SMLCOLLEGE

Handbook for parents

*Preparing young people for the
tests of life, not a life of tests.*

Quick Guide

Introduction

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the e-book about SML that is obtained via the website and the document that all parents sign up to, namely on 'Principles, Rules and Procedures'. It gives some more background on our approach as well as some practical details for parents. Any queries about it can be addressed to the Chair of Governors, Dr Ian Cunningham.

Please note that each of our students is in a learning group attached to which is a Learning Group Adviser who is the first point of contact for that individual. Our students are usually allocated a learning group during the first week of each term.

Status of students enrolled at SML College

Our students are considered home educated by your local authority, even though the law does not include reference to home education. Children are by law required to be in school or educated 'otherwise'. The law does not say that school is preferable; both options are given equal status. So technically we are 'otherwise' than a school and are recognised as such.

The local authorities understand that SML College does not offer alternative education but offers an alternative to the education system that assists parents with the education of their child. Our focus is on learning in its broadest sense and not education as understood in the instructional mode that occurs in schools.

SML College is recognised by Ofsted and the Department for Education as not being a school. There is more information on this on our website (as there is about some of the other items in this handbook).

What is Self Managed Learning?

A proven alternative to school

There's a lot we know about how children and young people learn, for instance they are all different.

Yet school assumes that children and young people will learn the same things, in the same way, at the same time, through a fixed curriculum.

The essence of the Self Managed Learning approach is that we provide a structure within which young people can plan, organise and carry out learning activities. We treat each young person as an individual, so we don't have classrooms or an imposed curriculum. Each student is able to work out for themselves what and how they want to learn.

Since the 1970s we have engaged in extensive research and study on how best to provide personalised learning and believe the Self Managed Learning approach is the optimum solution.

Freedom and flexibility

Self Managed Learning offers students a free choice of learning modes. Students in our college are encouraged to learn in any ways that they want. Some prefer to

use the computer, whilst others may use traditional textbooks or they may want some time with a Learning Adviser to get one to one support. Often they work together on projects. A free choice of learning modes means they can be at their most efficient.

In our research we have identified at least 57 different modes and contexts for learning for children. Only one of these is in the classroom and over the last 22 years of our College's existence no student has ever asked us to create a classroom environment.

How can Self Managed Learning help my child?

There is a strange assumption that what is taught equals what is learned. If teaching worked perfectly then presumably every child would pass in every exam that they took. Classroom teaching seems often to be aimed at a mythical average child. This average child does not exist. Every child is different and there is no such thing as an average child.

We know for instance that there are huge differences in the way people prefer to learn. The classroom seems to assume a particular way of transmitting knowledge and skills through particular media that are aimed at the mythical average child. In our research on learning with young people we found that there are at least 57 ways in which young people can learn. At SML College students get that choice.

We take an individual differentiated approach as some of our students love to learn using a computer whereas others prefer to read books and some require more help from adults whereas other students require less support.

Why should we be concerned about the way in which a person wants to learn so long as they learn what they choose in a manner that is conducive and personal to them?

We would argue that whether parents or schools like to recognise it, or not, self managed learning is already happening. Young people choose what they learn and how often they learn. Some decide that they like a particular subject and do more work in that area; others just don't see the point of a particular subject and decide not to take it seriously. No matter how skilled the teacher in a typical classroom is, they can't get inside people's brains and control the learning.

Our approach

What we have done is to create a new kind of structure to replace school structures that were designed for the world of the 19th century. A 21st century educational model has to respond to a complex and challenging world where a static job-for-life mode is long gone and where continuous Self Managed Learning is a necessity.

We support children in the breadth of their learning. Children and young people need to learn to take charge of their own lives, as this improves their mental health, and to take their learning wherever it leads them.

The five questions approach (see page 13) goes alongside other structures that we use to help students have the freedom to learn whatever they need.

> *Whatever they want to do a way is found for them.*
>
> *So they start thinking that most things are actually possible.*
>
> PARENT

What are employers' views?

Every credible survey of the views of employers over the last 20 years comes to similar conclusions. Generally employers say that schools are failing the world of work because they are neglecting important aspects of learning such as creativity, ability to get on with other people, ability to be self disciplined and self managing, etc.

This evidence is generally ignored by schools despite the rhetoric of wanting young people to learn to be able to be more employable. The continuing pressure to pass exams and assume that is going to get you into university and therefore have a good career is a monstrous lie. It is continuing to create misery for many young people.

