The Sensory Experiential Curriculum for Students with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties.

Redwood Special Secondary School
September 2016

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Introduction

In 2014 we at Redwood School, in response to our Ofsted report, evaluated our provision and researched the curriculum offer for students with PMLD in a variety of special schools. This research took the form of networking and visiting other schools to find out what they were doing and why.
We also completed an audit of our present provision in school to highlight strengths and areas for development.
This information was shared with and discussed with a core group of staff concerned and interested in the development of personalised learning of PMLD students. We worked closely with The Dales School who had recently implemented MAPP (Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress) – an assessment toolbox for assessing lateral progression.
The networking and information sharing resulted in the whole school restructuring of the Redwood Sensory Experiential PMLD curriculum in September 2015.
In September 2016 we extended the use of MAPP to include students with ASD and complex needs.
This document provides an overview of our Sensory Experiential PMLD curriculum.

This curriculum recognises that students with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, ASD and complex needs have unique abilities and ways of learning and that the curriculum needs to be approached in a different way than for those with higher cognitive ability. Additionally, many traditional assessment models do not recognise all the progress and development that we know these students can make – Measuring the immeasurable.

This curriculum overview gives ideas, not instructions. It is up to the individual students’ educators to decide what is or is not appropriate and write this into their individual learning intentions. The student must be at the centre of the educational process. It is not the responsibility of the student to change to meet the demands of the curriculum; it is the responsibility of those providing the curriculum to ensure that it is flexible enough and adaptable enough to meet the needs of each student. Adults are the facilitators of the student’s learning and it is key that all agencies (for example parents, nursing, speech and language therapy, occupation therapy, physiotherapy) work together in an integrated way to maximise the learning opportunities.
At the Redwood we believe that how we are as adults and essential facilitators in learning directly affects how our students are and how well they learn. We must therefore all take individual responsibility for being and remaining positive with our learners at all times.

**The Principles of the Sensory Experiential PMLD Curriculum**

The curriculum delivery is creative and thematic (where appropriate) and designed to meet the individual needs of the learners. It is a planned journey with landmarks and significant milestones for learners traditionally at P1 – P6. It has an informal approach to learning which is driven by the student’s individual learning intentions throughout all subjects, ensuring that the students have focused learning opportunities in all areas of school life.

- Students learn through interaction.
- Subjects happen at the same time.
- Teaching is led by the student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 Core Strands / Learning Intentions</th>
<th>Continuum of Skill Development – CSD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doing things more on your own.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Student determines the activities.
- The curriculum supports independence.
There are 4 core strands to the curriculum, which is underpinned and assessed on a continuum of skill development (CSD) see below.

Throughout the Sensory Experiential PMLD curriculum students may use a variety of approaches to support their learning. Many students benefit from a sensory approach to learning. Some students will use strategies such as objects of reference, photographs, symbols, switches and PECs to support their learning and communication. Throughout all approaches used, members of staff working with the individuals ensure that they adopt consistent approaches to ensure pupils feel secure in their learning. It is essential that students are provided opportunities to trial ideas and explore stimuli as independently as possible and that they are allowed the appropriate time to notice and respond to stimuli. It is through the close, professional relationships that students will feel secure and more willing to participate in sessions.

Within the curriculum various lessons may take place either cross curricular or discreet delivery were appropriate such as:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Sensory story telling
- Rebound
- Massage
- Sensology
- Movement
- Community visits
- 1:1 Interaction and communication
- Music
- Art
- Drama
- ICT
- PSHE
• Wider World Awareness
• Swimming – Hydro Splash
• Physical/Physiotherapy
• My Plan sessions

The Sensory Experiential PMLD curriculum also promotes British Values by:-
• Offering a varied and rich curriculum.
• Using approaches such as 1:1 interactions we help to develop the student’s emotional well-being encouraging them to believe in themselves.
• Promoting positive behaviour towards people working with us.
• Encouraging the students to spend time in the community and experience everyday living activities.
• Working together the team around the students to promote an environment which treats everyone as an individual.

Assessment

The key feature of MAPP is that it recognises lateral progression. MAPP is divided into two principal sections. The first focuses on setting learning intentions (as discussed above) whilst the second focuses on assessment.

The Continuum of Skill Development (CSD) assesses the development of four aspects of skill on a four-point scale. The four aspects of the CSD are: prompting, fluency, maintenance and generalisation.

There are four descriptors for each aspect which represent progress from emergent behaviours to competence. A numerical rating scale facilitates analysis, comparisons and graphic representations of summative data. On the rating scale emboldened numbers (1, 4, 7, and 10) refer to the descriptor which is placed above them. A number immediately to the left of a bold number indicates that the descriptor partly fits the student’s behaviour but is not yet fully achieved. A number immediately to the right of a bold number indicates that the student has progressed beyond this point but has not yet begun to achieve at the next level.
In this example a score of 4 would indicate that ‘the skill is observed on more than one occasion but only intermittently’ and a score of 7 that ‘the skill is reliably repeated but may need refreshing after a break. It is important to note that the CSD is an independent tool and can be used to evaluate progress against learning intentions which are drawn from sources other than MAPP.

