

Welcome to the Immersive Pathway at Blackfriars



Intent - The design of our Immersive Curriculum – what is our Immersive vision?

The curriculum offer for our students with PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) at Blackfriars is an exciting, enriching variety of opportunities and experiences that allows the development of student’s communication skills, engagement and participation whilst meeting their holistic needs.

This is the Informal or pre formal curriculum - for the students with profound and complex needs. The curriculum is designed to meet the holistic needs of the students through a personalised approach, where we use what motivates and engages a student. Informal students require a higher level of adult support, both for their learning needs and their personal care, and are likely to need sensory stimulation with their curriculum broken down into very small steps.

Overview of our Curriculum Pathways									
Our Golden Thread PRIDE		P Pride in our appearance and all we do	R Respect for ourselves and others	I Independence	D Determination	E Enjoyment			
Cognition And Learning		Communication And Interaction		Physical/Sensory need		Social/Emotional And Mental Health			
Preparation for Adulthood									
Anchors from RSE	Identity	Celebration	Our World	Belonging	Signs and Symbols	Journeys	In the beginning	Leaders and Followers	Stories
PSHE Framework									
Immersive - Informal Students are immersed in a Sensory stimulation curriculum making connections and responding Pathway Vision: Our Immersive Pathway offers students an exciting, enriching variety of opportunities and experiences through multi sensory approaches that helps them to make sense of their world and to stimulate engagement and interaction.			Exploratory - Semi Formal Learning through exploring and experiencing a life skills curriculum, community experiences to understand the world around them Pathway Vision: The curriculum on offer to students in the Exploratory Pathway is designed to ensure that they lead a happy, fulfilling and as full-filled life as possible. EHCP targets drive the curriculum offer, the curriculum is broad and balanced with an emphasis is upon Preparation for Adulthood.				Questioning - Formal Adapted National Curriculum and accreditations Pathway Vision: Our questioning pathway leads our students on a journey of self-discovery. Based on foundations of inclusiveness and self-awareness, students grow in confidence through developing an enquiring and questioning mind, as well as an understanding of self.		

The Immersive Pathway is for those students who need the Informal curriculum that offers them a range of multi-sensory experiences to make sense of their world and to stimulate engagement and interaction. Through immersing them in structured, repetitive immersive environments and topics that stimulate the senses, the students will be motivated to:

- engage,
- experience,
- anticipate,
- participate
- develop their interaction and communication skills.

The students will be immersed in communication opportunities and development as this is at the heart of the pathway and is implemented through:

Intensive Interaction, Resonance Board sessions, Rebound (link), Sensology, Music and Movement, Breakfast club, Story Massage, TacPac, 4D Immersive technology sessions, hydro pool sessions

There are opportunities for the classes in the Immersive pathway to mix together in the mornings for active Sensory Regulation sessions and at break times and House activities.

The whole school approaches to learning are embedded across the Pathways with:

- our Golden Thread to all we do being our motto PRIDE
- through our Preparation for Adulthood work
- PSHE Framework
- The Anchors

Immersive Informal Pathway Vision									
Pathway Vision: Our Immersive Pathway offers students an exciting, enriching variety of opportunities and experiences through multi sensory approaches that helps them to make sense of their world and to									
Whole School Approach	Identity	Celebration	Our World	Belonging	Signs and Symbols	Journeys	In the beginning	Leaders and Followers	Stories
Anchors from RSE									
PSHE Framework			Preparation for Adulthood				PRIDE		
Area of Need	Communication and Interaction		Cognition and learning		Social and emotional		Sensory and physical		
	Having a voice		Engagement		Regulation—behaviour		Maintain and develop skills		
	Making choices		Anticipation		Sense of security		Stamina		
	Having control		Participation		Confidence and self esteem		Resilience		
	Expressing need/emotion		Awareness and understanding of the world around them		Skills out in the community		Being active		
							Independence		
Approaches to Learning	Immersive multi sensory, bespoke approaches and collaborative learning. Use of structure and repetition. And routine. Outdoor learning and trips, community.		Mobility, postural management, exploring the environment and personal care to enable them to be comfortable and ready to learn. Physio programmes. Rebound Therapy. Music and Movement.		Medical needs met through Care plans and trained staff to keep them healthy and safe in order to engage and participate.		Intensive Interaction, Total Communication, AAC system Objects of reference, Visual aids, Now/next, Sensory diets, regulation, weighted items, Hi/VI equipment. Sensology, massage. Resonance Boards.		EHCP outcomes, reviews, engagement model interventions, SCERTS—communication profile, guidance from outside agencies. Weekly reflection. Mapping against Routes for Learning and Recorded on Evidence for Learning.
Components	Personalisation	High staff ratio	Multi Professional Collaboration		Care and Mobility	Behaviour for Learning		Environment	Outdoor learning

