



The Meadows School Curriculum Pathways

Engagement for Life Pathway (Pre-formal; PMLD)	Foundations for Life Pathway (Informal, Complex ASC; Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (CLDD).	Learning for Life (Semi- Formal; SLD)	Options for Life (MLD)	Transition to Adulthood. Life beyond the Meadows (post-16)
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*Our curriculum pathways provide a flexible, inclusive and adaptable structure that ensures every pupil access learning and support appropriate to their individual needs, and stage of development. Each pathway represents a broad approach to learning — from pre-formal engagement to semi-formal and formal progression — while allowing for overlap and fluid movement between pathways as pupils grow, develop, and change. **Our pathways adapt and evolve with each learner's journey and needs.***

Engagement for Life Pathway Overview

Intent

The Engagement for Life Pathway provides a highly personalised, multi-sensory curriculum that places each pupil's communication, wellbeing, and engagement at the centre of all learning. It recognises that for learners with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), progress is not defined by academic outcomes, but by meaningful interactions, awareness, and responses that reflect personal growth and connection.

Our intent is to:

- Use engagement as the bridge to learning, fostering the core elements of exploration, anticipation, realisation, persistence, and initiation.
- Support pupils holistically through close collaboration between education, health, therapy, and family, ensuring that every aspect of provision is joined up and consistent.
- Empower every pupil to engage meaningfully, communicate effectively, and experience wellbeing, dignity, and joy in all aspects of life and learning.
- Integrate education, therapy, and care within bespoke timetables shaped by each pupil's EHCP outcomes, ensuring a coordinated and individualised approach.
- Create safe, predictable, and sensory-rich environments that nurture trust, curiosity, and confidence, enabling pupils to learn and thrive at their own pace.
- Celebrate every step of progress, recognising that even subtle changes in engagement, communication, or regulation represent significant and meaningful learning.

Cohort- Who is this for?	The Engagement for Life Pathway is designed for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) who have significant and complex needs across cognition, communication, physical development, and health. These pupils often have multiple and interrelated disabilities, including complex physical, sensory, and medical needs that require regular therapeutic input, postural care, and medical intervention throughout the school day. Learners on this pathway typically require high levels of support for personal care, mobility, and access to learning. Communication is highly individualised and supported through a range of systems such as Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), switches, eye gaze technology, objects of reference, and sensory cues. Pupils benefit from a nurturing, low-arousal, and sensory-rich environment that provides an appropriate balance of engagement, rest, and therapeutic activity, aligned with their physical and emotional needs. Learning is most effective when education, therapy, and care are fully integrated, ensuring a holistic and individualised approach that supports communication, regulation, and overall wellbeing.
Principles	• Highly personalised and holistic: Education, therapy, care, and wellbeing are fully interconnected to meet each pupil's unique profile of needs. • Sensory-rich and meaningful learning: Pupils access motivating experiences that are functional, relevant, and rooted in exploration and interaction. • Collaborative practice: Staff work closely with therapists, medical professionals, and families to ensure a consistent, integrated approach that supports the whole child. • Reflective and responsive teaching: Close observation and reflective practice are essential to recognise, value, and build upon small but significant steps of progress.

Implementation	The Engagement for Life Curriculum is implemented through a highly personalised, multi-sensory, and holistic approach that recognises the unique learning profiles of pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). Teaching, therapy, and care are fully integrated, ensuring that every pupil's EHCP outcomes drive the design of their individual timetable and learning experiences. Therapeutic input from Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Physiotherapy, and Occupational Therapy (OT) is embedded within classroom practice, ensuring that pupils' physical, postural, and sensory needs are met consistently throughout the day. See below further information on Curriculum strands, approaches, etc.
Curriculum Strands	The Engagement for Life curriculum is built around six interconnected strands that underpin all learning and development for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). These strands work together to ensure that each learner experiences a holistic, meaningful, and engaging curriculum that reflects their unique strengths, needs, and ways of interacting with the world. • Communication & Interaction – Developing engagement, early communication, choice-making, and meaningful relationships. • Cognition & Learning – Fostering awareness and attention, understanding cause and effect, promoting exploration, discovery, memory, anticipation, curiosity, and motivation. • Physical & Sensory Development – Supporting postural care, mobility, and sensory regulation through targeted therapeutic and sensory experiences. • Social & Emotional Development – Building trust and security, developing awareness of self and others, strengthening relationships, fostering enjoyment, engagement, motivation, social inclusion, belonging, and connection.

