

EXETER HOUSE SCHOOL MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW



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Exeter House Middle School Curriculum Overview

Intent

In the Middle School at Exeter House School we are committed to supporting students to become lifelong learners. We believe in the extraordinary in all our students. We are passionate about providing all students with a broad and balanced learning experience that supports them in overcoming barriers to learning, develops their skills and knowledge and prepares them for life beyond school.

Implementation

We build on the young people's prior experiences in the Lower School Department, and prepare them for the next stage of their education with us and life beyond school. In order to prepare our students for life beyond school, the curriculum is shaped largely on encouraging students communication skills and developing their independence. Developing communication is central to supporting our students independence and best meeting their needs.

At Exeter house we pride ourselves on looking at each of our students as an individual and creating an educational journey through the school that enables them to develop the core skills needed in life and learning.

We strive to support each student to maximise their potential and are determined not to put a ceiling on what they can achieve. We aim to provide an education that changes lives through increasing aspiration and ensuring access, opportunity, and possibility for all.

Middle School Department Organisation

In line with lower school, the Middle School Department provides specialist pathways for pupils who have more complex learning and support needs. These pathways, whilst offering a more specialist educational experience, offer pupils a personalised programme which combines a specialist curriculum and elements of the departmental curriculums.

The Autism Spectrum Specialist Pathway: Larks Class and Falcons Class

This pathway is designed for those learners with more complex Autism and who therefore require a more specialised learning environment and approach to teaching and learning.

Within these classes we understand that the students all have their own specific barriers to learning and require a more personalised curriculum tailored to meet individual needs.

Each class adheres to the Autism Education Trust (AET) Progression Framework in conjunction with the Middle School planning framework.

<p>Communication and Interaction Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Engaging in interaction *Making requests *Communicating information *Listening and understanding *Greetings *Conversations 	<p>Social Understanding and Relationships Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Being with others *Interactive play *Positive relationships (supporting adults) *Positive relationships and Friendships (peers) *Group activities 	<p>Sensory Processing Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Understanding and expressing own sensory needs *Responding to sensory interventions *Increasing tolerance of sensory input *Managing own sensory needs
<p>Interests, Routines and Processing Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Coping with change *Transitions *Special interests *Problem solving and thinking skills 	<p>AS Curriculum Framework (based on the AET Progression Framework)</p>	<p>Healthy Living Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Keeping healthy *Personal care *Relationships and sex education
<p>Learning and Engagement Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Learning through play *Motivation and engagement *Organisation and independent learning *Understanding and following rules, routines and expectations *Evaluating own learning 	<p>Emotional Understanding and Self-Awareness Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Understanding and expressing own emotions *Managing emotions and behaviour *Understanding others' emotions / intentions *Self-Awareness *Developing confidence and self-esteem 	<p>Independence and Community Participation Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Independent living *Personal safety *Road safety and travel *Leisure

The Complex Needs Specialist Pathway: Owls class and Kestrel's class

This pathway is for learners with PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) and those who have more complex learning needs and therefore require a more sensory based approach to learning.

