

Oakfield House School

Teaching and Learning Policy



Policy Document (2014-2015)

Updated:	December 2014
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Signed by:	

Introduction

This policy supports the school's statement of purpose to provide high quality education for young people with special educational needs.

Aims

This policy is underpinned by the aim to address the special needs of our learners, whose nature is highly complex. Our learners experience learning difficulties, social and/or emotional disorders, difficult and often chaotic home arrangements and social contexts and often negative previous experiences in education.

Because of this, and in line with our Curriculum Policy, our commitment to our learners is to provide them with supported opportunities to become:

- Successful learners
- Confident individuals
- Responsible Global citizens

Pupils progress is measured from an initial starting point and against individual standards as well as in line with national averages. Maintaining high expectations of our learners by providing a learning environment that encourages and supports students in achieving their potential is a priority.

All of our students have access to the National Curriculum with adequate support at a level appropriate to their needs.

Effective Learning and Teaching

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and recognise the need to develop strategies that allow our students to access learning in ways that support and challenge them. We aim to take into account the varied needs of our students when organising our curriculum and teaching.

We also acknowledge that developing strong relationships with students in our school is beneficial and contributes to their academic and personal development.

Learning

Sound teaching practice is evidenced in students engaging with/in learning tasks. When students are engaged, they can experience success and make progress, leading to developing their self-esteem and confidence.

Engaged students:

- Enjoy and are enthusiastic about learning
- Persevere with and complete tasks
- Ask questions
- Offer opinions and participate in discussions

When students are engaged, their behaviour is:

- Settled and safe
- Well-mannered and respectful/considerate
- Tolerant
- Cooperative

Students demonstrate progress in learning when they show growth in what they know, can do and understand. This is evidenced through:

- Participation in lessons and discussions with staff and peers
- Offering comments/opinions
- Asking questions
- Recalling prior learning to complete tasks
- Observations by staff and peers
- Work samples and progress files
- Self-assessment
- Reports

Teaching

A teacher's approach makes a major impact upon pupil learning, attainment and progress, and the way students respond to school. There are a number of key elements which indicate good practice and ensure high quality teaching:

Planning and organisation

Teachers' planning is organised into schemes or units of work. An annual curriculum overview and sequence for each subject is planned and discussed by all staff. This is updated by subject leaders on a regular basis. Opportunities for cross-curricular links are identified for learning to occur in context across subject areas where possible.

Units of work highlight levelled objectives, ordered lessons, resources, considerations for differentiation and adjustments, and opportunities for assessment.

Short term lesson plans will state clear learning objectives, list engaging, challenging and differentiated learning activities that provide all students with opportunities for success; identify

use of resources including ICT and support staff and also highlight use of a plenary to consolidate and clarify learning. A range of pedagogical approaches should be employed to ensure lesson variation, and that learning is occurring with breadth and depth. Additional pupil information is also provided on each plan to ensure lessons are set at the right level and meet individual learning needs. Teachers also need to be flexible and evaluate their own practice to make necessary adjustments to planning in response to changing student needs. An individual pen portrait of each child is also provided on the back of the plan setting out prior learning, recent progress, trigger behaviours and effective teaching strategies for that child.

Assessment and Marking

Assessment (both formative and summative) for each student is ongoing and used to inform planning, provide feedback to students, staff and parents. It identifies students' individual needs, including specific support, further diagnostic assessment and intervention. (Please refer to **Assessment and Recording Policy** for more detailed information)

Classroom Environment

Classrooms should be safe, stimulating places, where student work is valued, marked and displayed. Classroom expectations should be displayed, as well as visual supports for daily timetables and other school routines. Resources need to be effectively managed.

Management of Pupils

Building positive relationships with pupils is key. Students should have a clear understanding of school expectations through explicit teaching and clear, consistent communication. A consistent approach to expectations and consequences throughout the school day are necessary for student development. Points for behaviour and achievement are awarded at the end of each lesson as part of the School Points and Reward system. 'Catch Up' is also offered at the end of each education day to support pupils who have not completed work. Knowledge of details of the students' Individual Education Plan (IEP) is essential for specific variations in dealing with individual children. Individual risk assessments and Positive Handling Plans (PHP) also provide important information with regard to safe and effective management of students.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring their teaching and their pupils' learning is of the highest possible standard. This should be done with reference to the information presented above. It is important that teachers actively use their assessment of pupils to inform planning and ensure that work is well matched to each pupil's needs. Work produced should be regularly reviewed to

ensure that pupils are making appropriate and sufficient progress. Opportunities for moderation are provided in teachers' meetings on a regular basis.

The overall responsibility for the monitoring of teaching and learning rests with the Head of School who will make regular visits to classrooms to observe lessons and review pupils' work. Staff will be provided with feedback from these visits.

The role of the Teaching Assistant

The primary role of the Teaching Assistant is to enable access to the curriculum and to facilitate independent learning, and to promote inclusion. This may be with pupils who have specific learning difficulties, pupils with communication problems or pupils experiencing behavioural difficulties. It is critical that all TA's are aware of each learner's individual needs, has access to all relevant information and also plays an active role in planning lessons and setting individual targets. Teachers are aware that TA's also play a key role in day to day assessment of progress – regular, ongoing communication with teaching staff is essential. The role of the Teaching Assistant is crucial if pupils are to achieve greater autonomy, higher academic standards, greater social awareness and feel part of the whole school community.

It is of equal importance that Teaching Assistants should feel valued and part of a team approach, to meeting the needs of the pupil/s in their care. They are, therefore, included in planning meetings and their training needs are discussed and identified in regular performance management meetings and supervision meetings.