In Sussex we come across many unemployed graduates with first class honours degrees. Meanwhile Wired Sussex has conducted in depth research in conjunction with local universities showing that:

a) The fused creative and digital sector has the highest growth in local employment

b) Many companies in this sector cannot expand because they can't find suitable employees. Indeed in their research one company owner said that he had 40 staff and if he could find 40 more he could double his business. He could not find one.

For more detailed case studies, and articles by Dr Ian Cunningham, please see our website or contact Ian at ian@smlcollege.org.uk

What does empowerment mean at SML College?

At SML College, our approach is to go way beyond just a voice for students. The students are able to decide for themselves what and how to learn within the context of a Learning Community.

Each individual is empowered to negotiate with their learning group what and how they learn. By and large there are no limits to this as students are realistic and want to do the best for themselves. The only possible limits would be resources and the law of the land. In practice neither factor tends to be relevant.

The Learning Community is important as we become ourselves through relationships. We are social beings. Self Managed Learning is not totally individualistic and self-centred. We need social arrangements that provide the space for students to work together in community.

Part of the College approach is to provide for representation on the Governing Body from Learning Advisers, parents, the wider community and students. The student Governor has the same rights as all other members of the Governors.

The Governing Body is the place for decisions which affect all stakeholders (Trustees, parents, students, Learning Advisers and the local community) whereas the College community meeting deals with general issues that only affect students and Learning Advisers.

The learning group is the place for each individual to manifest their right to negotiate their learning needs.

Why doesn't SML College have a fixed curriculum?

Our approach to the curriculum is to try to understand the kind of life an individual wants to live and what might be appropriate within that.

If university is a chosen pathway then they will have to deal with the academic requirements.

However, as learning is a lifelong journey these qualifications can be acquired much later on; as desires change over time so can what we learn, need or desire.

An example of this is a former student who only gained one GCSE (in English) but was able to start on a vocational course in the local further education college. There he had to take Maths GCSE, which he gained at the second attempt. At the end of his College courses he took an access course and this has led him to take a Psychology degree which he passed in 2018. All this with two GCSEs and no A Levels.

What is the role of adults within the Learning Community?

Our job as adults is to assist young people to learn in ways that are appropriate to them and meet their needs. In order to do this we have a team of adults who are paid and alongside them we have volunteers.

The best term to use for our role is 'Learning Adviser'. We are here to support students with their learning – and this applies to all in the team.

We accept that parents may prefer to use terms such as 'tutor' and we ourselves often have to accept that term because 'Learning Adviser' isn't in common parlance. The problem with 'tutor' as a term is that it can imply that each adult is working purely as a subject specialist to teach students within their subject area. That's not how SML works.

Our research shows that there are at least 57 different ways for a student to learn. This can include hands-on workshops, work experience and much more. Our Learning Advisers need to be aware of learning options for students and be able to support them in their choices.

Case Study: "I want to study for a GCSE in Law"

For example, in 2018 a student chose for herself to do a GCSE in law. We have no law specialist in the College and have no intention of recruiting such a person. On discovering this student's serious commitment to learn about the law (she was reading rigorously) we offered to introduce her to someone who had taken a law degree so that she could get more of an idea of the field. She agreed that was a good idea so it happened. If she had thought it a poor idea it wouldn't have happened.

We also offered her the chance to have a trip to the local magistrates' court to see the law in action. If she had felt this was not what she wanted we would not have pursued it. In reality she agreed and we organised a trip where other students could join in. (Incidentally the student took her GCSE a year early and passed.)

Our role in offering different learning modes to supplement her book learning is crucially what we are about. We can offer support to the student but they are doing the learning and choosing for themselves what helps them. If they make poor choices they can learn from that also. There are no mistakes, only feedback – that is, students learn what works and what doesn't for themselves.

What are Learning Groups?

In order to work through their plans for learning, students are placed into learning groups. These consist of a maximum of six students and one adult known as a Learning Group Adviser, who supports the group. The groups are created on an age basis and students are supported to complete a Learning Agreement and answer five fundamental questions (see p13).

Students are free to raise whatever they like within the group in order to help them with their learning (provided they are respectful of others). The group is the basis on which students think through their weekly schedule of activities.

During the first week students share their conclusions from the five questions with the others in a learning group and with the Learning Group Adviser, who is there to assist the students. Each week students are assisted to write their own work schedules for the next week.

