

Pens Meadow School

Flexible progression towards Entry Level using ASDAN Awards



What we did

Pens Meadow School caters for up to 65 children with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, many of whom also have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), aged 3-19. We reviewed the curriculum on offer to our secondary pupils and realigned it with foundation learning with three focus areas: functional skills, vocational skills and personal development.

We used ASDAN Personal Progress as the vehicle for delivery. This is illustrated in a number of diagrams which show how the curriculum areas are mapped to ASDAN modules:

- See diagram 1 to see how the pupil is placed at the centre of the planning process, linked through timetabled areas to each personal progress module.
- See diagram 2 to see the same information presented in a different way; linking the modules to timetabled areas.
- See diagram 3 to see the practical information needed; each module linked to the page of the guidance booklet and the code needed to identify the module.

Pupils have registration groups but move between groups throughout the day and week according to need.

Each pupil has an individual learning plan, developed through the annual review process that identifies skills, aspirations, and barriers to learning.

In the last three years at school, we work on developing skills the pupils will need to effectively transition to adult life. These include meaningful community access, experiences of college settings and support to access transport.

See document 4 for our 'rationale' which provides more detail about the practical considerations of curriculum organisation.

Why we chose to use ASDAN Personal Progress

Our school mission states that: *'we will support pupils to achieve their full potential. We will enable our pupils to be active participants in school, at home and in the wider community.'*

We therefore wanted to:

- Have a curriculum which achieved these purposes.
- Offer learning opportunities and experiences that were relevant, motivating and appropriate.
- Provide recognition of our pupils' achievements.

We chose ASDAN Personal Progress as we had previously used ASDAN Transition Challenge and Towards Independence very successfully. We like the flexibility of approach which means we can supplement delivery with additional curriculum materials and approaches such as EQUALS and Routes for Learning.

The curriculum format supports effective transition to adult services and providers as each pupil will leave with a range of awards in functional skills, vocational skills and personal development.

We are able to provide accurate information to future providers related to the level of attainment of pupils and likely success at accessing future qualifications.

The benefits for our students

Pupils can gain accreditation at any level of achievement, with the top levels providing progression to Entry Level One Qualifications. We therefore deliver a personalised approach, meeting individual need through a common framework.

We work with local colleges, work based learning providers and a local school for young people with moderate learning difficulties to enhance opportunities for our pupils – for example, in accessing link courses, work related learning on a farm or functional skills.

We are currently assessing the abilities of our most capable pupils in functional skills and plan on offering discrete Level One qualifications in functional skills, so providing progression in these areas

Our pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem through the range of experiences we are able to offer, which are all linked together to allow for skills to be learned and then applied in real situations. Pupils work together in different groups and in different locations and also benefit from this.

There has been a decrease in challenging behaviours since we introduced the new approach.

After twelve months delivery we reviewed the benefits and challenges, concluding that it was worth the considerable effort involved.

'It's hard in some ways as you have to know more about all the pupils but they are really getting a better curriculum. It's more interesting for them'.

- Member of staff

The detailed evidencing involved in the model ensures that pupils' abilities are celebrated and the photographic and video evidence enables pupils to understand and share their achievements.



What to think about if you plan to go down this path

Having a clear purpose for curriculum delivery with clearly defined outcomes ensures the focus is on providing relevant and motivating learning opportunities.

Curriculum opportunities need to be planned at the outset, not 'added on' or 'squeezed in'.

Enrichment is essential but needs to be scheduled. Previously we tended to have a full timetable and then opportunities would arise so we would do them as well! Now we have slots in the timetable.

Be flexible but be sure activities will contribute to personal progress. For example, our work related learning on Thursday mornings might mean working on a farm or preparing an enterprise morning: either will be planned and evidenced through Personal Progress. When opportunities arise we always ask: does it contribute to personal progress? If it does, we'll try to include it; if not, we don't.

Want to know more?

To learn more about what we do click on our [school website](#) For more information about how we use ASDAN Personal Progress, contact Marie Bissell on 01384 818945 or mbissell@pens-meadow.dudley.sch.uk