

Experiential Learners Overview Policy



Table of changes

Date	Section of Policy	Amendment
October 22	Personalised learning	Removal of target tracker and added communication assessments.
	The experiential curriculum	Additional information added re the engagement model.
	Training	Additional information on discoverer and communicator levels of communication,
	Strategies	Re-name TD snap from snap Core first.
	Impact	Amended section
	Evidence for learning	Amended section
	Role of the Head of Experiential Learners	Removed section

Experiential Learners Overview Policy

Date of Policy: October 2022

To be reviewed: Annually

Person Responsible for the Experiential Learners Action Plan:

Head of Experiential Learners; Sheila Symons.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies: Teaching and learning policy, Assessment and Recording Policy, Sensory Policy, Communication Policy and Attachment aware behaviour regulation policy.

Overview

The DfE definition of children 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 life.

At Delamere this encompasses a wide range of pupils', including pupils' who are in a wheelchair; pupils who are mobile, pupils who may have more than one diagnosis e.g. have a diagnosis of autism.

Pupils who are under the umbrella of Experiential Learners will additionally;

- have significant obstacles to communication and will use an alternative method of communication
- need high levels of support.

And may have;

- additional sensory or physical disabilities
- complex health needs or mental health difficulties
- behaviours that challenge.

Intent

Our vision, our values and our rights underpin all of our policies and the education we deliver. Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions that affect children. This policy has been created to keep the children at Delamere School safe and happy.

At Delamere School we recognise that our learners within the Experiential Learners Department have distinct learning needs which need to be addressed for them to achieve their full potential. Our intent is to;

Provide a highly personalised flexible and adaptable curriculum that places children's individual needs at the centre of their curriculum.

Recognise children's prior learning experiences and their experiences at home and to develop and extend these skills.

Provide a broad, balanced, challenging and stimulating curriculum for pupils that encourage and enables all children to be active learners.

Value all forms of communication and to develop and generalise communication skills so children can communicate needs, wants and opinions.

Work with families and the many other professionals who play an integral part in the lives of this group of children e.g. therapists, medical staff supporting children's postural management, physical skills, sensory needs and health care needs.

Curriculum Implementation:

Personalised learning

All pupils' learning starts with the identification and assessment of their individual needs. A range of assessments are used including B-Squared and communication assessments and teaching staff's professional judgement to aid this assessment. These assessments identify and focus learning around fundamental skills that will aim to remove barriers to learning and help pupils' make sense and gain basic understanding of the world. Outcomes are identified and formed into a personalised learning targets programme [PLT] which underpins all learning alongside the wider learning opportunities / cross curricular activities that occur within the classroom. Learning outcomes are written and discussed in collaboration with parents and the wider multi-professional team. They are reviewed termly. Staff plan inclusive and accessible activities that take into account individual needs.

The Experiential Curriculum:

Pupils who are under the umbrella of Experiential Learners require a high level of adult support to help them access their learning.

The Engagement Model is an integral and underpinning approach to supporting communication and learning. Engagement identifies and celebrates all pupils' progress, including linear and lateral progress, the consolidation and maintenance of knowledge, skills and concepts.

The Engagement Model includes 5 areas: exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation.

The Experiential Curriculum is broken down into very small steps.

Underpinning all teaching and learning is an emphasis on the development of core skills including

- Communication: "How I communicate" Respond (to social events and activities), Interact (with others), Communicate.
- Cognition: "My thinking" (Awareness, Exploration, Control and early problem solving, Sequence and pattern)
- Personal, social and emotional Development including: social interaction, social understanding, social communication, eating and drinking skills.
- Physical development; "My body" (Body awareness, gross motor skills [standing, sitting, walking] , fine motor skills,[reaching, grasping and releasing, manipulation mobility [indoor, outdoor, water]).
- Expressive Arts and design; music, creating art and design, enjoying music, responding to dance and drama.

