# **PgCE Primary School Embedded Learning (January Cohort) April 2021** A Guide for Students and Mentors.

## Introduction:

The purpose of School Embedded Learning (SEL) is for students to ground their campus-based learning in school experience. It should facilitate connection-making, reflection and analysis of practice and generate discussion around key areas of teaching. It is also a wonderful opportunity for student teachers to get to know their Developing placement school before the placement formally begins.

## School Embedded Learning Dates:

April 21st and 22nd 2021

April 28th and 29th 2021

## Guidance for Mentors and Class Teachers:

This is the first year that SEL has been attached to placement schools so this guide will be helpful to both students and schools to help clarify expectations. The SEL days are not part of the assessed placement, however as the student will be completing their SEL days in their placement classroom, what they do during the SEL days and how they engage professionally will be important. This handbook gives an overview of what the students should be doing during the SEL days, but this will vary from school to school and from student to student, depending on the needs of the class, and the needs of the student teacher.

COVID 19 Update:

Due to school closures and difficulty placing students, some of our students will not have attended a school-based Beginning placement. Some students were unplaced and continued to work on meeting the Teachers’ Standards through CPD materials and online course, supported regularly by their University Partnership Tutors. Other students were placed in schools supporting Key Worker children in a variety of ways, both in school and online. The previous placement experience of the student will determine how best to use the SEL days prior to the start of the Developing placement. We suggest that mentors and students meet during the first SEL day to look over the End of Placement report and to discuss developmental targets moving forward. Although the assessed placement does not officially start until May 10th, we are advising students to use their SEL days to continue to work towards their targets, and to make the most of their time in school.

Teaching lessons during SEL days:

There is no expectation of students to teach a certain % of the timetable during these SEL days, however, if planning and teaching a session for a small group, or a whole class is what the student needs experience of, and it is appropriate for the class, then that is fully supported.

## What should the students do during SEL days?

The school embedded learning days are not part of the assessed placement, but as the student will be in the same class for their Developing placement, what they do during the 4 days will impact on how the start of their placement goes, so they need to use the time wisely:

Students should:

1. Get to know the school, the mentor, the class teacher and the children. They should start to build those important relationships.
2. Build their confidence of being in school.
3. Support the learning – support the class teacher as required. This might include: working with small groups, team teaching with the class teacher, working with individual children, preparing learning resources or marking work etc.
4. Continue to work on their Developmental Targets. Look at the end of placement report and see if there are any opportunities to work on areas that they need to gain experience in.
5. Start to make plans for their Developing placement – talk to the class teacher about what topics / lessons that they might teach. Start learning about what the children can do, have already learnt. Look at the work in the children’s books and on the walls etc.
6. Make a good impression. Whilst the SEL days are not part of the assessed Developing placement, the impressions they make to the staff and children during those days are likely to impact how the placement goes.
7. Complete a short task for our Ped & Practice sessions each week (see below)
8. Have fun! Enjoy the time in school and make the most if it.

Developing Placement Start Date:

Prep Days (4 days): **4th to 7th May**.

Placement Days (25 days): **10th May to 18th Jun 2021** (depending upon placement schools’ half term dates)

Students will need to have all of their placement paperwork ready in their placement files by the last day of the placement prep days, with their pre-placement checklist signed off before the placement begins on May 10th.

## Guidance for Students - Reflective Practice:

There is a good opportunity during SEL days for students to reflect on their practice, reflect on the practice of others’ and reflect on how children learn and perhaps some of the more nuanced areas of teaching. It can be useful for students to structure their reflections to learn most from them and one helpful way is to use through Kolb’s model (below);



<https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>

## A weekly focused task for Ped & Practice Sessions:

Each week of SEL you will have a focused task to think about for our PGPC9060 sessions. This task should **not** be the main focus of your time in school, but a short activity to help you make connections between what happens in school and what we learn and discuss in our Ped & Practice sessions. Always talk to your class teacher about the task before hand so they know what you are focusing on.

There are also 8 additional tasks and focus areas at the end of this booklet, if you wish to choose to work on them, or maybe they connect to one of your target areas, but they are optional.

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| **Focus Tasks:** |
| 21/22 Apr ***Planning for Progression:***In our session on Friday this week we will be thinking about how to plan for progression.***OBSERVE A LESSON***: (This can be done both formally with you sitting and observing the lesson as an outsider, or informally as you support learning with a group)Observe one lesson focusing on planning for progression. If you can, ask to see a copy of a lesson plan, although many teachers will not work off detailed individual lesson plans, so it might be more of a weekly overview. **Some guiding questions:*** Think about where this lesson fits in. What has come before? What did the children need to do / learn / know about , before the lesson?
* How does the teacher / children recap prior learning?
* Do you get a sense of where the learning is going?
* Is there an opportunity for the children to reflect on their learning?