At the meeting the following week students review how their learning has progressed and write new schedules for the succeeding week. This process then rolls along each week with collective decisions made each morning in a community meeting of staff and students.

> *I see it as her getting lots and lots of help. It has blown me away actually with her being allowed to be herself; with what she has chosen to do and how interested she is in things.*
>
> PARENT

College arrangements and the role of parents or carers

Clearly parents play a crucial role in the education of their children. We are keen to maintain good relationships with parents throughout the time their children are with us. At the end of each term we have a three-way meeting with the parent or parents, the student and the relevant learning group adviser. It is a requirement of student membership of the Learning Community that a parent/carer attends this termly meeting.

The role of the Learning Group Adviser is to take an overview of the learning activities of students in that group. Because we don't do continuous testing but rather help students through productive feedback there are not generally things like test results or grades for parents to look at. As far as we are concerned there is total transparency in what we do and students are encouraged to talk to their parents about what they're doing. (However they are discouraged from gossiping inappropriately about other students as this can cause difficulties within the Learning Community.) Initially students may go through a period of adjustment and it may not look as though they are learning much, but in reality this is some of the most significant learning where they have to come to terms with the need to be self managing.

In the three-way meeting each term there is the opportunity both to review what has gone on and also consider future plans. Clearly for new students in the first term there will not be a meeting with the Learning Group Adviser until the end of term. So parents will need to trust the professionalism of our team in helping the student to adjust and to start their learning process.

If issues come up within the term then the normal channel of communication is from the Learning Group Adviser to parents and vice-versa. We hope that parents recognise that no news from us is good news. However parents can raise queries with us at any time.

We also have regular parent meetings at which parents can discuss and explore general issues: This is chaired by a Parent Governor on the governing body.

In the past we have sometimes provided something of a workshop environment for parents to understand more about how Self Managed Learning works. We are open to suggestions about the content of these general parent meetings and the two Parent Governors are the points of contact.

It's not appropriate for parents to raise matters to do with an individual student at parent meetings but rather to keep the discussion at a general level. This avoids any problems of breach of confidence or invidious comparisons between students. We take safeguarding very seriously and we will not discuss personal matters outside the termly three-way meeting.

Meetings and communication

The following list below is not exhaustive but may be of help, especially for new parents.

Parents' meeting

We have a termly parents' meeting held on a weekday evening. We request that all parents attend if they can, but if you can't to send apologies. Any parent can ask for any item to be on the agenda of this meeting.

Three-way meeting

The termly three-way meeting between student, parents and Learning Group Adviser allows for parents to not only discuss matters related to their student but any wider issues they might have.

Contacting the Learning Group Adviser

Parents can be in touch with their child's Learning Group Adviser at any time via e-mail or phone.

Annual social event

There is an annual social event for students, parents and Learning Advisers at the end of the summer term.

Open Days

Parents are encouraged to come to Open Days so that they can talk with others present and give their view on the College to potential students' parents.

SML information

A plethora of material about SML, such as published articles and book chapters, along with the policy documentation is available on request from the Co-ordinator.

Newsletter and social media

The College runs online blogs and newsletters are released to the community on a termly basis. Input from parents is welcomed. We also have a Facebook page and a Twitter feed.

Parent SML Programme

In 2019 we re-launched our Parent SML Programme for those who want to experience the SML process for themselves. If you are interested in finding out more about this group or would like to consider being a part to the next programme do let the Chair of Governors know on ian@smlcollege.org.uk or call 07850 313814

Why doesn't SML College have timetables?

We don't have imposed timetables. Our aim is to help students to learn to plan for themselves. They may initially struggle to do this as it is likely to be a new process for them. However we are not looking for perfection in this; rather we want to help each person to become fully self managing.

What is a Learning Community?

In addition to belonging to a Learning Group each student is also part of a Learning Community.

The Learning Community is the whole group of students and the adults who are there to assist them. Typically between four and five adults are available for each session.

In the first week we give significant emphasis to developing the community as a supportive place where people know each other and feel able to pursue their own interests within a community context. So some activities will be oriented in this direction rather than around each individuals needs.

What is each morning like?

The College currently operates from 09.15am to 12.50pm each weekday, with doors generally open from 08.45am. Ideally we like students in by 09:00am to be ready to start the day.

