Amberleigh Care

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Teaching and Learning Policy

The Oaks

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The Oaks, Amberleigh Therapeutic School

Teaching and Learning Policy

Contents

1. Rationale
2. Aims
3. What is effective teaching and learning?
4. Principles of teaching and learning
5. School community
6. Quality teaching and learning
7. Classroom management
8. Whole school strategies for teaching and learning
9. Strategies for ensuring progression and continuity
10. Strategies for recording and reporting
11. Strategies for the use of resources
12. Health and safety
13. Quality assurance

Appendix A – Principles of Instruction (Rosenshine, 2010)

Appendix B – Assessment Procedures

Appendix C – Quality Calendar

Rationale

Teaching is the process that all staff undertake to help the students develop skills, understanding, knowledge and strategies to enable them to learn new information, problem solve and understand the world around them. This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at The Oaks, Amberleigh School. It lays the foundation for our approach to teaching the curriculum and should be read in conjunction with our curriculum policy.

This policy reflects current practice, which we promote within the school, and identifies areas of work that are being developed.

Aims

This document aims to:

• Promote the development of effective strategies for teaching and learning

• Ensure that we meet the needs of students more effectively by establishing a consistent approach to teaching and learning

• Provide support and guidance to staff on effective teaching and learning strategies

•Provide information to care staff, parents and social workers on our approach to teaching and learning and explain how they can support and contribute to its development

• Ensure resources support effective teaching and learning

• Provide a focus for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning

• Provide a structured and ordered daily schedule within an environment that supports learning and understanding.

What is Effective Teaching and Learning?

Effective teaching and learning is the process we adopt by which we deliver a modified curriculum, which is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated to meet the needs of the students whilst having regard of the National Curriculum and the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs.

In our endeavour to meet these wide ranging educational and social needs, we have developed an appropriate curriculum with an integrated approach which encompasses the National Curriculum, meaningful qualifications and preparation to adulthood.

Our whole school curriculum model provides a natural progression with programmes designed for, and implemented at, an appropriate level. The curriculum prepares the students and young people for transition to adult life e.g. college, work and social inclusion through programmes which promote independence, including use of the local community.

Principles of Teaching and Learning

The main responsibility of student's education, rests with the whole therapeutic community, inclusive of care, school and therapy. All education staff are required to facilitate students access to the curriculum to ensure their effective learning, irrespective of their specific role. This approach is fundamental to our work with students. We welcome and actively encourage the involvement of significant others as well as participation in the community as part of this approach to team working.

At The Oaks, Amberleigh School we use principles and practices that are designed to create a structured and timetabled daily schedule within an environment that supports learning and understanding. This includes clear guidance to students on acceptable behaviour, supervision and positive attitudes in and around school. Our staff consider a wide range of teaching and support strategies including 1:1 work, team teaching, time out, alternative activities, intervention sessions and behaviour management systems. Staff utilise methods which are most productive (at the time) and in-keeping with the aims and ethos of the school.

Structured teaching, and an individual approach to the needs of each student helps break through the uncertainties and confusion of daily life. A secure and trusting environment has been created through the use of consistent behaviour strategies and therapeutic approaches. This helps the young people to be receptive and open to learning.

School Community

All members of the school community work towards the school's aims by:

• sharing responsibility for facilitating access to the curriculum and supporting student's learning so that they make progress

•valuing students as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs

•fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community

•providing a well-ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations and where self-discipline is actively encouraged

•offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures

•encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviour and work

•working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another

•working collaboratively within a shared philosophy and commonality of practice

• having a positive attitude to change and to the development of their own expertise

•having a positive attitude to the structure and organisation of the school

•take an active part in the performance management and the monitoring and evaluation programmes in order to further their professional development

Students work towards the school's aims by:

• attending regularly, being punctual and ready to learn

•conducting themselves in an orderly manner and showing respect for themselves and others

•taking pride in their work and a growing responsibility for their own learning

•working well with their peers and being tolerant of others

Quality Teaching and Learning

Our aim is to create an environment in which quality teaching and learning can take place so that all students have the opportunity to realise their potential. We believe that:

Quality learning occurs when student's:

•are encouraged to see themselves as being able to be successful

• experience success and are able to feel a sense of achievement

• feel happy and secure and have a feeling of self-worth

• feel accepted and have a sense of pride in belonging to their school/class

•feel a sense of ownership towards their work and increasingly take control of their own learning