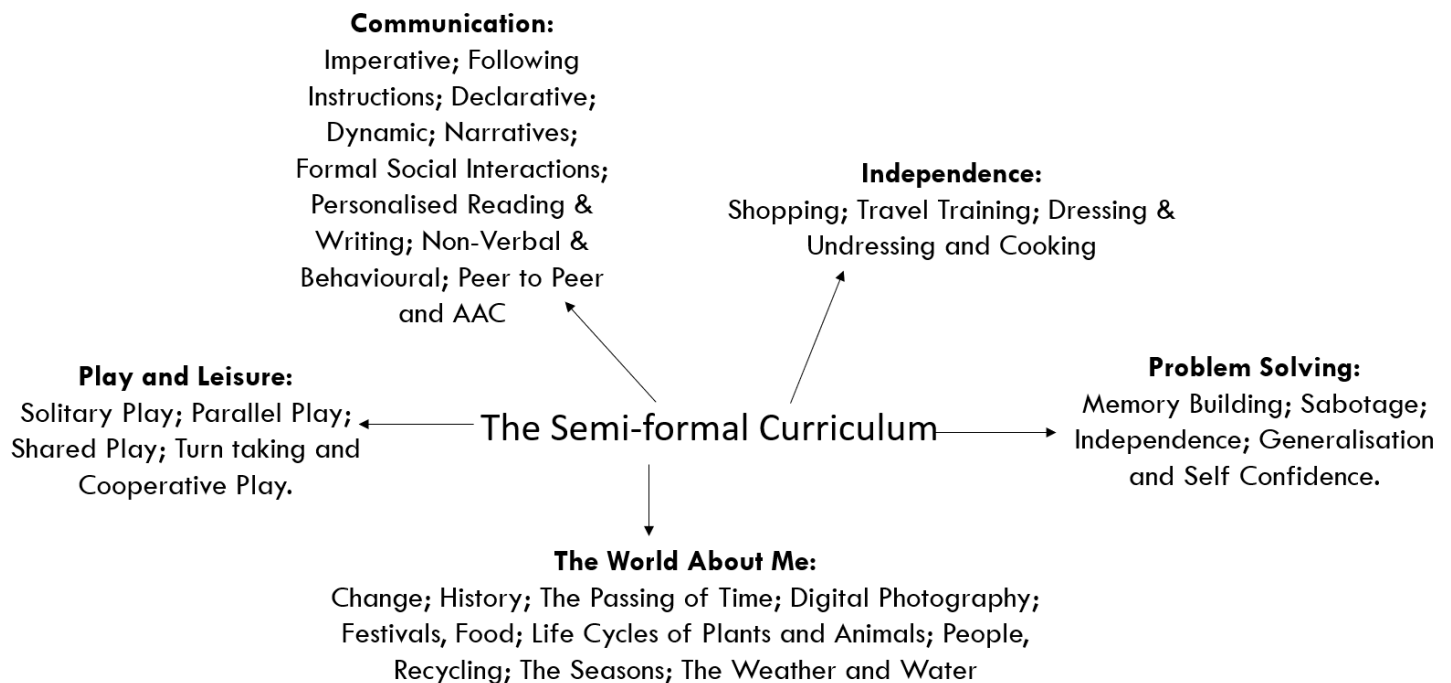
Within the PMLD/Complex Needs specialist class we understand that the students all have their own unique strengths and challenges and require a personalised curriculum tailored to meet their individual needs.

These classes follow **The Equals Pre-Formal Curriculum** in conjunction with the Middle School planning framework. A few pupils may also access aspects of Development Matters and The Semi-formal Curriculum as part of their personalised learning.

Communication and Social	Physical	Sensory
Self Determination and Independence	Equals Pre-Formal PMLD Curriculum Areas	
Creative	Well-Being	Cognition and Challenge

The Middle School Curriculum Framework: Wrens Class, Hawks Class, Magpies Class and Eagles Class

The middle school curriculum framework is informed by The Semi-Formal Curriculum; written for students with SLD providing schemes of work for Non-National Curriculum 'areas of learning' and the Equals curriculum; the National Curriculum differentiated for pupils with learning disabilities. We adapt and draw from the Equals and semi-formal curriculum as well as pre-key stage standards and Development Matters, in recognition of our students developing at different rates and striving to deliver a curriculum with the flexibility to reflect this.



