

# Curriculum



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## 1. Introduction

The Integrated Learning Space (ILS) was opened in January 2015. It is a Free School in Islington, coming under the umbrella of the Bridge London Trust. The inspiration for the ILS came from the acknowledgement that a small group of students at the Bridge required an enhanced level of support, over and above what a typical Special school setting could provide.

## 2. The Principles of the ILS Curriculum

The overarching focus of the ILS is to provide a curriculum driven by the individual learner's needs. Effectively this means that every student has their own curriculum, developed with them, based on their own skills, strengths and desired outcomes. The ILS therefore provides an approach to the notion of a 'curricula' that is highly eclectic in nature as it derives wholly from the student. This approach combines best practices and techniques to educational intervention that enables a highly specific focus on individual needs.

The ILS curriculum utilises a model based within a family of highly interactive methodologies that include 'Dynamic Assessment' (DA) and 'Response to Intervention' (RTI). The key feature of these methodologies is that they blend assessment and educational provision in one holistic activity. To ensure this happens the ILS provides a truly integrated service that brings together specialist skills and knowledge to deliver the curriculum in natural contexts both in and outside the school.

This curriculum approach is therefore broad as it attempts to include all aspects of the learner's development and it is balanced as it weighs up, specifically for the students, the level of input and support that is required. Above all at its core, it is meaningful to each student and their family.

## 3. Integrated Work

The Integrated working approach that we have adopted at the ILS puts the learner and their family, at the centre of decision making – meeting needs and improving lives. Its core principles involve:

- Combining expertise, knowledge and skills in a transactional model of support.
- Identifying needs, risk and impact earlier – proactively, with families, carers and other Professionals.
- Delivering transparent and coordinated packages of support.
- Collaboration on all levels across all services.
- Presenting professional challenge through strong management and leadership across all agencies.

## 4. Curriculum Aims

The ILS curriculum aims to promote:

- A student-centred model.
- Positive behaviour support.
- Negotiated outcomes.
- Spontaneous communication skills.
- Greater focus on independence and functional skills.
- More successful self and mutual regulation skills.
- More successful transitions and access to the local and wider community.
- Maximised potential for learning and engagement.

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## 5. Accessing the Curriculum

The ILS is set up for young people with Autism who present with often quite different styles of learning and a range of different cognitive profiles. These different ways of learning can be linked to; sensory processing difficulties, using forms of language which do not always link up with typical systems of communication, and behaviours which may occasionally present challenge for the staff in support. Because of this professionals at the ILS use a bespoke student centred approach that addresses primarily the student's communication, sensory processing and behaviour, enabling each learner to make progress within their own capacity and at their own pace.

Some of the ways in which we support the students within this person centred approach is through the use of;

- PECS – Picture Exchange Communication
- Makaton
- Alternative and Assistive Communication (AAC) Low and High Tech.
- Intensive Interaction
- Sensory diets and Sensory integration programs
- Sensory stories and Multi-sensory approaches
- TEACCH and other structured teaching approaches
- Use of range of visual supports including: timetables, schedules, key rings
- Objects of reference
- Attention Autism
- Exploratory, Messy and Heuristic Play
- Call and Response and musical interaction
- Hydrotherapy / swimming
- Proprioceptive massage
- TAC PAC
- SCERTS [Social Communication / Emotional Regulation / Transactional Support]
- PBS [Positive Behaviour Support]

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## 6. The Strands

Students are provided with opportunities for learning across the Strands in all lessons that are delivered at the ILS. It is learning that takes place all day in every type of situation /location and activity. The Strands are used to guide thinking ensuring that a holistic view of learning is addressed.

### The Strands headings are:

- Social and Emotional
- Communication & Interaction
- Physical & Sensory
- Independent Living
- Knowledge & Understanding / Cognition

The Strand objectives evolved in part from the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) and Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS) framework.

## 7. The Curriculum Areas

In conjunction with the Strands there are subjects for each lesson – these can be found within each of the relevant curriculum areas. The subjects fall into six broad categories which the timetabled activities link to.

### The broad subject areas are:

- Functional skills
- Creative development
- Physical development
- Independent living skills
- Community awareness
- Technology

Each student has an Individualised curriculum that originates from their Education Health Care Plan outcomes, addressing the theme of each of the Strands and is delivered using strategies which are matched to their learning styles.