Professionals Involved

The student' social, independence and self-help skills are promoted as much as possible through the above activities and at other times with the support of the physiotherapy team in school, the Personal Care team who assist in the bathroom and with physical management and the School Nurse who oversees Care plans and the administration of medication, the Multi-sensory Impairment Team who visit school and Speech Therapy.

Physiotherapy 01782 427425

Speech Therapy 01782 234484/234485

VI Team Liam Gosling 01785 356830

HI team Sarah Sayburn 01785 356830

School Nurse Tina Richardson 01782 987155

Clinical psychologist Dr Juliet Shand 01782 987150

The Class Team

Your child will be in a class with a main class teacher and then a number of Teaching assistants. The staff ratio is higher in the Immersive pathway in order to meet the complex needs of the students. Staff have a wide range of medical training needs, manual handling, sensory impairment, ASD and PMLD. They will be classroom based for most lessons allowing for their own personal equipment to be in once place. There will be movement to the pool, 4D room, outdoor spaces, sports hall, sensory spaces and assembly hall. You will hopefully get to know your team very well. They will communicate with you daily using a Home/School communication book and/or Showbie.

What will the day look like?

Students will be **greeted at the main door** by our smiley helpful door team and helped into school and down to their class where the class team will be waiting.

Students are **made comfortable** and there maybe some change of position or physical management at this point or at other points during the day.

Bags and books are checked for **messages from home**.

Sensory regulation activity – some students will go out for exercise and fresh air and meet up with other members of the school who are doing the same, some may follow a music and movement session in the classroom or be in their standing frames depending on need.

Then everyone returns to class for the **morning greeting** – with songs, signs, actions, props, photos, symbols, Big Macks, Step by Steps, PECs or PODD depending on need.

There is a **morning break** where again the students are supervised and supported to be out on the yard getting fresh air and meeting other students from around the school. Students will have a drink and snack if appropriate. Each class team will speak to you about either sending in your own or a small amount of money towards juice in class.

The **Personal Care team** will have the appropriate students on a rota and take them to the bathroom and also to be around for times in between.

Medication is administered by the class team and enteral feeds are either done by the class team or the enteral feeding nurse. **Lunch time** students are supported by the class team and lunch time supervisors and assisted. They then have time on the yard or in the 4D room for music/story/programme.

The end of the day is **story time and goodbye song**. Messages are written into books or put onto Showbie. The students are then taken to the appropriate taxi when it arrives.

Implementation – What does the vision mean in reality?

Across the school all Pathways explore the same Anchor each term – to give a focus for themes of study as well as including seasonal changes in the activities explore. A student's EHCP targets help to build a holistic view of their needs and these are embedded in everything that we do and are tracked. All students are assessed using Routes for Learning, each student follows an individual route map with skills being recorded using the Evidence for Learning app where photos and video evidence of progression can be linked to their targets.

A broad and balanced range of activities are delivered around the 4 key areas of need referred to in the Education Health Care Plans:

Cognition and learning needs are met through firstly knowing and understanding the level the student is at and then offering lessons that have structure, routine and are interactive throughout. Lessons are often through a stage-appropriate theme approach and the groups create environments within the classroom that immerse the pupils in that learning experience. The lessons are multi-sensory and interactive and devised to stimulate the senses and prompt responses. Resources and stories that motivate the students and fit with the stage that they are at are used. Lessons are planned with the student's target and next step in mind so that there is a clear focus and element of challenge.

Communication and Interaction skills underpin everything that the teachers do – every lesson or activity is an opportunity to be developing the pupils' communication 'skills'. Getting them to greet, request, comment, choose and control activities is very empowering and develops their desire to communicate and be engaged and part of the lesson. Our students are part of the House system in school and have many opportunities in assemblies and team game days to mix with friends from across the different groups within school. One class runs a café where all classes come, mix and socialise with their friends. This helps to further develop their skills of greeting and interacting and seeing those skills modelled by others.