Equals Curriculum				
English	Maths	Science	Humanities/ Art/ Technology	RSHE
<p>Pupils enjoy a varied English Curriculum. We aim to enable each pupil to become effective communicators and to develop a love of literature in all areas of learning. Pupils will be immersed in a total communication environment - including Intensive Interaction, Makaton signing, photos, symbols and Assisted Communication Devices. Furthermore, they will receive regular support from the Speech and Language Therapist. Pupils will be given opportunities to develop listening skills and be encouraged to express themselves. Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of story and books. We have an excellent on-site library facility containing a wide range of reading materials including sensory stories.</p>	<p>Pupils enjoy a varied Math's curriculum. There is a termly focus on a specific area of mathematics in each of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and Place Value • Measurement • Geometry <p>As well as discrete lessons focusing on specific areas of mathematics, equal importance is placed on embedding math's across the school day. Math's skills and language is woven and embedded throughout the school day to highlight the importance of generalizing skills and continuously overlearning skills and ensure that opportunities for using math's are meaningful to our pupils and enable our pupils to use their developing skills in everyday life.</p>	<p>Pupils are encouraged to develop the skills of scientific enquiry through an integrated topic-based approach. Middle school pupils will encounter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life processes and living things – growing plants, ourselves. • Physical processes – light and dark, pushes and pulls, sounds and hearing. • Materials and their properties <p>Science lessons allow our pupils to explore the world around them in a highly practical way and sensory way.</p>	<p>All pupils in the department enjoy a creative and integrated topic-based approach to Humanities, Art, Music and Design and Technology. Pupils also benefit from a weekly Forest School session in our on-site forest school. Forest School sessions not only support the pupil's engagement with the natural world around them, but also integrate learning from across the curriculum. We also benefit from other facilities that enhance our learning in humanities such as the cookery room and library. Where possible we enjoy taking our learning out in the community and enjoy working with other organisations such as La Folia. Music projects with La Folia have led to amazing opportunities such as the chance to perform at Salisbury cathedral.</p>	<p>We are committed to nurturing the high self-esteem of our learners and promoting respect for others. We believe that everyone can learn, both socially and academically, and are committed to equipping our learners to lead as independent lives as possible. We ensure that our relationships and sex education is inclusive, accessible and meets the needs of all our pupils, through high quality teaching, that is differentiated and personalised. The six main areas covered across the year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Awareness • Self-Care, Support, and Safety • Managing Feelings • Changing and Growing • Healthy Lifestyles • The World I live In

Exeter House Middle School Progression Curriculum	Semi Formal Communication Independence Problem Solving Play and leisure The world about me	Autism Curriculum	Autism Education Trust (AET) Framework Social Communication Social Interaction Social Imagination & Flexibility Sensory Processing Learning Emotional Awareness & Self Awareness	Complex Needs PMLD The Equals Pre-Formal Curriculum	The Equals Pre-Formal Curriculum Communication and Social Sensory Physical Cognition and Challenge Self-Determination and Independence Creative Well-being
	Equals English Math's Science Art/Humanities /Technology				

At every stage of their education, each students' strengths and needs are considered carefully and the Curriculum is tailored to them and reviewed regularly. This means that challenge is pitched at just the right level for each learner to make the best progress possible. We want all students to be fully engaged in their learning and to develop the skills to enable them to become independent thinkers and learners. We want all our pupils to reach their full potential, develop a lifelong love of learning and leave the Middle School Department fully prepared for the next stage.

In addition to the curriculum pupils may have an Individual Support Plan which will detail any specific interventions required such as Sensory Integration, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy, V.I./H.I support, Positive Behaviour Support or specific curriculum interventions. These interventions will be overseen by the relevant professional team and undertaken by the class teams.

Topic cycles

Termly themes are in place across each department to provide a context for learners to engage with the curriculum. Themes have been selected with the age of the learners in mind and to motivate and stimulate pupils to engage with the learning process. Following a theme for a term ensures sufficient time is given to provide depth and coverage, as well as to ensure pupils have plenty of opportunities to practice and consolidate new skills.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Autumn	Our Favourite Stories and Authors	All Around the World Explorers of the 7 Continents	The Human Body	Festivals and Celebrations
Spring	The Solar System	Living Things and Their Habitats	Time Travelers: Exploring the Past and Present	Materials
Summer	Weather and the Seasons	<i>All Around the World Explorers of the 7 Continents 2023</i> The Rainforest	Oceans and Seas	A World of Sport

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning takes place through:

Teacher directed activities – Planned activities with learning objectives based on individual needs and encouraging a lifelong love of learning across the curriculum. Students work either individually, in small groups or 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 young person's education. These targets are related to the specific needs of each individual.

Student initiated activities – Activities selected by the student. Staff observe, model, extend and introduce learning opportunities.

TEACCH- Each class follows the TEACCH programme of structured teaching.

This includes:

- Organisation of the physical environment (minimising distractions, segmenting the environment to add meaning)
- Use of individual schedules (helping students to know what is happening during the day)
- Visual structure (including visual instructions, visual organization and visual clarity)
- Work systems (a system to inform students what work and how much work needs to be completed)

Facilities

Classrooms include a book corner, a Circle Time area with interactive whiteboard, and an area for table top activities and a small work room for individual and small group work.