***TALK TO THE CHILDREN:***Talk to the children. Do they know what they are learning about? Can they make connections with previous learning? Do they know where their learning is heading?***TALK TO THE TEACHER:***How does the teacher know whether the lesson is going well and that they children are progressing?If time allows talk to the teacher about a lesson that you observed or took part in. Where does it fit in to a sequence of learning? What has come before? What is next? Ask if you can see the planning documents for that lesson. If possible, ask to see a copy of the yearly plan for your class in that topic, and then the shorter-term plans. Discuss the planning process for that subject, where does the teacher start / how does the teacher change or tweak the plans based on how a lesson has gone?***REFLECT:**** What key learning can you take away from your observations and discussions?
* How are you going to use that learning in your own lessons?
* What questions do you have for the class teacher about planning for progression?
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| 28/29 Apr ***Working with Other Adults:***In our session on Friday this week we will be thinking about how to effectively work with other adults in our school.**Observe and reflect:**Who are the other adults in the room?What are their roles?How do the teacher and the other adults work together? How do they know what each other is doing? How do they communicate?How do the children behave / respond to the other adults in the room?What would the classroom be like without that other adult?**Discuss with the class teacher / TAs:** (If time allows)Talk to the class teacher / TAs about how to effectively work with the other adults in the classroom. Does he / she have any top tips? What are the most important advantages to having another adult in the room? What are some of the challenges? How does he / she overcome these?**Develop relationships:**Think about how you can develop your relationship with the other adults in the classroom. How can you get to know someone better, or tell them a little about yourself? Is there something you can offer to help with that would be an opportunity to develop that relationship? **Reflect:**What is difficult about being a student and working with the other adults in the classroom? How can you overcome these challenges? |

## General SEL Expectations:

It is important that we are all clear about just what is expected of us for school embedded learning so we have set out below the respective roles of the student, the university and the schools. This has been agreed with the schools in advance and they will all have a copy of this booklet as a reminder.

You **–** you are a student but you are also a professional in training and so most important of all is that you act professionally at all times. In reality, what does this mean?

## Be there!

Attendance is compulsory for all the SEL sessions at school. It will help you to make the links between what you learn at university and what you see in practice. Remember as well that the teacher may have planned for you to work with a group or do a specific task so being absent may disrupt other people. Part of your SEL experience involves observing and discussing with your peers so, again, you need to be there. Think too about the impression you create of yourself. Whilst this is not a formally assessed module in the sense that you receive a grade or write an essay, be under no illusions that you will be watched all the time by school staff, who will build a picture of you during your time there. Those impressions last and remember you may well be applying for a job next year in that area. Head teachers talk to each other!

Of course, there are times when absence is unavoidable. If you know **in advance** that you will be off (e.g. for a funeral) you need to speak to your personal tutor first, to make sure the absence is OK, then let your school know. You will also need to phone the university absence line **01524 384510 in Lancaster,** and let them know.

If you have **no advanced warning** (if you are ill in the night, for instance) then you need to contact school first. Check with the school what their procedures are for reporting absence – usually it will be a phone call (NOT a text message) as early as possible. Most school offices are manned from 8.00am. If you don’t get through, KEEP TRYING. It will be answered eventually. Again, you will also need to let your personal tutor know and also phone the absence line.

Be early!

You will soon discover that many teachers are in very early to set up for the day’s teaching and will often stay late to do marking, assessments, attend meetings, run clubs etc. The documentation for your *assessed* placements stipulates that you must be at school at least half an hour before school starts and leave at least half an hour after the end of the school day. For your SEL experience, treat this as a minimum! Even though you won’t have as much setting up to do as for an assessed placement, you can always help the teacher to set up or use that time to look at documents, policies, children’s books etc. Again, this will be noticed, so don’t just be early, be busy. After school, nothing looks worse than the sight of a student racing the children and parents out of the car park to get home early!

Dress and act professionally!

Remember, you are a professional, so you need to look as though you are. Look at what the teachers wear as a rough guide and then use some common sense (anything very short, or low cut, or denim are invariably a bad idea, but don’t wear your best suit if you are going to do some painting in Reception! If you are involved in a PE lesson, you might want to get changed into something appropriate.)

Not only are you a professional, you are also a role model for the children. It is natural that they will be curious and will want to get to know you. Some will inevitably “push the boundaries”. Be careful not to become too friendly with them (playing football with them in the playground for instance) or you could struggle to maintain their respect in the classroom. The maxim “Be friendly but don’t be their friend” is quite a useful one to remember.