## 8. The Framework

How these subject areas are linked to timetabled activities is illustrated in the table below:

Strands	Subject areas	
Social and Emotional Communication & Interaction Physical and Sensory Independent Living skills Knowledge Understanding and Cognition	Example activities including skills approaches and routines that naturally fit the broad subject area.	
	<b>Functional Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensology</li> <li>• Attention Autism</li> <li>• Intensive Interaction</li> <li>• Snack Time</li> <li>• Structured Table Top</li> <li>• Literacy &amp; Numeracy</li> <li>• Making transitions*</li> <li>• Good Morning/Good Afternoon – Greetings</li> <li>• Assembly and whole school celebration</li> <li>• Social skills / structured turn taking games</li> </ul>
	<b>Creative Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Music Interaction</li> <li>• Floor Play</li> <li>• Dance</li> <li>• Yoga</li> <li>• Call and Response Songs/poems/chants</li> <li>• Art/Mark Making/craft/Lego</li> </ul>
	<b>Physical Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory Circuits</li> <li>• TAC PAC</li> <li>• Massage</li> <li>• Water Play</li> <li>• Messy Play</li> <li>• Swimming/Hydrotherapy</li> <li>• Sensory Diet/Sensory Integration Activities</li> </ul>
	<b>Specific Independent Living</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toileting</li> <li>• Personal Hygiene &amp; Tooth Brushing</li> <li>• Dressing/Undressing</li> <li>• Laundry &amp; Jobs (money/laminating/surveys)</li> </ul>
	<b>Community Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Training – walk/bus/train</li> <li>• Shops Cafes Park</li> </ul>
	<b>Science and Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT – Computers/iPads/iPods</li> <li>• Cooking &amp; Snack Preparation</li> <li>• Gardening &amp; Recycling</li> <li>• Safety in the school/home – Electricity etc.</li> </ul>

The overlap in subject areas of timetabled activities is recognised and it is intended to give a shared language and framework to reflect the range of learning that is taking place across the ILS for each student.

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## 9. Trans-Disciplinary work

At the ILS, professionals provide students with a dedicated specialised setting both in terms of physical space they use, and the range of professionals working alongside them in a locally accessible provision.

The ILS is staffed by a multidisciplinary team comprising teachers, lead Special Needs professionals, (LSNP) Special Needs professionals (SNP), Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Psychologist, CAMHS staff, parent support professionals and apprentices supported by premises , HR and admin. The specialist knowledge and experience of the staff alongside input from the student's families and other associated agencies is used to determine the priorities for each of the Strand areas mentioned above.

Everyone who works with the young people at the ILS, has the knowledge and skills to offer the consistency and continuity of support to optimise the student's access to learning and communication. This often involves a high level of support from experienced staff that can readily identify and maintain the learning environment that each young person requires. For example: noticing the subtle stimuli that can have a significant impact upon an individual's ability to self-regulate and focus; picking up a tension in the student that may have arisen unpredictably because of something in their environment.

All therapies are considered an integral part of students' education. The multi-disciplinary team works together to provide a holistic approach to encourage independence, opportunities for greater access to the curriculum, and pupils' general wellbeing.

As a team we strongly believe that our students should be contributing within their communities. This involves ensuring that staff have the knowledge and skills to support students at all times and that we are able to teach our students skills in self and mutual regulation effectively, in order to access a wide range of community provision in a calm and controlled manner.

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## 10. Culture of Teaching and Learning

All class teachers have a responsibility to:

- Liaise with their Senior Teacher/Assistant head to produce appropriate student centred programmes of work that take into account the wide range of abilities and needs of students.
- Prepare differentiated lesson plans and materials.
- Ensure Special Needs Professionals understand the contents of a programme of work/lesson plan and assist with planning, as appropriate.
- Use Special Needs Professionals to assist and supervise when the teacher is engaged in one-to-one teaching or group teaching.
- Give Special Needs Professionals clear guidance about the objectives of an activity, how to approach it and what the outcome should be.
- Make classroom resources accessible so that students can collect their own materials, where appropriate.
- Be flexible, changing approach if students seem confused or uninterested.
- Provide a stimulating/calm environment, as appropriate.
- Have high expectations.
- Critically evaluate the curriculum on a regular basis.
- Apply and promote a reflective culture on a daily basis to ensure that learners are engaged and targets are evaluated on a regular and timely basis.
- Drive the student centred approach across the school at all times.
- Develop negotiated outcomes and collaboratively arrived at consequences, which share control with the student.
- Apply and promote a reflective culture on a daily basis to ensure that learners are engaged and targets are evaluated on a regular and timely basis

## 11. Partnership with families

At the ILS we believe that parents and carers are equal partners in framing meaningful outcomes for their sons/daughters, and the ongoing involvement of families in the student's learning and the ways in which students are empowered to have control over the development of the work is for us, a key aim. In order to gain the viewpoints and opinions of the parents, semi-structured interviews are carried out with them regarding their expectations about how the ILS support them and their child. Demographic information is also collected for each student and their family as part of the creation of a successful Educational Health Care Plan [EHCP].