The key features of CSD are:
- It provides a common vocabulary for observation and recording
- It provides a framework for recording progress against skills which are not susceptible to being broken down into smaller and smaller steps or which do not benefit from such task analysis.
- It provides a framework for recognising progress where the same skills are being practised and refined over time.
- It provides a framework for recording incidental learning and achievements which have not been planned but which emerge spontaneously.
- It provides a framework for evaluating qualitative differences in performance as well as quantitative differences.
- It profiles the various strengths and needs which students have in different aspects of skill development, for example, a student’s ability to maintain skills in relation to their ability to refine them or to work without support.

Definition of Terms:-

Prompting

*Prompting* is about increasing independence.

| Example: from inconsistent **Maintenance** to consistent **Learners maintain competency over time through repetition. They remember how to do a task after a break.** |
| The skill has been observed on a single occasion only. | The skill is observed on more than one occasion but only intermittently. | The skill is reliably repeated but may need refreshing after a break. | The skill is consolidated and maintained over time. It is remembered after a break. |
| 1 2 | 3 4 5 | 6 7 8 | 9 10 |
There is progression from being able to perform a task only with maximum support to being able to complete the task independently. Types of support may include:
- Physical help
- Spoken help
- Gestural help

**Fluency**
*Fluency is about combining speed and accuracy.*
For example:
- Hitting a switch with increasing speed and/or accuracy
- Signing with greater accuracy and fluency
- Speaking – producing speech sounds with increasing clarity
- Writing – forming shapes with increasing control

**Maintenance**
*Maintenance is about becoming more consistent over time.*
For example:
- An isolated response or action is repeated and repetitions become more consistent and reliable

**Generalisation**
*Generalisation is about performing in different settings with different people.*
Skills which have been learnt in one context are applied in an increasing range of contexts.
For example:
- Using a communication aid to ask for a drink in a café
- Approaching staff to ask for assistance in the local college

Each of the above terms can be expressed in more ‘student friendly’ language to enable students to participate in the assessment process. For example, ‘prompting’ is about ‘doing things more on your own’, ‘fluency’ is about ‘getting better at doing something’, ‘maintenance’ is about ‘doing something more often’ or ‘being more reliable’ and ‘generalisation’ is about ‘doing something with different people in different places’.

See table below for full explanation in terms of the 4 areas of the CSD.
## CONTINUUM OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT

### from dependent **Prompting** to independent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners complete tasks independently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The learner is provided with support throughout the task. Support may be in the form of physical, gestural or spoken help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### from approximate **Fluency** to accurate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners reach a level of mastery combining speed and accuracy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The skill is approximate and the learner’s behaviour needs considerable shaping in order to accomplish the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### from inconsistent **Maintenance** to consistent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners maintain competency over time through repetition. They remember how to do a task after a break.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The skill has been observed on a single occasion only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### from single context **Generalisation** to many contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners achieve mastery in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or with different staff.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The skill is demonstrated in a single setting or context, with limited stimuli or materials and with the same staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following spreadsheet example provides an illustrative example of the summative record of attainment for a student at Redwood School, in relation to his / her personal learning intentions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>XXXXXXX</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Learning intention</th>
<th>Physical Development: To become more tactile tolerant when accessing lessons.</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15/16</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>b b 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>b b 3 4 5</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>b b b 4 5</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Generalisation</td>
<td>b b b 4 5</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C.S.D. Scale</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>30.56%</td>
<td>continued</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning intention</th>
<th>Communication: To make a choice from two items by gesture and vocalisation.</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>b b b b 5 6 7 8</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>b b b 4 5 6 7 8</td>
<td>55.56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>b b b 4 5 6</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalisation</td>
<td>b b b 4 5</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.S.D. Scale</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cells shaded yellow represent the baseline score and the green cells represent the progress which the student made during the course of the learning intention. Learning intentions can be set throughout the year and / or continue over the terms. E.g. some of the learning intentions are set at the start of the academic year and others are introduced as the year progresses. The date of each baseline assessment is shown in the top right hand corner of each box.

The progress score is arrived at through the judgements of teaching staff based upon the observations which are recorded on a continuous basis on individual learning intention specific recording sheets.

The spreadsheet shows progress but also provides a visual representation of relative strengths, both between learning intentions and between aspects of skill development.

These strengths are also shown in numerical terms using the percentage data which is given in the right hand column, and averaged into an overall score. If an area of the CSD is not relevant to the intention it can be coloured grey equating to not applicable. In some cases an R can be inputted creating a red cell to show regression.

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