## Be aware!

A little emotional intelligence goes a long way in a primary school. There will be many occasions when you will want to speak to the class teacher or other staff about aspects of school life. Staff are invariably generous with their time and advice but…not usually at 8.55am when the children are about to come in, or when they desperately need to get some last minute resources ready or they are preparing for a staff meeting. So keep your eyes and ears open and choose your moment carefully. Similarly, if you are asking about sensitive areas (whether it be a safeguarding issue or an aspect of teaching that the teacher is less confident about) choose your words carefully. It can be easy to cause offence or imply criticism and, once done, it can be hard to win back someone’s confidence.

The school– the school will make you feel welcome, will give you access to documentation that we have agreed with them, will allow you to watch them teach and to question them about aspects of their practice. They will probably also watch aspects of your emerging practice and give informal, constructive advice.

But if you play your cards right, they will do far more than that. They will open a window into the world of teaching and give you lots and lots of help and advice that can only come from being in school all the time. This is one of the real strengths of the school embedded experience so do cultivate those relationships with the staff.

The university– One of the tutor team will provide the link between the university and the school. This will be done both in pedagogical and practical terms:

 Pedagogy *–* we will provide input at the university that will introduce the themes that you will be exploring in school. We will set school-based tasks and evaluate them with you.

# **Optional Focus Areas**

On the following pages there are some optional activities that you can choose to complete, depending on your developmental targets.

 **Focused observation** – you will be asked to observe an aspect of practice (e.g. behaviour management, assessment for learning) and note down your observations and comments about what you see on an observation grid or sheet.

 **Access/reflection** – you will be expected to access, read and reflect on some of the school’s documentation. This might be a policy, or some teachers’ plans or children’s books. The school will make these available for you but it will be your responsibility to ask for them.

 **Discussion** – having observed, read and reflected on the practice you are seeing, it is natural that you will want to discuss it. Sometimes this will be a discussion with the class teacher or other staff member, sometimes with the children, sometimes with your tutor and sometimes with your peers, especially if they are in a different year group or key stage. At least one of these discussions will take place after school each week on one of the days.

 **Application** – having a go yourself! Having watched and discussed and read about it, I am sure you will be bursting to try out some of the techniques or approaches for yourself. This may be with individuals, groups or, on occasion, the whole class, depending on your confidence. Nothing you try out will be formally assessed but you can expect some informal, constructive feedback from school staff, your tutor, your peers and even the children.

# There are 8 focus areas that can help guide your SEL experience:

## **Managing behaviour**

The theme this week is around behaviour management and some of the things that contribute to it, so you will be looking at classroom organisation, groupings, rewards, sanctions and much more.

Focused observation – using the observation sheet, spend one lesson writing down anything you notice that affects the children’s behaviour. (Try to choose a different lesson from the other students in your class so the teacher doesn’t have 3 or 4 students just observing!) In the “Comment/Examples” section, write down what you see (e.g. hand-clapping to gain children’s attention) and add a comment (e.g. most children joined in after 2 claps, Jason waited till everyone else had started, then joined in).

Access/Reflection – outside of lesson time, look at your notes and consider how the systems, strategies, relationships and organisation affected the children’s behaviour. Any surprises? What will you take from this that you could use in future practice?

Discussion – after school on day 1, discuss with a student from a different class your findings so far. Are there differences between your findings? Is the approach consistent across classes?

Application – during day 2, take a group for whichever subject suits you/the teacher. Choose one of the approaches or strategies that the teacher uses and try it with the group (it could be a non-verbal prompt, such as clapping, it might be a verbal strategy, such as the use of praise, or the use of house points etc.) How effective was it? At an appropriate time, discuss with the teacher which strategy they prefer and why.

**Remember to negotiate with the teacher a suitable time to carry out set tasks. You may need to be flexible and do them on different days from those advised above. The rest of the time you will be supporting the teacher in their work.**

## **Formative assessment**

This activity concentrates on the area of **assessment**, considering different strategies used and their effect on children’s learning. You will be carrying out some assessment of your own as well.

Focused observation **–** on day 1, identify a time when the children are being assessed by either observation or discussion (this doesn’t have to be set up formally, it could be during a normal shared session or guided group task). Using the observation sheets, note down responses to the prompt questions.

Access/reflection **–** after school on day 1, take a sample of the children’s books and, using the “marking” sheet, note responses to the prompts. If there is very little evidence of comments in children’s books (which would be normal for younger children) you may want to speak to the teacher about how they feed back to them. Read the assessment/marking policy and think how this relates to the assessment you saw earlier in the day and the comments you have seen in the books. Does the policy inform/guide practice?

Discussion **–** find a suitable time to talk to a group of children about their individual targets. Do they have any? Do they know what they are and where they are kept? Do they know what they have to do to achieve the targets? What happens once they have achieved them? If the children are deemed too young to be able to do this, discuss with the teacher what happens about target setting for them. After school on day 2, compare notes on your findings from this and the “application” below with a peer.