Parents and carers communicate daily with the school through home school books, they take part in target setting meetings every term and attend an end of year review. Parents and carers also have regular and frequent opportunities to engage with staff through Child In Need [CIN], Child Protection [CP], Community Education and Treatment Review [CETR] and Team Around the Child [TAC], looked after child [LAC] meetings. We believe that by engaging and working at this level of close collaboration with families, carers and other stakeholders of our students we can understand our students better, be more aware of their aspirations, and hear their voice in decision making.

## 12. Assessment

In order to enable teachers to assess how well the students are making progress within their own individualised curriculum the ILS has two main areas of focus:

1. Baseline measures around the strands: (regulation, social communication, independence, life skills and learning cognition)
2. Ongoing assessment of pupil's progress which is unique to each individual student and determined by the multidisciplinary team.

At the ILS we work around the position that where possible – 'The assessment fits the individual rather than the individual having to fit the assessment'.

Assessment and the setting of goals is done collaboratively with families and over time becomes the language used in TAC (Team around the child)/ CIN (Child in Need)/ LAC (Looked after child) meetings and when completing the EHCP. The goals are functionally based and focussed on core areas of spontaneous communication, emotional and sensory regulation and independence skills as from the research these are the most important predictors of long term positive outcomes for young people with the profiles that the ILS serves.

### Student's achievement is captured

- Qualitatively through 3 Termly reports reporting to core strands of the curriculum and subject areas.
- Through the use of 'Earwig' [Electronic recording system].
- On each individual students baseline/MAPP Targets.
- Via meetings with families.
- Written notes captured on students individual recording sheets.
- End of year 'P' Level [PIVATS] data.

#### \*PIVATS

(Performance Indicators for Valued Assessment & Targeted Learning) are based upon the revised performance criteria published by DfES and QCA (2001) in "Supporting the Target Setting Process - Guidance for Effective Target Setting for students with Special Educational Needs. PIVATS are used to show small incremental steps of progress. They measure Early Developmental Levels progress tracked by 'I Can' statements that break the National Curriculum into smaller steps.

#### \*MAPP

(Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress) is an assessment tool used to assess and record student's progress in relation to personal learning intentions. It provides a way of recognising lateral progression. MAPP targets typically drawn from the themes for future learning found in Section E of the student's EHCPs.

### Recording

Formative assessment is carried out around the central Strand targets and within each lesson. At the end of the day the class teams meet to discuss and reflect on the student's progress throughout the day. Different forms of formative tracking are used to allow teachers to be creative in relation to the learner and how to gather meaningful data around their work.

### Assessment of Behaviour

The ILS is a **Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)** school, and we recognise that there are many reasons why the students may present with the behaviours that they do. Therefore, attempting to identify the function of their behaviour through a sensitive form of functional analysis is key. By understanding the functions of a behaviour the strategies put in place by staff to support the student decrease behaviours of concern and lead to increased learning and development opportunities.

To measure the occurrence of different forms of behaviour at the ILS a number of tools utilised:

**IRIS Adapt** – This is an electronic behaviour tracking system that measures the occurrence of behaviour; it is an online tool for logging and analysing pupil behaviour/incidents; giving information about triggers, antecedents, interventions, calming strategies and follow up requirements. It utilizes an ABC approach to capturing incidents.

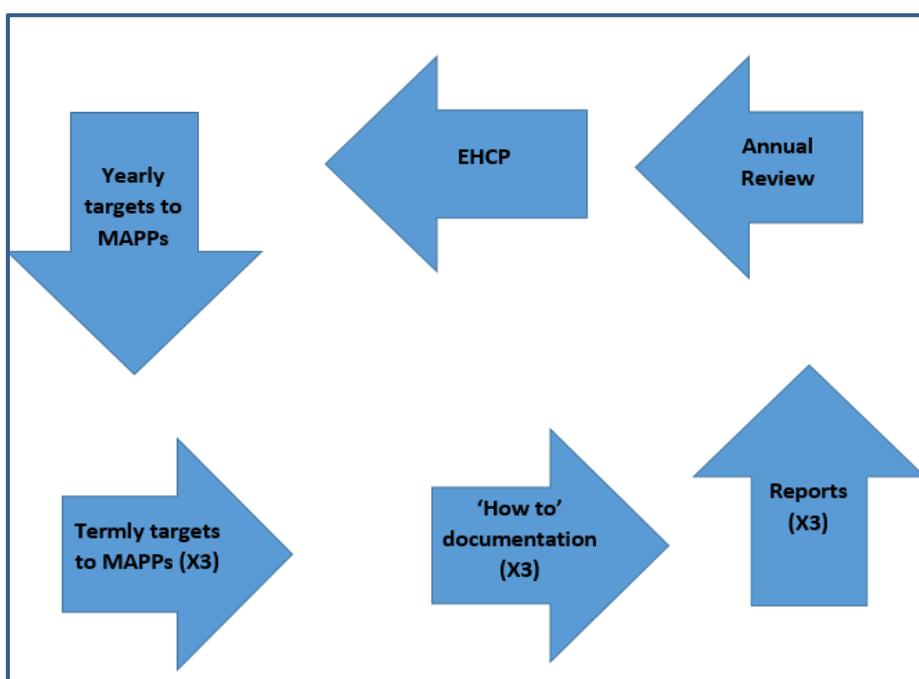
**Daily traffic light data** – A low tech system and putted into a weekly spread sheet. This is completed electronically at the end of the day by the whole team, and aims to capture and record levels of regulation/dis-regulation