It is important that pupils are given the opportunity to experience a wide range of activities enough times so that they can learn from their experiences.

All children have opportunities to play and learn alongside their more able peers with creative timetabling between classes and whole school learning activity weeks.

Training:

- All class-based staff have regular training relating to Moving and Handling and Positive behaviour management through Team Teach Training.
- Staff are additionally trained in a range of communication strategies including Canaan Barrie on body signing, discover and communicator levels of communication, intensive interaction and the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) approaches that are highly personalised.
- Some approaches are autism-specific practices which will include - PECS, TEACCH, Sensory Integration; a range of strategies will be used that reflect a child's learning need.
- All staff have on-the-job training reflecting a range of teaching and learning approaches.

Multi agency Approach including Working with Families:

The multi-disciplinary approach to pupils learning is a strength at Delamere and there are wide range of professionals that are dedicated to supporting pupils complex needs. Parents are the primary link in keeping professionals aware of their child's ongoing needs. Ongoing dialogue enables shared feedback of information so that accurate assessment, planning and delivery of the curriculum can take place and children's learning can be developed. The multi- agency approach enables, and gives value to all sources of knowledge when planning for our experiential learners. It is acknowledged that different assessments will be used by different professionals.

"Many pupils with learning difficulties will have priority needs which are central to their learning and quality of life. Some pupils will have therapeutic needs or require paramedical care. Provision for these needs is a legitimate& essential element of the curriculum and should be planned for." QCA General Guidance on planning, teaching & assessing the curriculum for pupils with Learning Difficulties (2009), Page 7

Delamere School has a dedicated on-site Therapy Team who are:

- A School Nurse
- A team of Speech and Language Therapists (SALT). The team includes a Highly Specialist specialised SALT in Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) and another Specialist SALT who has dysphagia experience.
- A team of Occupational Therapists including a Highly Specialist Occupational Therapist for children with ASC and sensory needs
- Highly Specialist Physiotherapists for children with physical needs
- Trafford Sensory Impairment Service—including specialists for children with Visual Impairments and Hearing Impairments

These professionals provide advice and support to staff working with the pupils as well as undertaking assessments, working 1:1 and in a group with the pupils. They jointly write Personalised Learning Targets, and written advice is provided for communication, feeding and drinking and physical needs as required [communication and positional passports]

Strategies/Approaches used within the Experiential learners Department :

- Canaan Barrie signs for the visually impaired, use of Positive Looking for VI pupils.
- Signalong
- Objects of reference
- Use of Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) - A range of low tech communication aids, including communication books, activity mats [accessed by eye pointing or touch], PODD mats, switches, symbols and symbol based apps e.g. TD snap.
- Intensive interaction

Additional strategies to support experiential learners with Autism;

- TEACCH, Visual timetables
- Sensory Integration approaches / strategies
- Work stations
- To pupils follow a Multi-sensory approach.

Impact

- All children will have access to a total communication approach and be supported to develop a system of functional communication appropriate to their cognitive level so that they can make choices and express feelings.
- All children will form positive relationships with staff and peers at Delamere.
- All children will have access to a broad, balanced & personalised curriculum including reading for pleasure sessions.
- All children will participate in a wide range of multi-sensory experiences both in school and within the community. [linking to cultural capital]
- All children will make at least expected levels of progress across the core areas of learning based on their starting point and their medical diagnosis / needs.
- All children will be supported to thrive physically and emotionally.
- All children will be supported to successfully transition into the next stage of their education.

Evidence for Learning

Children have personalised learning targets which link to their EHC outcomes.

Teachers assess progress and development of pupils by recording their attainment through B squared and through the Engagement Model.

Assessment outcomes are reported as part of the Annual Review process. Analysis of pupil progress data is carried out throughout the year.

Detailed observations, photographs and video evidence are recorded and form the basis of our evidence for our summative annual review reports.

End of Year reports are provided for parents.

Policy reviewed October 22