In addition to classroom-based facilities we make full use of our excellent onsite shared facilities. These include our library, soft play, hydrotherapy, jacuzzi, forest school, rebound trampoline, cooking room, playground equipment, sensory integration room, and sensory room.

Each class has access to offsite activities. These include swimming at Five Rivers Leisure Centre, opportunities for therapeutic riding at RDA in Wilton and trips into the community to learn independence and life skills. We also get the opportunity to work on collaborative projects in the community with organisations such as La Folia participating with exciting projects including a chance to perform at the cathedral.

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

Communication

Continuing to develop our student's communication skills is central to all teaching and learning across the entire department. We aim to provide a total communication approach which is facilitated by our onsite Speech and Language Therapist and our Communication Lead. Communication methods include Makaton, Objects of Reference, speech, gestures, body signing, communication software such as Grid for IPAD and other high tech AAC devices, EyeGaze in our PMLD class and Intensive Interaction. Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is widely used for pupils in the department.

Intensive Interaction

Intensive interaction is an approach to teaching the pre-speech fundamentals of communication to students who have severe learning difficulties and/or autism 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.

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. 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 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 to achieve the 'calm alert' state required to engage and participate.

Reading

At Exeter House School we believe in seeking out the extraordinary in everyone. We aim to ensure that our students have the best access to education, increasing opportunity and possibility for all and enabling them to flourish and feel a valuable part of society. The life skill of reading is vital to this aim and we place huge importance in ensuring that our students build confidence in their own ability to be able to read and experience the world around them through a love of books and reading. Teachers model reading regularly and engage in sensory sessions for students who need support to access reading and listening with props and sensory experiences. Classrooms are language rich environments with key vocabulary displayed. Students are encouraged to take reading books home to read and share with parents and carers.

Phonics

Where appropriate, students in Middle School participate with daily phonics sessions which include discrete phonics teaching, continuous provision activities, workbox TEACCH approach activities and personalised intervention programmes. We focus on providing highly engaging, visual and sensory activities which are engaging and support students' overlearning and developing skills. As students' progress, we use Bug Club phonics scheme to support learners with their knowledge of phonemes/graphemes, blending and segmenting and develop their reading skills.

Cued articulation

Our Cued Articulation phonics alphabet was designed specifically to meet the varying needs of our students and to allow them to develop their phonic skills in a meaningful and accessible way. We have used a combination of approaches which allow the students to link letter sounds to specific actions, therefore increasing their recall and memory of the letter sounds. Each hand movement represents one sound and the cue gives clues as to how and where the sound is produced. Cued articulation is used to support students to make the sound clearly and we practice this skill during Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) sessions and phonics to support their reading development.

Colourful semantics



Colourful semantics reassembles sentences by cutting them up into their thematic roles and then colour codes them. The approach is used in stages and helps students develop language and vocabulary in addition to grammatical structure. It can be used to help students who are starting to develop language and have limited vocabulary to confident talkers who struggle to organise the grammatical content of their sentences. This approach is built into daily routines such as Story sharing, SALT sessions and Workbox activities.

Writing

Across all environments, writing is explicitly seen throughout the environments in print form, supported by Widgit symbols to help aid learners. Each pathway across the school allows for writing to be explored in a meaningful way with different resources. In regards to traditional approaches to writing, there are many different resources such as crayons, sensory items (flour, sand, foam etc.), pencils and paper to aid mark making.

As the fundamental foundations to writing are based on fine and gross motor skills, classes are provided with different items to help with these developments. Within PE sessions, gross motor skills promoting gross motor skills are frequently worked up, no matter the strand or age of the individual. Each class also has plenty of resources to aid fine motor skills such as threading, scissors, tweezers and other toys to promote bi-lateral movement to aid crossing the midline alongside finger and arm strength to manipulate tools. This is taught through fine motor sessions to practise threading, twisting, weaving etc. In order to aid development, items such as a variety of pencil grips help refine pencil grip development alongside writing slopes.