Social, emotional and mental health needs are met in a variety of ways. Students have the opportunity to mix socially in school with other classes, out on the yard, with out-side visitors and by having the opportunity to be visiting their local community, library and cafes. Through breakfast club and the time given to breaks and mealtimes, key independence, choice making and social skills are developed. All our students are very different and for those who have high levels of anxiety bespoke plans and opportunities are provided to reduce these anxieties and give them strategies to cope and communicate more appropriately. The students are exposed to massage, calming music, sensory rooms, outdoor space and are supported through emotional difficulties at their own pace. We work closely with parents, CAMHS, medical professionals and our own Clinical psychologist Juliet Shand.

Sensory and physical needs are so important for many children. Many students have sensory processing disorders and need a bespoke programme often with advice from an Occupational Therapist. We have a Sensory diet programme that runs first thing in a morning for pupils for whom it is appropriate to help them regulate their sensory needs and emotions ready for the day. We work closely with the Multi-Sensory Impairment team, the Hearing Impairment team and Visual Impairment team to make sure student's needs are met appropriately. The physical management of our students is crucial to maintaining and extending their skills and to their comfort and engagement levels. Classroom teams work closely with the Physiotherapists in school to make sure that students are accessing the appropriate equipment/seating/walking opportunities and have frequent change of position during the day. All students access the hydro pool for swimming and movement in the water. For students for whom it is appropriate there is Rebound Therapy on the trampoline, massage, sensory yoga, trikes and resonance board work.

Therapy Afternoons the three Immersive classes will have the opportunity to mix and engage in different therapies in an afternoon on a rota. These may include extra swims, sensory story and massage, music and communication, music and movement, Body Blast, Sensory circuits, Rebound therapy, Resonance Boards, craft, 4D sensory room etc.

Implementation – the timetable and the teaching

Some of the activities the students will access.

Breakfast club/Cooking

A session that focuses on the development of communication skills and independence. Students will use symbols/photos/real objects/PECs/PODD/ipad software/voice to make choices of what breakfast snack they would like – encouraging communication, requesting, exploring likes and dislikes. They will have the opportunity to taste and show a preference – learning to make a more appropriate choice next time. For those that can they will be encouraged to spread butter/jam, spoon, pouring, cut, share and take turns. There may even be some washing up at the end! This session links in with Preparation to adulthood targets as do Cookery sessions that may take place where food/taste/smell/feel is explored.

Communication/Greeting session

This is the formal, structured registration and morning greeting session that happens daily. The pattern of activities will remain the same with variations added to represent each day. It introduces the students to the day and is an opportunity to recognise the morning greeting song, their photo on the powerpoint, wait their turn, recognise their friends and who may be missing and say hello to everyone in a way appropriate to them. All students will have individual targets specific to the development of their communication. There are opportunities to anticipate routine, instigate their turn and show and tell – sharing of news, using information from home. Photographs are used for self-recognition and recognition of others.

Sensory Integration sessions

Sensory integration sessions use activities that focus on changing how the brain reacts to touch, sound, sight and movement. Everyone needs their sensory systems working at their best in order to begin to think and learn. For students who tend to get overstimulated, their sensory integration

activities can help them come down from an overloaded state and feel calm. Or students who feel or appear sluggish can get into a “just right” state by doing activities that help them feel more alert. This is done through a carousel of activities in the hall, exercise on the yard, Body Blast, physical management time, sensory trail and by using the 4D room.

Sensology

The Sensology sessions encourage students to use all of their senses, sight -tracking of lights and objects, listening - different sounds linked to the theme, quiet and loud sounds, smell - lots of smells linked to the theme, pleasant and unpleasant, taste - tasting different items linked to the theme, touch - holding and manipulating objects, textures. Often the sessions are linked to the seasons as a theme. The sessions provide students with the opportunity to have recorded their responses to activities and situations which they have encountered – showing their likes and dislikes and helping them to establish an understanding of choice and preference.