We start the morning with a community meeting which is chaired in rotation; it could be a nine-year-old chairing the meeting or one of the adults. The role of the community meeting is to work out collective needs such as agreeing rules for working, through to organising trips or agreeing on bringing in visitors. Anything can be raised by students or adults that is relevant to the running of the whole community. All students are informed of any workshops that are running that day, which have been informed by their Learning Agreements.

What is each afternoon like?

In the afternoon (from 1:30pm to 4:30pm) we have another session for a separate community of students.

Like the morning, we start with a community meeting, which has the same format. The afternoon sessions have the same access to any resources and also have the same Learning Advisers, who rotate to be available for both morning and afternoon sessions.

What happens in the first week?

We start off with a whole week where we find out about the person, their interests, what they like and don't like and any directions they want to take in their life. After that we can start to work with them to help them to think through the kind of programme of learning that they want to undertake.

How do students plan their learning?

This is achieved through finding out about the students by asking them to answer five questions about themselves. These are:

1. **Where have you been? What have your experiences of education and of life been like? What have been the ups and downs of this experience?**

Given that any person is today 100% formed by the past – either it's in the genes or they learned it – the answer to this question is crucial. Some students have flowed through their life so far with a degree of ease whereas many have dips in their life that have affected them. It's important to know these.

2. **Where are you now? What kind of person are you? What are your interests? What do you like doing – and what don't you like doing? What's important to you? What are you good at – and what not so good at?**

For students who come from school they often dwell on the things for which they have been criticised in school and, in the process, undervalue their positive features. Our role as Learning Advisers is to help them to develop a rounded and realistic sense of who they are now before moving on.

3. **Where do you want to get to? What kind of life do you want to lead? What kind of person do you want to be in the future? Do you have ideas already about a career (generally more relevant for older students)?**

Most students have never been asked this kind of question before. Older students may have had family discussions about careers but even these may not be contextualised in terms of life style. Hence answers to this question may be quite tentative initially – and that's fine as we want to stimulate thinking not tie down precise details at this stage.

4. **How will I get there? What do I need to learn to become the person I want to be in the future? How will I learn what I need to learn?**

Initially students find this difficult to answer – or they slip into known ideas. At this stage we may be challenging them to think more widely and also convince them that they really can aspire to learn anything they want to and in any way that is convenient. Of our 57 known ways of learning the one that is generally ignored is the classroom – students never ever ask us to provide a classroom within which to learn.

5. **How will I know that I have arrived at where I want to be? How will I measure the outcomes of my learning?**

This is a tough question to answer and often students have to return to this later. However it is important that they learn to self assess. Much of our work is with adults (where we use the same five questions) and it's often apparent that they have always relied on the judgements of others. Hence many make the wrong choices about careers. Some apply for jobs for which they have no chance of getting (because they have never had to assess their own abilities) or they apply for jobs that won't stretch them or give them what they want out of life.

One of the things we are doing with this process is to encourage students to take a strategic view of their learning and to manage their learning in such a way that they will be able to lead a good life in the future. As each person is different what a good life means to one person is not the same as for another person. Some may be concerned about fulfilling their potential; others may focus on being happy in life. And so on.

In doing this work students are supported all along the way by Learning Advisers and by other students.

What is the role of exams?

We are only interested in testing and assessment when young people choose it. Our students may take public exams if they choose and they do so in the context of their interests in pursuing a particular career they themselves have freely chosen, with our assistance as adults.

The plant story (below) is a comparison with schooling and testing. Nurturing the child works; imposed testing is demeaning and undermining for many children. With apologies to vegetarians, there is the old saying that you don't fatten a pig by weighing it continually.

We also want to say that we value all our students equally no matter how well they do in examinations. We have had students leave with eight grades 8/9 GCSEs and others with none. We are interested in what's appropriate for the individual in terms of, for instance, their career objectives.

One of the issues about appropriateness is the timing of public exams for those young people who have a summer birth.

The Government's own figures show that at least 10,000 young people every year get a lower grade at GCSE just because they're born in the summer. Hence it may be sensible for an individual to delay taking GCSEs. On the other hand we have students who sometimes want to take some GCSEs early to avoid having a large number of exams at the same time. That's fine as well.

Story of two plants

There is a story of two boys in neighbouring houses who were given a young shrub each to look after in their respective gardens. In one garden the boy's shrub was thriving and looking really healthy. In the next garden the other boy's shrub looked decidedly sickly. The parents of each of the boys could not understand the difference. They decided to observe what they were doing.