	• Independence & Life Skills – Encouraging participation in daily routines and the wider community, promoting awareness of self, environments, and functional life skills through sensory and experiential learning. • Culture & Arts – Enabling sensory self-expression and exploration through art, music, drama, and cultural experiences, focusing on process, interaction, and emotional engagement rather than the end product.
Approaches to Learning	Learning within the Engagement for Life Pathway is rooted in connection, consistency, and curiosity. Pupils learn best when they feel safe, valued, and supported by trusted adults who understand their unique ways of communicating and engaging. Every learning experience is carefully planned to ensure that pupils are given time, repetition, and responsive support to explore, anticipate, and interact with the world around them. Core Approaches • Sensory Learning: Activities are multi-sensory and experiential, enabling pupils to learn through touch, sound, movement, light, and smell. Sensory input is carefully balanced to engage curiosity while maintaining regulation and comfort. Structured sensory programmes such as Sensory Reading and Tac Pac, are used to enrich experiences, promote anticipation, and deepen sensory communication. • Total Communication: A consistent, multimodal communication approach is embedded across all contexts, incorporating facial expression, gesture, sign, vocalisation, eye gaze, switches, TaSSeLs (Tactile Signing for Sensory Learners) and AAC systems. • Co-Active and Intensive Interaction: Staff model and mirror pupils' responses to build trust, promote shared attention, and encourage two-way communication. • Repetition and Routine: Learning builds on familiarity, repetition, and predictability, helping pupils develop anticipation, confidence, and understanding.

	• Therapeutic Integration: Education, therapy, and care are delivered holistically — with physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy woven naturally into the daily routine. • Observation and Reflection: Staff continuously observe pupils' responses, adapting activities in the moment and reflecting as a team to identify subtle indicators of progress and engagement. • Positive Relationships: Consistent staffing and nurturing interactions form the foundation for learning, ensuring pupils feel secure, respected, and emotionally connected.
Enabling Environment	The learning environment for pupils on the Engagement for Life Pathway is carefully designed to be safe, nurturing, and responsive, enabling every pupil to access learning through their senses, emotions, and interactions. It provides the stability, comfort, and stimulation pupils need to develop communication, awareness, and engagement at their own pace. Key Features of the Environment • Calm, Predictable Atmosphere: The environment is structured around familiar routines and consistent staffing, helping pupils feel secure, reduce anxiety, and anticipate what will happen next. • Sensory-Rich Spaces: Classrooms and shared areas offer a range of controlled sensory experiences — including light, sound, texture, aroma, and movement — that promote exploration, attention, and enjoyment. • Accessible and Adapted Layout: Spaces are organised to support postural care, positioning, and mobility, ensuring that pupils can participate in learning and therapeutic activities safely, comfortably and with dignity. • Therapeutic Integration: Equipment and resources such as standing frames, switches, sensory stories, hydrotherapy, and rebound therapy are embedded into daily learning to promote physical, sensory, and emotional wellbeing.

	• Consistent Communication Cues: Visual, auditory, and tactile cues are used throughout the environment to reinforce routines, support understanding, and promote independence. • Outdoor and Community Learning: Safe, accessible outdoor spaces and community-based experiences provide further sensory, physical, and social opportunities, enabling pupils to generalise learning in real-world contexts. The overall aim is to create an environment where pupils feel safe, understood, and motivated to explore, supporting engagement, communication, and wellbeing in every interaction.
Destinations beyond school	Pupils on the Engagement for Life Pathway transition into adult provision that continues to promote communication, wellbeing, and quality of life. Destinations may include: • Specialist further education colleges, day provision, or adult social care settings that provide sensory, therapeutic, and community-based programmes. • Health and therapy-focused destinations, continuing health care packages, residential care, or supported living arrangements offering therapy input, integrated support, comfort, and consistency. • Bespoke transition packages developed collaboratively with families, therapists, and adult services to ensure continuity of care and engagement. Success is measured not by academic outcomes but by quality of life — demonstrated through improved supported access, participation, communication, choice, joy, and wellbeing.

