



Framework for Mill Lodge ARC Curriculum

Introduction

The pupils within the ARC provision have a primary diagnosis of autism with additional complex learning needs.

They experience difficulties problem solving, playing co-operatively, and forming relationships. Our pupils may use signs, symbols, or both to communicate. Others may use some limited language, which frequently presents as delayed or immediate echolalia. Our pupils require on-going support for most if not all their aspects of daily life.

The pupils at the ARC may have co-existing difficulties related to their autism such as (but not exhaustively):

- Restricted diets and complex issues with food intake
- Sensory processing differences
- Long-term sleep issues
- Pica
- Bowel and digestion issues
- Issues related to their emotional regulation.

It is important to place our pupils and their needs at the centre of our planning and thinking when designing and delivering a curriculum framework.

We recognise that for our pupils to achieve their potential they require a carefully designed curriculum and distinct teaching approaches that focus on developing their communication, cognitive, social/emotional and self-help/independence skills. It should be informed by recent evidence-based practice and pedagogy that is autism

positive and directly seeks to address the barriers and strengths complex autistic pupils present with.

We wish to develop learning experiences that embed Preparation for Adulthood at the appropriate levels for our pupils to make positive and meaningful transitions to their next stage of learning.



Our curriculum promise

- We will offer a balanced and meaningful curriculum with learning experiences that are relevant to our individual pupils.
- Our teaching activities will incorporate pupils' motivators.
- Our pupils can expect the provision of their non-negotiables as planned for via their Sensory Ladders available throughout their school day.
- We will ensure that the environment and offer will incorporate our knowledge of the pupils' sensory preferences and be designed to maximise participation within learning experiences.
- We will offer opportunities for our pupils to make choices throughout their school day.
- We will maintain an in-depth knowledge of our pupils and a strong understanding of their development and progression.
- We will use advice and strategies offered or supplied by a range of outside experts.
- We will thread communication and interaction opportunities throughout our school day and provide Augmentative and Alternative Communication strategies and tools throughout our learning experiences and daily routines.
- We will seek to understand behaviour as a communication and offer proactive support based on de-escalation.



Key Areas of Learning Aims

Communication and Interaction

- The progression from pre-intentional behaviour to learning how to respond to and initiate communication.
- The development of functional and social communication skills, receptive and expressive skills.

Cognition and Learning

- The demonstration of and purposeful responses to stimuli in an environment.
- The demonstration of increased problem-solving skills and reasoning.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

- The development of self-care and independence skills including toileting, personal care, confidence in food and self-regulation strategies.
- The ability to develop relationships with adults and peers that are meaningful.

Physical and Sensory

- The development of fine/gross motor skills which leads to personal autonomy and physical well-being.
- The ability to engage with strategies and resources that help maintain and offer regulation.

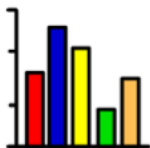




Teaching and Learning in the ARC at Mill Lodge

The staff at the ARC will:

- Understand the levels of development, what this means and take into consideration the atypical and non-linear development of the pupils.
- Create meaningful learning activities without focussing solely on what is age appropriate.
- Consider that autistic pupils with complex needs have significant issues generalising learning and will require repeated opportunities to consolidate skills and then transfer this skill over a range of different experiences.
- Understand the specific barriers autistic pupils with complex needs experience (for example: meaningful phonics for pre-verbal pupils, functional mark making, acquisition of vocabulary, hyperlexia, flexibility learning and executive functioning issues) and utilising specialist resources/advice that helps to bridge these differences (e.g. Phonics for SEN, POPS Reading Scheme).
- Focus on process based over outcome learning when this supports the pupils experience.
- Acknowledge that some pupils will remain at the earliest stages of development.
- Attribute importance to ongoing observation and assessment as a means of assessing a pupil's level of engagement, their motivators and their ongoing strengths and needs.
- All contribute to completion of the Pupil One Page Profiles, I Can Engagement Targets, Sensory Ladders or Risk Reduction Plans (when pupils have one).
- Engage in regular professional development that seeks to enhance skills and knowledge in areas specific to our pupils.
- Demonstrate a strong understanding of the Eight Principles of Good Autism Practice, Eight Inclusion Promises and how the ARC offers these in its practice.