Application **-** (probably on day 2) using one of the teacher’s Learning Outcomes (L.Os) assess a group of children, using a strategy observed. How do you know if they achieved the L.O. or not? What would be the next steps for their learning? How easy was it to assess their progress? What were the challenges?

Work with a small group and use the group assessment grid, notice and record when a child looks to have met the objective

**Remember to negotiate with the teacher a suitable time to carry out set tasks. You may need to be flexible and do them on different days from those advised above. The rest of the time you will be supporting the teacher in their work.**

## **Lesson structure, plan and objectives**

This activity focuses on the **structure of a lesson**, what the different parts are and how they fit together to maximise learning.

Focused observation **–** the observation sheet is actually part of the university’s planning guidance with some notes attached under each of the headings (you may wish to blow this up to A3).

Observe either a core or foundation subject and use the prompts to guide your writing. As for the previous week, you need to write down what you see and then make a comment; in this case you need to identify what you thought to be the most effective parts. Make sure your fellow student observes a different type of lesson (e.g. if you watch a core, let them watch a foundation). You may also use a copy of the teacher’s weekly plan and follow the lesson you are observing from the plan – note detail and how it fits in to the overall progression of learning. What is next for the children and why?

Access/Reflection **–** outside of lesson time, reflect on what you observed and think of 3 questions you would like to ask the teacher about the lesson (it could be 1 question about each section but does not have to be). Think also about the parts you thought were the most effective. Why do you think that was so?

Discussion - at the end of day one, compare notes with the other student(s) in your class. What were the similarities/differences between the structures of the core/foundation lessons? Look at the parts that you both noted as the most effective. Similarities? Any common themes? At an appropriate time, speak to the class teacher about your observation and discuss the questions you prepared.

Application **–** on day 2, teach a part of a lesson to a group (don’t worry – this will have been planned by the teacher already; you are just going to try to deliver it). Before you do, have in mind your reflections on the effective parts of the lesson on day 1. Can you use similar strategies/approaches to make your teaching effective?

**Remember to negotiate with the teacher a suitable time to carry out set tasks. You may need to be flexible and do them on different days from those advised above. The rest of the time you will be supporting the teacher in their work*.***

## **Supporting learners with SEND / differentiation**

This section focuses on **aspects of SEND, responding to pupil need and within that the concept of differentiation** and how this can affect learning and behaviour.

Focused observation **–** Decide on two focused lessons that you will observe on day 1. Focus on a couple of different children and during those lessons undertake several 10 minute observations of them over a day and write everything down they notice, everything the child does.

Access/Reflection **–** Consider, how is differentiation planned for? How did the plan transfer to the lesson? Do the activities planned for take into account different learning styles? If so, how is this recorded? Did the children display specific, identifiable learning styles? Is there a difference between the core and foundation lesson? Discuss this with a student from another class. Ask the question: how do good planning and effective differentiation affect learning and behaviour? Observe how the teacher responds to children’s needs. How is their approach linked to what we understand by inclusive pedagogy?

Application **–** using the teacher’s plan, deliver a learning experience to a group of children on day 2 (it can be any part of the lesson). Get one of your peers / colleague to observe you (if possible).

Discussion **–** speak to your observer about the learning that took place. After school, add your own thoughts to this. Did your observer spot things that you did not? How easy was it to follow someone else’s plan? How detailed was it? Was the work differentiated to the right level for the children? Did this enhance their learning? Did it affect their behaviour? Has today’s experience altered/strengthened your views?

Try and have a conversation with the SENCO this week.

1. **Supporting Learners with English as an Additional language**

Revisit inclusive practice. Help them consider any EAL learners in the class and help them to identify how this is catered for.

Focus specifically on an EAL learner in the class (if appropriate) – what is their first language and how is it different to English – e.g. sentence structure? Observe how they learn best, what their challenges are in terms of accessing the curriculum and recording work. Where are the difficulties? English? Written grammar?

Does the class teacher receive any training / support?

## **Developing Greater Depth Learners**

Consider how your class teacher extends the more-able children in the class. Do they use Bloom’s taxonomy of questions? Are there learning challenges? Different work that extends thinking? How is this planned for and organised?

Are there any specific resources the class teacher uses?

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## **Working with Parents and Carers**

Speak to your class teacher and any Teaching Assistants how they work with parents and carers. What opportunities are there and what are some of the challenges.

Be out on the playground prior to school and to work with the class teacher after school and see how they work with parents generally. (This is not just limited to this week)

Read the school’s policy on working with parents and carers, what some of the issues are and some of the key areas where this happens – explore communication with parents and try and attend any meetings with parents where possible.

## **Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning**

Look at how the children are supported to explore these crucial areas of learning

Are you seeing approaches such as ‘growth mindset’ in action or ‘mindfulness’?

How are teachers looking after their own and their class’s wellbeing?

Is this discussed? Is it developed?