The first boy was watering and feeding his shrub every so often but otherwise left it alone. The other boy was observed to do nothing in the day but each night he crept out and pulled up the shrub to examine its roots. He then replanted it.

How do students sit GCSE and other exams?

We have a long history of using Arts Awards for students creative work. The awards that we use are Bronze level (equivalent to a Level 1 qualification) and Silver level (equivalent to a Level 2 qualification eg GCSE). These qualifications are assessed via a portfolio which students create with the support of our Learning Advisers. These qualifications have become more recognised and valued over time and we find that local colleges are now accepting these awards for entry into courses. Because there is no fixed curriculum (only a structure within which the student should work) it fits extremely well with our Self Managed Learning approach. Also we do the assessment so it avoids the situation with public exams where we are not involved in assessment.

Another example of the value of these qualifications is that they can cut across subject boundaries. The division of a curriculum into a series of subjects is extremely artificial; the choice of subjects is wholly subjective. The world doesn't exist as a series of subjects and it's important that young people learn to deal with the world in which they are growing up in. Our research with adults in significant leadership or professional roles shows that most of the valued learning has had little or nothing to do with the subject based curriculum. Typically at most only 10 to 20% what makes a person successful has come from education or training. One reason for this is the artificiality of dividing the world into subjects.

Public exams

We would like to open our own exam centre in the near future so that students can take GCSE's on our premises. However, if there are any delays to this, students wanting to take public exams will need to sit them in an approved centre. Parents will need to make these arrangements themselves and we can provide advice on suitable local centres such as schools and colleges. There is generally a fee to be paid for entry to such exams. In some subjects there is a requirement for controlled assessment in schools so it may be difficult for students to take such qualifications.

Attendance and rules

What are the arrangements for attendance?

The College is not a school and is not bound by school rules or Government rules in relation to schools. For instance we do not fine parents who take children out of the College in term time for travel. Indeed we welcome travel that provides learning opportunities for students.

However we are not separate from the educational world. For instance local Councils, Further Education (FE) and Sixth Form Colleges ask about attendance and punctuality and we always provide honest answers. In order to do that we keep a student register. Students have to be in the morning meeting (not just on the premises) by 09.15am to be marked present. For the afternoons, students need to have arrived by 1:30pm to be marked present. Any lateness is recorded accordingly.

Councils check if someone off the school roll is with us. In future they may want more information about students' education especially as home education comes under increased scrutiny.

Currently we assert that children are always with us five days per week from 09.15am to 12.50pm for the morning sessions and from 1:15pm to 4:30pm for the afternoon sessions. We are

not a drop-in centre but require attendance during this time, unless there is a good reason for a student not being present.

The need for a supportive and cohesive Learning Community is also part of Self Managed Learning values and all parents sign up to supporting the value of the community – and that any student not working in that way could be asked to leave.

If students are not present or are late they are not able to be fully functioning members of the community.

Clearly illness and emergencies count as reasons not to attend and students in this category are marked on the register accordingly.

Emergencies may also mean someone coming in late and this is recognised in our system. However we don't always get information from parents on such matters and that does hinder us in being fair to students. So we would urge parents to make certain that we always get full information on illness and emergencies. Notification needs to be given by 09.00 on the day.

How are rules created?

We work together to create rules that help the community flourish. We provide freedom for young people to be themselves in a supportive environment. However in order for individuals to be respected and supported it needs others in the community to manifest this respect. Students are free to be who they want to be but not free to hinder the freedom of others. Rather than preach citizenship to students we help them to understand, in a practical way, what it means.

Safety for other students

We aim to make the building as safe as possible. We want to have an open and tolerant environment where we implement a strict equalities policy with respect for individuals of any race, faith, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, family background, social class or disability.

What is the status of SML College?

The College is part of the educational charity the Centre for Self Managed Learning. The charity is also a company limited by guarantee. It has five Trustees who have overall responsibility for the whole charity and who set policies for all its activities.

The charity has a long history of the successful implementation of Self Managed Learning in a wide range of organisations around the world.

The College is a particular project within the charity. It has a Governing Body made up of representatives from Learning Advisers, students and parents.

There are also lay Governors who represent both the local community and the wider educational world. The Governors make decisions on the operation of the college and parents can make known views to the Governors via the parent representative.