•are supported by significant others and feel that their work/effort is valued

•are taught how to think, learn, listen carefully, concentrate and persevere

•are challenged and motivated and see work as having a purpose

•are actively involved in the learning process

•are given the opportunity to communicate their ideas

• are given opportunities to present their work to differing audiences

•are given the opportunity to work collaboratively

•can make informed choices in their learning

• are given opportunities to apply acquired skills and knowledge to new situations

Quality teaching occurs when staff:

•undertake regular training to maintain high standards of teaching and learning

•set a good example by being enthusiastic, committed, flexible and punctual

•create an atmosphere of trust and establish clear classroom routines/systems that encourage self-discipline

•establish a calm working atmosphere and have a firm, yet sympathetic approach

•create a stimulating, well organised and challenging environment in which to work

•take account of student's interests and experience

•have high but realistic expectations that are made clear to the students

•respond consistently and fairly to student's behaviour, accentuating the positive and giving praise where it is due

•ensure that work is rigorously planned, with clear learning outcomes that are understood by the students

• are aware of and sympathetic to, all the factors that affect student's learning (e.g. cultural background, age, special educational needs)

•are concerned with all aspects of a student's development not simply their academic achievement (e.g. social, emotional, moral, physical etc.) and are sympathetic to individual needs

• provide activities that ensure equal opportunities for all

• provide activities that are differentiated to match the abilities of the students and are quick to recognise specific learning needs of individual students

•take time and care to assess and record student's achievements in order to plan future work – either reinforcement or extension, match the pace of learning to the individual's ability

•plan work that ensures continuity and progression so that students have an awareness of what went before and what comes next

•use questioning techniques

• employ a variety and balance of teaching styles (exposition/instruction/direct teaching) and grouping strategies (pairs, groups, etc.) as appropriate to the needs of the students and the subject being taught

•ensure any homework given extends or complements the work done in class and makes effective use of other adults in the home

•have respect for students and value their comments and views

•encourage curiosity and a positive attitude to learning

•have a good knowledge of the subject matter

•give regular feedback to the students about their progress, acknowledging effort and highlighting 'next steps'

•encourage students to assess their own performance and to strive for improvement

•encourage students to question, make decisions, investigate and solve problems

•provide opportunities to consolidate and generalise their learning and

•have a sense of humour

Classroom Management

We believe a teaching environment that promotes learning will have many of the following features:

•a positive ethos which provides a positive classroom atmosphere

•overall organisation that encourages the student to become independent learners

•clearly established systems and routines

•rules governing behaviour that are consistently applied and which students think are fair

•efficient and flexible use of space which facilitates working as individuals, in small groups or as a whole class

• items which give students new experiences encouraging them to ask questions of why and how

•an orderly environment promoting tidiness and organisation

•a wide variety of appropriate and well managed resources including resources for information technology and appropriate software

•relevant tools applicable to the subject that enhances and develops learning

•attractive, stimulating, clearly labelled displays that involve the student, are relevant to the topic/work, changed regularly and are varied (interactive, celebratory, informative, process etc.)

•well lit, ventilated rooms where student work in comfortably warm conditions

Whole School Strategies for Teaching and Learning

Our curriculum is differentiated according to the age and stage of the students. Our planning sets out to ensure that students have access to a modified curriculum which takes account of their preferred learning styles and effective teaching and learning approaches. We aim to ensure that as far as possible all students achieve their potential and functional independence. All staff are required to provide students with opportunities to apply new skills / learning in functional settings. Discussion and collaborative working between students is encouraged wherever appropriate and these skills are modelled and supported by staff from other disciplines within Amberleigh e.g. care staff and therapists as well as external staff who provide additional support.

The structure of lessons is based on Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction:

1. Review (last lesson, homework, prior learning)
2. Share Learning Outcome.
3. Introduce Key Vocabulary.
4. Model Learning (do it for them)
5. Allow practise with feedback.
6. Complete
7. Feedback/Questioning.
8. Review

"Learning involves a lasting change in pupils' capabilities or understanding." (Department for Education 2020). If nothing is remembered, nothing has been learned. Therefore, we believe that reviewing previous learning at the start of every lesson and re-visiting learning across contexts is key to ensure attainment is secure.