**Termly Behaviour Data** – [Aberrant Behaviour Questionnaire] – This provides us with information that can assist us to reflect on the primary functions of a students’ behaviour and the evidence based interventions that address these behaviours when they are located.

Guidance in the way in which behaviour is analysed is provided by the Clinical Psychologist and Positive Behaviour Support Coaches who work within the school. The use of structured and semi structured observations form a key part of the assessment. These can be done by members of the team working directly with the students but also by external observers (psychiatry, psychologist, therapists). Structured observation schedules will be developed for each relevant intervention. Staff also organise ongoing staff meetings to discuss progress and uses multiple observers to validate opinions. Measures of treatment fidelity are also taken as part of ongoing assessment. These measures are essential to measure the efficacy of interventions but also for evaluating the quality of evidence supporting the use of school based interventions. End of term reports of student’s progress are completed by class teachers with input from the in therapy team and shared with families.

**Setting and reviewing targets:**

From Section E [‘Goals and Outcomes’] of each student’s EHCP (Education Health Care Plan) one target for each of the 5 Strands is set for the coming year. These 5 targets are then transferred onto the MAPP (Mapping and Assessing personal progress) assessment grids and broken down into 3 termly IEP Strand targets. The MAPP assessment grid is then populated across 4 areas [prompting; fluency; maintenance and generalisation] with a baseline measure made at the beginning of the term and ‘progress made’ - informed by daily formative assessment [within these 4 areas of each of the targets - filled in at the end of the term. Formative progress is captured through daily recording and Earwig throughout each day and in the class reflection meetings with class teams (including Speech and Language and Occupational therapy). Planning for the IEP targets [i.e what the staff actually do with the students to support their progress], is shown on the IEP ‘How to’s’ and on the lesson plans. IEP targets are ‘highlighted’ on lesson plans when they are linked with subject targets, however certain key areas of learning such as; ‘emotional regulation’, ‘sensory regulation’ and ‘social communication’ are being worked on all of the time. Information around all of these IEP [Strand] targets is available on the IEP target sheets, which can be found [1] displayed in the class room [2] in the teaching file. Formative assessment is carried out around the central IEP targets and within each lesson, and the whole class team contributes to this assessment. This formative assessment underpins the routine summative assessment. The whole target/planning process is described in the Flow Chart below.



### 13. Enrichment Curriculum

- Educational Visits to; art galleries, cinemas, museums, Squidz [a nightclub for people with LD]
- Dance Therapy
- Hydrotherapy
- Cycling scheme at the Emirates

### 14. Equal Opportunities

Nationally a number of factors have been identified that affect consistent underachievement in schools across a range of different curriculum areas. These have been specifically (but not exclusively) identified as gender, disability, race and class. It is recognised that underachievement can therefore be attributed to 'pre-conceived expectations' and 'attitudes' of teachers/support staff, as well as to teaching styles and the content and delivery of the curriculum. When planning the curriculum approach at the ILS, content is drawn from human ['the students and their families'] and material ['what is meaningful'] resources; both in school and from the wider community and every effort is made to give equal representation to the students own and others cultures. The school has a large number of students for whom English is not their first language, and we are committed to raising our awareness of equality of opportunity and inequality by examining any and all factors that might inhibit the students' development in any way. Appropriate provision is made for students who need to use:

- A means of communication other than speech, including computers, technological aids, signing, symbols, pictures, photographs, objects of reference etc;
- Aids or adapted equipment to allow access to particular activities within and beyond school.

#### We recognise that

- All members of staff need to ensure that all students are treated equally at all times.
- That all resources need to demonstrate the relevance and validity of all races, abilities, ways of being and genders.
- That teachers and support staff always have the highest expectations of the students and what they can achieve.
- That all forms of communication are responded to and are considered as having equal value to formal language based systems.
- All staff should embody 'total communication' approach which promotes high achievement of all students.
- The notion of 'Disability' is always challenged as a label, and when used is always projected positively throughout the school.
- **At the ILS all ways of being are celebrated.**