Fine motor skills

Fine motor activities provide students, who are able, with the opportunity to hold, manipulate and play to promote and develop their Fine Motor skills. The maintenance and promotion of these skills will help the pupils in all that they do in school and at home as FMS are a very valuable part of everyday life

Proprioception

Sessions where pupils experience gross motor movements and activities and change of position and time on the mat. It explores their awareness of self in space and time. It also included relaxation, massage. 1:1 work with staff following individualised program within class setting.

Rebound Therapy

Rebound Therapy is the therapeutic use of a Trampoline to promote and develop motor skills, body awareness, balance, co-ordination and communication. Rebound Therapy should be seen as an integrated part of your child’s movement programme. Rebound Therapy has a unique effect on the body organs, systems and muscles. The sessions will involve the child being on the trampoline and a qualified member of staff applying a gentle rocking or bouncing of the trampoline. This movement will improve health and fitness and greater independence, whilst fun, enjoyment and the opportunity to succeed are of paramount importance. During Rebound Therapy the cardio-respiratory system works harder so heart rate and respiratory rate increase. Muscle tone can be increased and decreased by activating the muscle spindles and stimulating the sensory system.

4D Room

Students across the Pathways all benefit from accessing the 4D room to enhance their learning. For the Immersive Pathway it is used to immerse pupils in a sensory experience with interactive images on the walls and floors and enhanced with music and props and change in temperature to stimulate sessions. Students will be using their tracking skills, listening skills, reaching, pressing and controlling skills. Students will often have a change of position in this room to support their physical management needs.

Intensive interaction

This process is recommended for people who are hard to reach and are not motivated to be with others.

Intensive interaction is a teaching and learning approach to develop communication between two people. The method works by progressively shared moments or sequences of enjoyable interaction that will often be frequent and short in duration increasing as time goes by. The process is led by the individual with the supporter responding to behaviour and using this behaviour to encourage interaction.

Intensive interaction develops the fundamentals of communication prior to speech, the skills that are generally learnt at the very early stages of a babies development.

This includes using and understanding eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language as well as the learning the importance of turn taking and enjoying being with others. The fundamentals of communication form an important part of communications development as without some of these skills it is very difficult to engage in communication.

Communication and Interaction:

At Blackfriars we have a holistic approach to communication and provide a language and symbol rich environment where pupils can use a variety of approaches to develop their communication skills and have a powerful 'voice' in and out of school.

All students need a voice and a way of communicating their needs, thoughts and feelings. The development of skills in communicating and interacting with others are developed in various ways across the Pathways at Blackfriars. The development of these areas leads to less anxiety, a positive change in behaviour and improvements in relationships.

Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC)

AAC Approaches at Blackfriars: a definition of AAC within Blackfriars e.g.

The term 'AAC', an abbreviation of Augmentative and Alternative Communication, refers to any intervention which enhances a student's ability to express his or her needs and desires. As such it can encompass no tech strategies such as the use of Makaton signing, low tech approaches such as the use of symbols and simple switches and high tech equipment which has a voice output.

Students who's verbal communication has not progressed sufficiently that they can convey their thoughts in a timely and effective manner require consideration for an AAC intervention. Such difficulties can come about for a wide variety of reasons including physical challenges impacting on the clear production of speech, learning difficulties resulting in language not being acquired in the typical fashion or a sensory loss such as hearing impairment. Blackfriars has a number of young people with these challenges and sometimes where several factors coexist in the same young person.

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Approaches to communication include:

facial gestures

vocalisations

eye pointing – etran – eye gaze technology

fist pointing

objects of reference
symbols and photos
PECs – Picture Exchange Communication System
Communication books
Personal Passports
PODD
Manual Auditory Scanning
Makaton and BSL
Electronic communication aids and use of ipads
Grid 3
Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support (SCERTS)

SCERTS is an overarching approach to autism education created by a multidisciplinary team of experts. The letters in the name stand for Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support—the critical elements of the SCERTS program. It is also appropriate to use with other students not on the spectrum.

SCERTS is not a therapeutic technique; rather, it is a model for engaging children which, when properly applied, "provides specific guidelines for helping a young person become a competent and confident social communicator while preventing problem behaviours that interfere with learning and the development of relationships."

Staff have had training in SCERTS and are starting to baseline students and use targets to focus on small steps in progression towards the Outcomes in their EHCP.