See Appendix A – Principles of Instruction (Rosenshine, 2010)

Excellence is celebrated in displays and presentations (in the classroom, daily handovers or celebration events) where:

•each student is given an opportunity to have work of a high standard displayed at some time in the school year

• students are encouraged to believe that any exhibited work (performance or display) should represent their highest standards of personal achievement

•recognition is provided to students nominated by staff for great effort and achievement

Excellence is celebrated as a whole community in community meetings where:

• individuals are given positive feedback on their attitude, behaviour and achievements in school

•certificates are given for student of the week

•behaviour points result in rewards at the end of each academic term

Strategies for Ensuring Progression and Continuity

Each subject identifies with an individualised curriculum policy with a clearly identified intent, implementation and impact for that subject. Within these subject policies, there is a curriculum map which shows the overview of the learning for that subject based on outcomes, skills and topics across an academic year.

Curriculum Schemes of work for each subject, identify learning objectives related to the relevant subject learning at different levels. Each scheme of work is in four progressive pathways providing a broad and balanced curriculum that covers early learning, accreditation and vocational progression and achievements.

Medium term planning is a rigorous and highly organised process completed at the start of each term where a context for learning is identified and a weekly structured plan of objectives, differentiated outcomes, task-based activities, key vocabulary and concepts, cross curricular involvement of English, maths and ICT, and opportunities for assessment are planned.

The focus for ensuring progression and continuity is on building knowledge and acquiring skills, integrating new knowledge into larger concepts and application of this into different contexts. The curriculum will be coherently planned and sequenced, and it will prepare students for future success in education, employment or training.

Consideration will also be given on how we consistently encourage high levels of punctuality and attendance.

Careers' guidance is also a crucial aspect, which is overseen by our internal Careers Adviser, along with additional input from our independent careers' adviser, helping all students to make progress and to move onto the appropriate destinations in terms of education, employment or further training when they leave our school. The eight Gatsby Benchmarks of the Careers guidance framework are considered through our curriculum schemes of work and regular careers interviews and focussed sessions are integrated for the students. We also focus on relevant and meaningful work experience as part of this.

Termly PCP targets ensure focussed work for English, Maths, Behaviour & Social development (KS3/KS4) or Preparing for Adulthood (KS5), and SEN progress (if applicable). SLT monitor planning and teaching so that they can provide support and guidance as applicable and generally disseminate good practice to ensure these are incorporated into teaching & learning.

Intervention is weekly for English and Maths for all students based on diagnostic assessments, PCP targets or next steps of current learning and this is individualised for each Student. All students also have 15 minutes of daily 'reading for pleasure'.

Daily tutorial time is a part of the weekly timetable with a focus on mindfulness, SMSC and British Values activities and targeted therapeutic intervention to ensure progress is made academically, socially and emotionally – this progress is captured and monitored by Tutors.

Weekly staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Feedback to students about their own progress is achieved through discussion with the student and the marking of work. We have a very clear 'Feedback and Marking' Policy to ensure a consistent and thorough approach to marking.

Formative assessment is mostly carried out by staff in the course of their teaching but formal opportunities for assessment are identified, where appropriate.

The statutory annual review of any student's Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) is supported by detailed feedback from teaching staff. This feedback includes the Person Centred Plan (PCP) for each student, which sets out clear targets.

Detailed educational reports are provided for each student's LAC review – which occurs twice each year. These reports are circulated to the social worker, independent reviewing officer, parents (if appropriate) and other Amberleigh staff prior to the LAC review taking place. The education report is also discussed with the young person prior to the LAC review.

Progress is reported and discussed termly at each students PEP meeting (Effective Personal Education Plans). This meeting includes, education, care, therapy, the virtual school and parents (if appropriate) to review academic achievements and review progress towards targets. Pupil premium funding may be requested or offered during this process to support individual students with progression and continuity.

At the end of each academic year each young person receives a school report, written at a level appropriate for each young person. This includes: attendance, qualifications gained, tutor comments against the behaviour points system, overview of PCP targets, subject comments for achievements and next steps, picture collage and student and Head Teacher comments. The report details the progress made academically, socially and emotionally during the year.

