon to hold can encourage them to begin using it</p> <p>Once children are secure with a spoon (although this may never be fully achieved), they can move on to learning to use a fork and finally to use a knife and fork.</p> <p>Some children can learn to cut with their knives and load their forks neatly!</p> <p>Some children can learn to lay the table. First they can learn to match the knife, fork and spoon to shape outlines but later can learn to put the cutlery in the right place with no guide.</p> <p>Some children can learn to clear up after the meal. They can put the waste food in the bowl, their cutlery</p>	
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		<p>in the other bowl and their plate on the pile.</p> <p><i>Other activities to support learning to eat</i></p> <p>In addition to learning to eat real food, some children will be able to play with cutlery and crockery, pretending to feed dolls and teddies or role play cooking, eating and washing up.</p> <p>Sing songs, tell stories and play interactive games about food eg: 'Hungry, hungry, I am hungry. Table, table here I come' , 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and 'the Three Bears'. Make up stories about eating.</p> <p>Use Makaton signs, Tobis, photos etc to support learning vocabulary around eating and use cutlery/ crockery and food to learn about matching, sorting, counting</p>	
Drinking		<p>The drinking programme is mainly aimed at progress through the different types of drinking receptacles, until children can use an ordinary</p>	

	<p>Being aware of drinks and drinking</p> <p>Being helpful in the drinking process</p> <p>Drinking from a baby bottle</p> <p>Drinking thickened water</p> <p>Drinking from a spouted cup/ sports bottle</p>	<p>cup independently but it also includes pouring out drinks, filling jugs and washing up cups.</p> <p>Encourage children to watch while you pour liquid in a bottle/ cup. Help them to understand where the liquid comes from</p> <p>If they are physically able, encourage children to hold the bottle/ cup with you while drinking</p> <p>Be aware of when to start moving children on from bottles to two-handed cups, sloping cups and ordinary cups. Sometimes children need encouragement to move on to a new receptacle.</p> <p>Using a cup with a hard spout will help children to move on from sucking as for a bottle to the motion required for using a cup.</p> <p>Drinking from an open cup can be very messy and</p>	
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	<p>Drinking from a two handled cup (with a lid first)</p> <p>Drinking from a sloped cup</p> <p>Drinking from an ordinary cup</p> <p>Drinking with a straw</p> <p>Pouring a drink</p> <p>Filling a jug</p> <p>Offering drinks to others</p>	<p>children will need lots of practice and guidance. You might need to thicken it slightly to stop it flowing so quickly</p> <p>Drinking from a straw is really good for strengthening the muscles in and around the mouth. Start with a wide straw and gradually make them thinner so children need to suck more vigorously</p> <p>Encourage children to help you to pour drinks as they become interested in trying it out for themselves. Make sure there is only a little in the jug to begin with.</p> <p>Help children to fill a jug by holding it under a tap that you control. It will be some time before children can manage to hold the jug with one hand and turn on the tap with the other. Expect many accidents with splashing water while</p>	
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	Washing up the cups		
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USEFUL SOURCES

Supporting Feeding and Oral Development in Young Children

www.downsyndrome.ie/docs/feeding_oral_development.pdf

Choosing Eating and Drinking Equipment

www.dlf.org.uk/factsheets/choosing_eating_and_drinking_equipment_sponsored.pdf

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Swiss Cottage School Curriculum

Vale of Everhsam