How is SML College financed?

It is funded through various routes. One is the allocation of profits from the company Strategic Development International Ltd. to the charity.

Another route is through fundraising. However this leaves a shortfall which unfortunately means we have to raise funds from parents. The only exception to this is where schools or local councils are prepared to fund the student or where the parent is able to raise funds through one of the trusts that exist to support families in need.

We are able to keep costs down due to the fact that all Governors carry out their work voluntarily without pay as do the Trustees of the charity. Despite all this we do have to charge fees. However we have a Hardship Fund which is able to provide bursaries for parents who are unable to pay the fees.

We also welcome donations of equipment and money to assist us.

We take a maximum of a £750 deposit, dependent on session, from each parent so that any damages done by a student, or unauthorised removal of property, can be deducted from this. Most students do respect the building and equipment so the deposit can be returned in full in those cases, unless there are other debts. It is crucial that we keep costs to a minimum to avoid passing on costs to parents in increased fees.

The roles of Governors on the Governing Body

1. The Governing Body has an essential role in supporting the development of the College within the Centre for Self Managed Learning.

2. It is important to locate the Governing Body of the College within the overall charity. The Trustees of the charity are the accountable body for the overall running of the charity and this body agrees all policy matters and all financial matters. The Governing Body might have an input to such decisions, but the decision-making body is the Board of Trustees. The Trustees are also guardians of the principles and philosophy of Self Managed Learning and Governors must at all times operate within these principles.

3. All Governors are expected to implement the agreed policies of the charity and to further the use of Self Managed Learning.

4. There are two types of Governors on the Governing Body: Lay Governors and Stakeholder Group Governors.

5. Lay Governors are appointed by the Trustees and this includes the Chair of Governors and any deputy, if such a post is needed. Lay governors are selected so that there is a majority of Lay Governors on the Governing Body. They are also selected to provide a balance of different views – for example from the local community or from business.

6. It is important that the voices of students, Learning Advisers and parents are heard on the Governing Body, hence having the Stakeholder Governors. They are different to Lay Governors in being elected from, and by the members of, each group.

7. It isn't expected that these Stakeholder Governors provide direct representation of and/or for each of the three groups. They are 'representative group members' rather than 'representatives of' the group as a whole or individual member within the group. It can't be possible for one person to know everything about all those in each stakeholder group. It is more that these voices can provide an input into discussions about implementing the strategic direction of the college as set by the Trustees.

8. Stakeholder Governors hold the position for a maximum of one year. It is important that different parents, students and Learning Advisers get the chance to be on the Governing Body, so the rotation of Governors is essential.

9. The Self Managed Learning approach is based on direct involvement between each individual and the College (as represented by the Chair of Governors); so, for instance, where individual students, parents or Learning Advisers have a need to have personal issues addressed these come directly into the College via the procedures and policies in place and not via any Governor. In that sense these three roles do not include representing other persons but rather contributing to general discussion in the Governors.

10. One feature of the College is that students and Learning Advisers work together in the Learning Community and have meetings every day. Ongoing operational matters are dealt with in this environment and in any subgroups such as the Joint Resources Committee. This makes the Parent Governor role different as parents are not involved in the day-to-day operation of the College. The termly parents meeting is valuable in providing a forum for all parents and providing information to parents.

Admissions

After an Open Day parents may wish to check on gaining admission to the College. They can fill out a registration form and apply for their young person to attend a trial week. This allows the applicant (potential student) to see if the College is for them.

We admit a wide range of young people and we do not select on academic grounds. However we are very much an educational setting and not a therapy provision. Where a young person has needs that we cannot meet we will offer help to parents as to alternatives. We have a great deal of flexibility in how we work and we do not wish to discriminate against any young person.

Our main criteria for entry are a) does the young person want to attend ie they are not being pressured to attend, and b) will they benefit from being with us? We operate as a learning community and cannot take on any young person who is not able to be part of the learning community. No student is provided with preferential treatment - we treat all our students as equally valuable persons. And we do want every person in the community to gain benefit from being in a caring community.