Assessment, Target Setting and Monitoring in the ARC

Principles of Assessment:

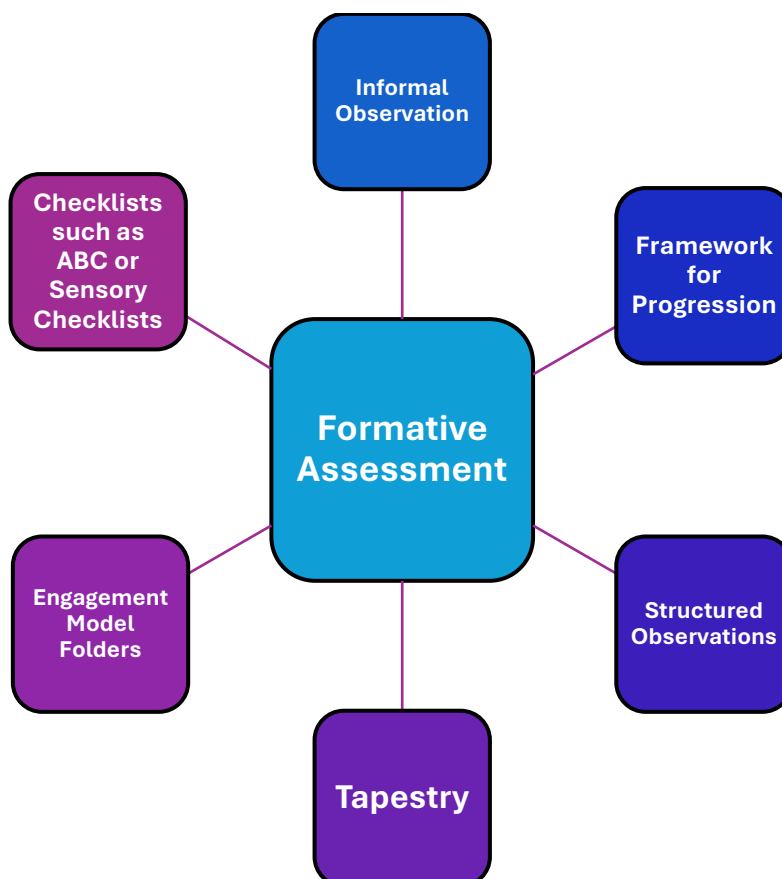
The purpose of all assessment is to provide information about pupils' current abilities, monitor progress and inform future planning. This enables our pupils to make their best progress in Key Areas.

Assessment will involve collaboration between parents, outside agencies and school.

Formative Assessment:

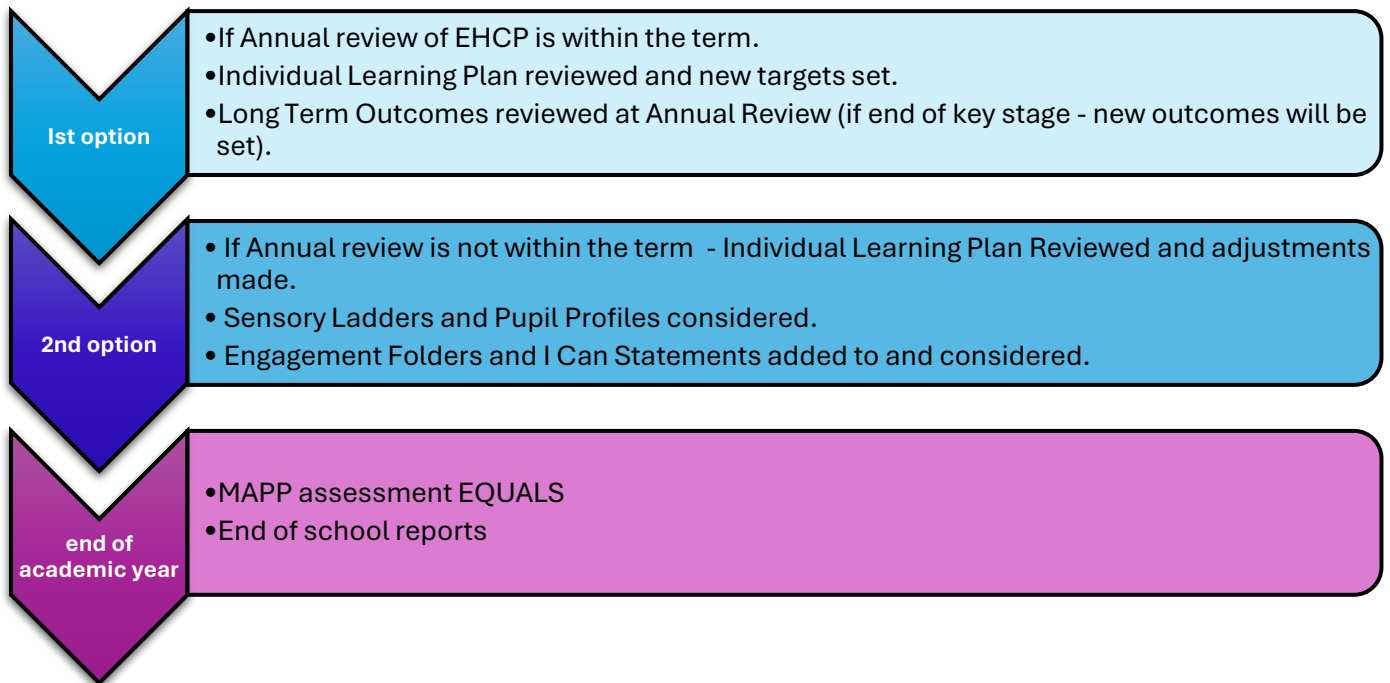
This is regular, informal assessment that is used by teachers to assess pupil understanding and inform teaching strategy. Our assessment is formative and is ongoing throughout the school year.