Strategies for Recording and Reporting

• There are four main types of assessment carried out at point of entry at The Oaks: WRAT5, Solar, PASS and New Group Reading, Maths and Spelling Assessments. These are then administered either termly or annually to assess attainment and measure progress.

• Formative assessment takes the form of class work, observations, discussions, teacher marking, self/peer marking, skill checks, diagnostics, online games etc. It is daily assessment which teachers use to capture student's attainment in lessons against a planned learning objective. Evidence gained is recorded on solar and used to track progress and amend planning and teaching accordingly.

•Summative (formal) assessment takes the form of end of term tests, knowledge checks, coursework and more formal testing e.g. Functional skills, BTEC and GCSE past papers and exams. This is carried out as required, to inform planning, to set PCP and PEP targets, to measure progress and to achieve relevant qualifications.

•Reporting of progress for each student is communicated to parents, social workers and carers through various formal events such as integrated meetings, the statutory annual review process, LAC reviews, PCP reviews and PEP meetings. In addition, informal discussions take place daily between care staff, therapists and teaching staff.

See Appendix B – Assessment Procedures

Strategies for the Use of Resources

•All staff have access to school resources. Each subject has a curriculum budget to develop areas of work as set out in the school development plan.

•Classroom Resources are the responsibility of all teaching staff who must ensure that: there is a range of resources appropriate to the age, ability and curriculum taught, which are well organised, clearly labelled and, where appropriate, accessible to the students

•Students are taught to value resources, treat them with respect and understand the importance of proper storage

•Students are encouraged to act independently in selecting materials suitable for the task and for returning resources to their correct place

•Due regard is given to Health and Safety, e.g. storage and use of tools. A risk assessment is carried out for the use of specific activities in school

• Information Technology is a major resource that is used to support quality teaching and learning across the whole curriculum. All staff are responsible for facilitating access to ICT for students when required and helping them to develop and apply their ICT skills.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety issues are the responsibility of all who work in the school. However, the Head Teacher has overall responsibility for Health and Safety and all problems should be reported to them immediately.

All classrooms, specific resources and activities are risk assessed, as required.

Quality Assurance

Amberleigh Therapeutic School is committed to improving the quality of its provision as stated in the SDP/SEF through:

- Embedding, monitoring, measuring and maintaining effective policies and procedures
- Measuring and analysing performance against benchmark targets and ensuring student progress is tracked and monitored to inform PEP and PCP outcomes.
- Ensuring all teaching and school-based staff are aware of their joint responsibility in improving the quality of the education provision.

The quality process involves a cycle of activities and review of which the SDP/SEF, the student and all stakeholders are major parts including:

- Consultation with strategic stakeholders and the use of feedback to inform progress and developments
- Consultation with students and the use of feedback to inform progress and developments and respond to need
- Collaboration with placing authorities and previous education providers
- Planned schedules and termly checks to ensure that systems are accurate and effective
- Observations of teaching and learning to assure its quality and development requirements
- Collection of data relating to attendance, retention, progress and achievement of students and the monitoring and evaluation of courses/programmes to inform developments
- Production of a Quality Calendar to inform all interested parties of the key strategies during the year ahead
- Implementing and monitoring action and school improvement plans
- Issuing reports on quality issues for the Proprietor

See Appendix C – Quality Calendar

The School Development Plan, School Evaluation Form and School Improvement process is supported by a series of activities, procedures and practices. It is the responsibility of the Head teacher and Proprietor to identify the Strategic Priorities for the school in response to internal and external demands, ratings, judgments and initiatives.

The Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher will:

- Review school policies, associated procedures, guidelines and strategies

- Establish mentoring arrangements for all new staff or for staff with new responsibilities
- Carry out a programme of lesson observations in line with curriculum delivery requirements
- Manage the annual quality cycle/quality calendar
- Monitor the Ofsted Action Plan implementation
- Monitor and report on the complaints procedure
- Manage and report on the staff & student perception questionnaire
- Manage and report on the lesson observation system in line with Quality Assurance requirements
- Draw up the annual staff development plan, and manage and report on staff development
- Ensure, through audit, that all staff comply with quality policies and procedures
- Provide effective & appropriate teaching, training and support for learning
- Undertake appropriate development and training
- Validate all decisions on quality issues.

All staff are responsible for the quality of their work and for ensuring the quality of the education provided.