



PMLD/Complex needs Specialist Classes

Parent Information

Welcome

I look forward to welcoming you and your child into one of our PMLD/Complex needs specialist classes at Exeter House School. These classes span all the Key Stages of a child's educational journey at Exeter House School (Early Years to Post 16). If you would like any further information about our educational provision in these classes please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sharon Mant PMLD/Complex needs lead.

Classes

There are currently three PMLD/Complex needs specialist classes:

Kingfishers: Pupils within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

Teacher: Sharon Mant

Owls: Pupils within Key Stage 2

Teacher: Greg Beha/Sam Heenan

Kestrels: Pupils within the Key Stage 3 and 4

Teacher: Abbi Murphy

Each class is led by a teacher and supported by a team of teaching assistants.

Curriculum Framework

Within the PMLD/Complex needs specialist classes we understand that the students all have their own specific health, physical and/or cognitive barriers to learning and require a personalised curriculum tailored to meet individual needs.

Each class follows The Profound Curriculum in conjunction with the lower, middle or upper school planning framework. Please see the department information booklets for further information.

The lower school classes (Kingfishers) follow **The Profound Curriculum and the primary school topic cycle.**

The middle school classes (Owls) follow **The Profound Curriculum and middle school topic cycle.**

The upper school classes (Kestrels) follow **Personal Progress Qualifications (ASDAN) and upper school topic cycle.**



Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning takes place through:

Teacher directed activities - Planned activities with learning objectives based on individual needs. Students work either individually, in small groups or occasionally as a class.

Individual Targets - Personalised targets agreed with parents during structured conversations that take place three times a year. This ensures that you can be fully involved in your child's education. These targets are related to the specific needs of each individual.

In addition to classroom based activities we make full use of our excellent onsite shared facilities. These include soft play, hydrotherapy, jacuzzi, forest school, library, sensory integration room, cookery room, courtyard sensory garden and multisensory room.

Each class has access to offsite activities. There are opportunities for therapeutic riding at RDA in Wilton and trips into the community to learn environmental and life skills.

Students have access to a range of therapeutic opportunities including rebound therapy, music therapy, therapeutic riding, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and sensory integration therapy.

Assessment

Teachers formally assess each child's progress three times each year.

Teachers collate evidence of learning through **Evidence for Learning** and class scrapbook. This evidence is used to create **Learning Journeys** that celebrate individual experiences at school. Over time they will 'tell a story' of learning, progress and engagement.

Annual Reviews are held to discuss progress in all areas and are attended by the whole team around the child. The teacher will assess and report on each child's development against the achievement continuum skills of:

Anticipation

Awareness

Curiosity

Discovery

Initiation

Investigation

PMLD/Complex Needs Strategies

Each teacher adopts a number of different techniques to enable the pupils in their class to be positively involved and engaged in their learning. Teachers plan these in both personalised and group learning opportunities alongside the curriculum for their age group. Each day will have a regular structure and routine. Multisensory teaching enables pupils to engage all of their senses in their learning. Pupils are given plenty of time to process information and to learn through repetition. Class staff work closely with outside agencies to ensure all health and physical care needs are met. Individual therapeutic programmes are integrated throughout the school day and class staff have a high level of expertise in these areas.

Communication

Development of **communication is central to all teaching and learning**. At Exeter House School we aim to provide a total communication environment. Communication methods include Makaton, objects of reference, eye pointing, speech, gestures, body signing, speech, communication software and Intensive Interaction. Staff in the complex needs class will get to know each pupil's way of communicating and will interpret any attempt at communication in best faith. All communication attempts are respected and valued.

Intensive Interaction

Intensive interaction is an approach to **teaching the pre-speech fundamentals of communication** to children who have severe learning difficulties and who are still at an early stage of communication development. This technique involves having fun, playing and sharing attention with another person as well as aiming to develop non-verbal communication such as gesture and body language. This technique is

used extensively by all staff during planned discrete sessions and incidental learning opportunities throughout the day as appropriate for each pupil.

For more information about Intensive Interaction:

www.intensiveinteraction.org

Sensory Integration

Sensory integration is the **ability to process, interpret and use information received through the senses**. Sensory integration (a balanced nervous system) develops through typical childhood activities and experiences. It is the foundation for more complex learning and behaviour.

There is a link between a person's ability to deal with sensory input effectively and their behaviour and emotional development. For many students at Exeter House School, sensory integration development is atypical. These students may experience difficulties in learning, motor skills and behaviour.

A person's response to sensory input will affect their arousal state. In order to be able to function, a person needs to be able to maintain an optimal level of arousal, that is, to be in a state of readiness to learn and respond appropriately.

Students may have access to individual sessions in the sensory integration room and staff integrate sensory strategies into daily classroom activities. These interventions help students to modulate their level of sensory arousal in order to achieve the **'calm alert'** state required to engage and participate.

For more information about Sensory Integration:

www.sensoryintegration.org.uk/What-is-SI#Overview_of_sensory_integration%20

Home School Diary

We know that you want to be **involved** with your son or daughter's learning. Every day staff will send a note in the Home/School Diary to inform you of the day's events and how your child reacted to activities. We will also use the diary to ask for any equipment that we need in school.

Celebration

We know how proud you are of your son or daughter. We are proud of them too and like to reward achievement. Pupils can work towards individual or class awards at a level that is appropriate to them. We also have a whole school house point system and celebrate achievement in our twice weekly assemblies. Pupils can achieve house points, stars and certificates for good work, good attitude, being a great friend or for trying something new.