Examples of ongoing and formative assessment used within the ARC:



Ipsative Assessment:

Pupils at Mill Lodge ARC have ipsative assessments twice a year and annually. The bi-annual assessments are dependent on when pupil's annual review is held.



Sources that inform our Ipsative Assessment include the AET Progression Framework, Engagement Model profiles, recorded observations (video, photographs, written) and professional opinion (school based and outside experts). The developmental assessments that form part of this process are also matched to the needs of the individual pupil and the overarching aims of the curriculum pathway that they are currently accessing.

Progress and attainment are judged related to Short Term Targets on Individual Learning Plans, Engagement Model I Can Statements and MAPP targets:

- Little or No Progress (may require additional support from outside agencies and a problem-solving meeting with ARC Lead unless related to ill health or other explanation)
- Good Progress and/ or
- Excellent Progress.

These are recorded as Red, Amber and Green respectively for each area of development on each pupil's end of year report.

Specific Teaching and Learning Approaches used in the ARC



Receptive and Expressive Communication:

- Responsive TOTAL Communication approach and environment – including:
- Symbols and visual supports (e.g. Communication Books, Aided Language Displays and Aided Language Boards, Symbol Request prompts, Visual Timetables, Lanyards, Makaton, and the use of gesture.
- Reducing language that adults use to support understanding and the mapping of words onto actions, objects, and situations.
- Emphasis on Listening and Attention, syllable clapping, rhyming and songs.
- Advice and support from Speech and Language Therapy services.
- ***Please see our 'Communication Policy' for details.***



Engagement and Learning:

- EQUALS Curriculums – Semi-Formal and Formal
- Motivators and active engagement tools.
- Significant processing time (including the six second rule).
- Task based learning (when learning specific skills by breaking down the task into simple steps) and errorless learning to build confidence and consolidate skills.
- Distraction free workstations
- Individual and small group learning
- The use of music and songs to enhance learning, routines and understanding.
- The use of visual models
- POPS Reading Scheme, Phonics for SEN, and Colourful Semantics

- Specific advice from outside agencies including SISS teams.
- ***Please see our 'Semi-Formal and Formal Curriculum Policy' for details.***



Social and Emotional Development:

- Intensive Interaction and Mirror Play.
- Explicit teaching of the ARC rules.
- The Transporters video resources.
- The use of social stories and comic strips.
- Non-negotiables that are individual to each pupil (e.g. stim toys).
- Request for quiet time passes.
- Toys and activities related to personal interests available during choosing time.
- Explicit teaching of personal care and opportunities to develop independence and self-help routines.
- Advice from outside agencies such as Educational Psychology.
- ***Please see our 'Safe Touch Positive Handling' and 'Understanding and Supporting Behaviours' Policies.***



Physical and Sensory Development:

- TACPAC
- Sensory Circuits and the use of the Sensory Den, Individual Sensory Ladders
- Planned movement and physical activities throughout the day e.g. Soft Start or Opal Play with weighted backpacks.
- The use of TalkTools resources such as Jigglers.
- Environmental Audits, low arousal spaces and breakout spaces.
- Availability of chew toys and fidget toys.
- A range of seating including Zuma and rocker chairs, yoga ball seats, beanbags, peanut balls.

- Advice and strategies from Occupational Therapists.
- ***Please see our 'Understanding and Supporting Behaviours' Policies.***