Within Exeter House School, we have access to an Occupational Therapist (OT) who can provide specialist support and also delivers regular CPD training to all members of staff to help aid progression of these skills. They allow for elements such as correct seating arrangements, provide information on sensory integration and other intervention methods to allow all students to make progress.

Assessment

We assess students on Evidence for Learning (E4L) - and track their progress towards their EHCP targets and 'small steps' in their curriculum goals. It supports an **Inquiry-based approach** to education and provision, that allows both parents/carers and school to gather photo and video evidence, linked to the individual's learning goals as well as any key skills frameworks. Observations can be annotated and tagged to reflect the curriculum area.

We have a variety of strands that we are able to use to assess progress . These include the Profound Curriculum, the Autism Progression Framework, Development Matters and the Entry Level Progression Standards. We are able to assess your young person using a framework that is not only a suitable challenge but also one that is highly aspirational.

At the end of each term you will receive a Learning Journey that has been created using Evidence for Learning. This is a fantastic way for us to showcase all the wonderful things your young person has achieved throughout the term. The booklets come with photographs, descriptions and references to the assessment frameworks.

Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Strands

Regardless of which Curriculum Pathway learners take there are five overarching strands that are built into all aspects of our curriculum. At each phase of their educational journey the balance of these strands may be different based on the identified priorities for that age group and/or individual. However, each phase is designed to build on what has come before and prepare for what is coming next, with the overarching aim of preparing all learners for life after school. These 5 strands are evaluated within the Annual Review process as well as being tracked through the core curriculum targets. **Annual Reviews** are held to discuss progress in all areas and are attended by the whole team around the young person.

Overarching Curriculum Strands

- Social and Emotional
- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Sensory and Physical
- Independence

Overarching Curriculum Strands

		Social & Emotional		Cognition & Learning	Communication & Interaction	Sensory & Physical		Independence		
Middle School	EH Lower School Curriculum Progression	Personal, Social & Emotional Development	ELSA/ Forest Sch	Literacy Maths Understanding of the World	Communication & Language	Speech And Language Therapy	Physical Development Expressive Art & Design	Riding Therapy / Music Therapy / Sensory Integration Therapy / Rebound Therapy / Physio / Forest Sch	Physical Development	Occupational Therapy
	Autism Curriculum	Emotional Understanding and Self Awareness Healthy Living		Learning and Engagement Interest, Routines and Processing	Communication and Interaction Social Understanding and Relationships		Sensory Processing		Independence & Community Participation	
	Pre-Formal	Social relationships Creative Well-being	Cognition and Challenge	Communication			Life Skills			

The Wider Curriculum

We have a proud history of being a forward-looking school and are always searching for innovative ways to further improve the curriculum for our young people to offer as broad, rich and stimulating learning experience as we can.

We are able to offer our learners a range of regular on and off-site enrichment activities including Forest School with a trained practitioner, Hydrotherapy and use of Jacuzzi, Music Therapy, Rebound Therapy, swimming at the Five Rivers Leisure Centre, Riding Therapy at RDA, as well as accessing various local and community facilities. We are also greatly looking forward to further developing sporting opportunities available to our young people in Middle School through after school clubs such as Football.

We work closely with our external colleagues such as Physiotherapists and Health professionals to meet the physical and medical needs of our young people. We are fortunate to have a full time Occupational Therapist who offers 1:1 support for students to ensure they are well regulated. Students' sensory needs are met in class with specialist seating and exercises using therapy equipment. We recognise the significant impact that a student's emotional and sensory regulation can have on their well-being and therefore their ability to access the learning experiences we offer.

Access to creative experiences is an important and powerful aspect of our curriculum offer. We are fortunate to have developed partnership work with some inspirational local Arts groups. Each year we work with La Folia to create unique performances using the mediums of music and drama, for example, performing at Salisbury Cathedral.

Developing the curriculum and evaluating its impact

Although our curriculum has a clear strategy and approach it is also flexible and adaptive to need as well as new innovations and approaches. The development of the curriculum is an ongoing process which is fundamentally interlinked with the development of teaching and learning and our assessment processes, and as such requires many systems, approaches, strategies and inputs in order that consistent reflection and improvement is maintained. This strategic approach towards how we monitor its effectiveness and appropriateness ensures our curriculum offer has maximum impact.