

## PMLD at The Milestone School

### **INTENT:**

The Milestone School PMLD curriculum is designed to provide an appropriate, stimulating, meaningful and inspiring education for pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties. It is a child centered, process-based, multisensory and developmental curriculum, focusing on experiences gained through interactive activities and opportunities rather than the 'end product'. Through these experiences, we focus on the pupil's engagement, responses and expressions, time taken and their actions. The PMLD Curriculum content is derived from our four core progression pathways (as below), which are all interrelated and dependent on each other. All subject areas, activities and learning experiences (including enriching subjects) are delivered through these four pathways.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Our PMLD curriculum is broad, balanced and meaningful to the needs of the young people. It recognises how our pupils learn, by supporting and developing their strengths and abilities, it focuses on developing the learner's understanding of the world around them and of social interactions and relationships. It is delivered in an integrated manner, incorporating learning, therapy and health needs and many opportunities to practice and achieve these learning outcomes are offered in a wide range of settings. We recognise and understand that factors such as the time of day, comfort or choice of positioning may affect a pupil's ability to concentrate and therefore learn. We also take into consideration the physical abilities/limitations, medical, personal care and feeding needs of the pupils when structuring the day and developing the activities that make up the curriculum.

Pupils at this level are working significantly below Age Related Expectations and will follow an informal, non-subject based learning approach; focusing on their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes which are taken from the Milestone School Core Subject Progression Pathways. These outcomes underpin the foundations of communication, maths, English, PSHE and Physical Development (PD).

Pupils will be working within levels 1-6 of these pathways under 4 of the 5 EHCP areas

- Communication and Interaction (C&I)
- Cognition and Learning (C&L)
- Sensory and Physical (S&P)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

Self-help and Independence (SHI) EHCP outcomes can be taken from any of the Pathways depending on the needs of the young person, this also demonstrates the individualised child centered approach we follow at The Milestone School.

Due to the impact of their sensory and motor impairments, care needs, medical needs/conditions (which may be regressive) and general health on both learning and performance, we acknowledge and understand that pupils with PMLD develop at varying rates and may make progress or rebuild lost skills in very small steps. For this cohort of young people, maintenance of existing skills is of equal importance. The learners outcomes are broken down into smaller achievable learning intentions by teachers to show progress.

Learners of this cohort are taught in classes with a high level of adult support, due to their complex and holistic needs. At The Milestone School, we recognise the importance and need for our pupils to access activities which can be reinforced through planned repetition. Learning opportunities are relevant to their needs and delivered at a rate which enables processing time for the pupils.

We follow a topic based approach to ensure breadth of experiences and opportunities which are linked to but not taken from the Milestone Enriching Subject Pathways. We recognise that many subjects offer immersive and exciting experiences so, where appropriate, pupils working within the PMLD curriculum will access a variety of engaging activities and experiences related to a topic. These activities are not assessed on subject based pathways, but are merely the vehicle with which to deliver their EHCP outcomes.

Many children with PMLD are unable to communicate using typical speech or symbols, which is why developing an understanding of the learner's communication is of paramount importance and adapted communication methods are used to meet their individual needs. Interpreting meaning in their vocalisations, eye contact/movement, body language and facial expression enables teachers to assess their progress and engagement.

A multisensory teaching and learning approach is used where a range of different sensory inputs (visual - sight, auditory - sound, olfactory - smell, tactile - touch, gustatory - taste, proprioception, vestibular and interoception) are integrated into activities to stimulate the learners and promote communication. These are and can be incorporated into topic related sensory stories, sensory, TACPAC, story massage, Rebound therapy, swimming/hydrotherapy, sensory cooking and art sessions to name a few. It is also acknowledged that time needs to be dedicated to addressing the pupils' physical needs to ensure comfort and readiness for learning, which may include changing their positions for pressure relief, maintaining (and developing where appropriate) their muscle tone and joint movement through physiotherapy programmes and the use of standing and walking frames. These activities are extremely important to the quality of life for these young people.

As a Thrive school we promote the development of emotional wellbeing. Our pupils working at this level will experience this through forming positive relationships with others, being made to feel safe and having their needs met, creating social opportunities within their department, whole school and local area, making them feel special and celebrating their successes.

### **IMPACT:**

- Continuous updating of SOLAR (our assessment tool)
- Evidence for Learning
- Engagement Model profiles
- Pupil progress meetings
- EHCP reviews

Each year, progress is measured by looking at the percentage increases and this is reported to parents. Where pupils are not making progress, barriers to learning e.g. health conditions will be addressed within the pupil progress meetings with members of SLT.