An essence of the SML approach is that we all have to respond to what are the available resources. We have a talented team of staff and we have practical learning resources in the building and the grounds around it but it is clearly not infinite in its provsion.
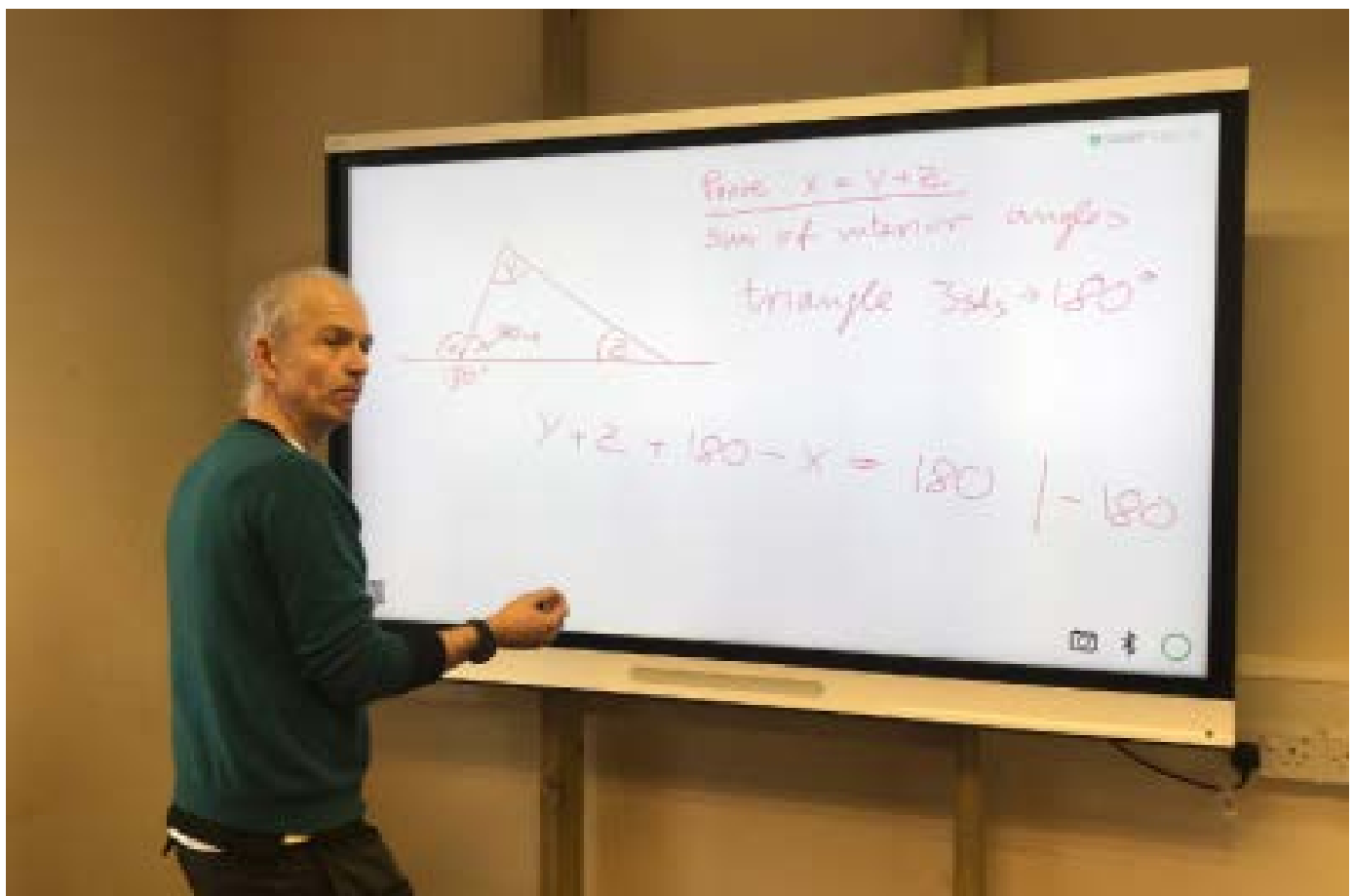
Policies for SML College

Policies are agreed by the Trustees of the charity as they have the legal responsibility for them.

The following are current policies and copies can be obtained from the Chair of Governors (ian@smlcollege.org.uk)

- Admissions
- Anti-bullying

- Complaints
- Data Protection
- Digital technologies – acceptable use – students and adults
- Equality
- E-safety
- Health and Safety
- Off-site activities and visits
- Safeguarding

The following apply only to employees, fee paid individuals and volunteers:

- Code of conduct
- Conflict of interest
- Anti-bribery and corruption
- Disciplinary
- Grievance

Contact information

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