Makaton is a type of sign language that is now used by over 100,000 children and adults. We use Makaton in school as an enhancement of communication to all students. Due to its increasing popularity we feel it is important for all students whether dependant on AAC or not, to have an awareness of Makaton and at least know some basic signs. This will enable them to venture out and speak to people in the community as well as their peers who are reliant on using sign language in school.

Makaton are very active on social media and promote a 'sign of the week'. Why don't you take a look and try giving the sign of the week a go at home?



PODD is a symbol-based language presented in a book format. The letters PODD stand for Pragmatic, Organisation, Dynamic Display and refer to how the symbols and language within the book are laid out. PODD books can include any symbol language but are usually formed by PCS symbols. PODD books come in all shapes and sizes and when we identify that a student requires one, they are made, personalised and given to the student. This is an exciting process that we like parents/carers and wider families to get involved in. Have you seen a PODD book in action before? If not, try heading over to YouTube to see lots of people interacting using PODD books.



Another communication system accessed widely and regularly at Blackfriars is Grid player. This system is normally accessed via an iPad and depend on the user they access different symbol sets such as 'Symbol talker' and 'Super core'. Students are often highly motivated to interact with grid player because it's on their favourite things – the iPad! Students touch the symbols on screen and a voice (which they can choose from plenty of options) speaks the word out loud for them. This is fantastic for those students who are unable to use their voice or to assist those with limited language. We have a close working relationship with Smartbox (who own grid player) and staff access regular training and assistance.



PECs is one of the most widely known methods of AAC. It stands for picture exchange communication and students are able to obtain their wants and wishes by exchanging a photograph, picture or symbols for the object of their choice. PECs has many levels and users start off by using to get one object at a time to potentially building up their knowledge to use symbols to create a whole sentence. It was first designed and created back in the 1980's more specifically for children and adults who had been diagnosed with autism. It is now well known across the world and students with various diagnoses access and have fantastic success!

Preparation for Adulthood

Students at very early levels of development access a curriculum which is comprehensible and meaningful to them. The focus is to help students to further develop life skills, to enable them to establish positive interactive relationships with others, to proactively explore the world around them, gaining environmental control skills. All pupils will be given maximum opportunities to achieve the highest level of independence possible

As they get older, students in the Immersive Pathway, still dependent on those in control of their daily lives, begins to move towards more active participation in learning and autonomy (self-determination). The key skills to develop are communication, regulation, social skills and independence. We want each student to...

... be a happy, emotionally secure adult whom responds to living in a multisensory world in a positive way. This person will have or have experienced skills to participate and contribute to a community life, enjoying a range of experiences with support alongside their peers

The students have opportunities to be involved in the school community – Café, House activities, joint assemblies, other students coming in to read to the groups. The students will also have opportunities to access their local community with a varieties of visits to local facilities and by also having visitors from the community into school.

All students have a Preparation for Adulthood plan and targets.

Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE)

PSHE is imbedded in everything that we do. We also have drop down PSHE focussed activity days. We work towards the PSHE Education Planning Framework for pupils with SEND and use this framework to baseline our students and track progress. All students fit within the 'Encountering' stage in the Immersive Pathway.

Impact – attainment, progress and assessment

EHCP targets are embedded in everything that we do and are tracked. Students are baselined on arrival at Blackfriars. All students are assessed using **Routes for Learning**, each student follows an individual route map with skills being recorded using the **Evidence for Learning app** where photos and video evidence of progression can be linked to their targets along with observations and professional judgements. This assessment model allows for students with a spikey profile. Assessment is ongoing, continual and informs our teaching. We use the **5 areas of the Engagement model** when considering assessment of pupil progress:

Engagement Model

- Engagement is the single best predictor of successful learning for children with learning disabilities. Without engagement there is no deep learning, effective teaching, meaningful outcome, real attainment or quality progress.
- The process of engagement is a journey that connect a child and their environment to enable learning and achievement.
- Engagement is multi-dimensional and encompasses awareness, curiosity, investigation, discovery, anticipation, persistence and initiation.
- 5 areas of the Engagement model are Exploration, Realisation, Anticipation, Persistence and Initiation.

If a student is not making expected progress then the Engagement Model can be used to baseline and help to structure appropriate interventions in order to increase engagement for that student and therefore progress.

Students communication development is also going to be baselined using SCERTS and appropriate targets set to work towards that link with their EHCP outcomes.