Learning beyond the Classroom	Learning beyond the classroom provides pupils with enriching, real-world experiences that extend sensory, social, and communication development in meaningful and motivating contexts. Activities are carefully planned and personalised to ensure accessibility, comfort, and emotional security for each learner. • Community Inclusion: Structured and well-supported community-based visits provide opportunities to experience new environments and build tolerance and confidence in real-world settings. • Outdoor and Sensory Exploration: Access to forest school, outdoor learning spaces, and sensory environments encourages exploration, regulation, and physical development through nature-based and tactile experiences. • Encounters with Visitors: Visits from theatre companies, artists, sensory storytellers, and therapy animals offer engaging, multisensory opportunities that stimulate curiosity, attention, and enjoyment, enriching the curriculum through shared experiences.
Impact	The impact of the Engagement for Life Pathway is reflected in each pupil's communication, engagement, independence, and wellbeing. Progress is recognised through meaningful changes in how pupils connect with others, respond to stimuli, and participate in their world — not through academic measures, but through observable, individual growth that reflects each learner's journey. • Engagement and Responsiveness: Pupils demonstrate increased attention, anticipation, and interaction, showing greater awareness of people, routines, and environments. • Communication Development: Pupils show more purposeful and consistent communication — through gesture, facial expression, vocalisation, eye gaze, or assistive technology — enabling them to express preferences and emotions. • Emotional Wellbeing: Learners display signs of happiness, calmness, and security, engaging positively with trusted adults and familiar activities. • Physical and Sensory Progress: Pupils develop improved posture, control, and participation in therapeutic routines, supporting comfort, mobility, and access to learning. • Independence and Life Skills: Pupils increase participation in daily routines and transitions, demonstrating small but significant steps towards supported self-awareness. • Holistic Development: Learning, therapy, and care are integrated effectively to support physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth, ensuring all aspects of development are valued.

	Family and Professional Feedback: Families, therapists, and multi-disciplinary partners share evidence of progress across settings, reflecting continuity between home, school, and the wider community.
Assessment and Progress	Progress is tracked through a range of methods, ensuring that both personal and developmental progress are recognised and celebrated. Assessment focuses on engagement, communication, independence, and wellbeing, acknowledging that progress for pupils with PMLD is often non-linear and highly individual. • Adapted MAPP Framework: Used to capture small-step progress across four key dimensions — independence, maintenance, and generalisation — reflecting pupils' movement towards greater independence and consistency in skills linked to EHCP outcomes and personal learning goals. • Engagement Model Language: Applied to monitor pupils' levels of engagement through the five key areas of learning — exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence, and initiation — highlighting how pupils connect, respond, and sustain attention during activities. • Routes for Learning Milestones: Used to identify pupils' current developmental stages in communication, cognition, and social interaction, ensuring that teaching is responsive and personalised. • Ongoing Observation and Evidence Collection: Staff record progress through narrative observations, photographs, videos, and annotated notes within Evidence for Learning, capturing the subtle but powerful ways pupils engage, respond, and initiate within everyday routines and structured sessions. This multi-layered approach ensures that assessment is holistic, meaningful, and reflective of each pupil's individual journey, informing curriculum planning and continuous adaptation to support progress and wellbeing.

Transition Planning and Support

Transition for pupils on the Engagement for Life Pathway is a gradual, collaborative, and person-centred process, led by each learner's needs, and family priorities. Planning begins early to ensure that post-school transitions are well-prepared, consistent, and emotionally secure.

- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes are reviewed and updated to reflect post-school goals, focusing on continued development of communication, independence, and wellbeing.
- Staff work closely with local authorities, adult social care teams, health professionals, and community providers to identify appropriate post-19 placements and support packages.
- Transition visits and familiarisation activities are carefully planned to introduce new environments, staff, and routines gradually, supporting regulation and confidence.
- Families receive ongoing guidance and support, including signposting to advocacy services, respite opportunities, and adult provision networks.
- The Connexions Advisor plays a key role in helping families explore options and make informed decisions about future pathways.
- Transition documentation and close liaison with post-16 and post-19 providers ensure continuity of care, communication systems, and therapeutic strategies across settings.

Transition success is defined by consistency, security, and wellbeing — ensuring every learner continues to experience connection, comfort, and dignity as they move beyond school.