



Greenvale School

Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy Signed: February 2018
Date to be reviewed: February 2021

Teaching and Learning Policy

This should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum Policy, the Assessment Guidance and the SEN and Access Policy.

Introduction

This document is a statement of aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at Greenvale School. It lays the foundations for the whole curriculum, which is both formal and informal and forms the context in which all other policy statements should be read.

Aims

The main aims for teaching and learning are that the students will:

- exceed their expectations in academic achievement, aesthetic appreciation and spiritual, cultural and moral awareness.
- develop a responsible and independent attitude towards work and towards their roles in society.
- be tolerant and understanding and respect the rights, views and property of others.
- be motivated and happy in their learning and feel safe, secure and confident in making contributions and in their own abilities and skills.

Principles of Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning is the purpose of the school. It is the method through which the curriculum offer is broad and balanced and meets the requirement of the The Education Act (2011), and new National curriculum and assessment guidance from DfE (September 2014).

Teaching and learning takes place as a result of a process of co-operative team work. All members of the school community, (staff, parents, students and governors), work towards the school's aims by:

- esteeming the students as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs.
- fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the whole school community.
- providing a well ordered environment in which all are aware of behavioural expectations.
- offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance and contributions of different cultures.
- appropriately encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviours and work.
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging and learning from one another.

Within Greenvale school we are committed to:

- promoting equal opportunities and positive race relations, avoiding and actively tackling discrimination against anyone for reasons of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origins.
- valuing different cultural traditions and making connections with their own lives in a meaningful way.
- challenging stereotypes and giving students the understanding they need to recognise and reject all forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- using teaching styles and resources that take account of students' cultural backgrounds and learning needs.
- all students having full access to all elements of the curriculum including relevant educational visits.
- encouraging, supporting and helping all students and staff to reach their potential.

To take account of the above planning, teaching and learning will:

- significantly reflect cultures and experiences of ethnic minority groups in a positive light
- promote appreciation and awareness of cultural diversity and differences in life style
- reflect positive images for both sexes in all situations
- provide a positive image for the range of disabilities in the school (e.g. independence within capability, respecting use of aids)

Staff are constantly developing a curriculum and learning environment which recognises, values and provides diversity. This is led by the School Development Plan, Continued Professional Development opportunities and National initiatives.

Organisation of and Strategies for Teaching and Learning at Greenvale School

Teaching predominantly takes place in class groups, which are age based and of mixed ability, including students who have profound and multiple learning difficulties and students who have an autistic spectrum disorder. Additionally most students with PMLD have access to a 'resource' base designed to meet their learning needs. Some students also have access to iBase for focussed interventions relating to academic or personal development (*See Special Educational Needs and Access Policy*). Some other students also have access to mainstream link in Year 7 (*see Inclusion Policy*).

There are 4 main 'pathways for students at school:

Students across the school follow one of four possible pathways – PMLD, SLD, Advanced or HN. The provision of each pathway is tailored to meet their needs.

- Grove Pathway – Students typically work between P1-P3ii, and follow a sensory curriculum. They are assessed in the 7 areas of engagement.
- Forest Pathway – Students typically work P4-P8. Some students may attend advanced groups or have interventions to focus on specific skills.
- Woodland Pathway – Students typically work above P8. They attend advanced learners and coding club, and work on Functional Skills in English and Maths.
- Glades Pathway – Students need a high level of support and structure throughout their day. They follow a daily structured routine using symbols support, and elements of the TEAACH approach. They may have a sensory diet in place to support their emotional sensory regulation.

The students require a high level of individual attention but also need to learn to interact and work collaboratively with their peers. Therefore an approach utilising a combination of whole-class, small-group, and individual work is employed. In addition, there are also cross-class groups for specific activities which facilitate key stage ability groupings, which are appropriate for delivering some aspects of certain subjects, and assist in differentiated planning for relevant learning outcomes. These are termed as curriculum groups and take place for English and Maths in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage three. In Key Stage 5 students have a variety of groups including Preparation for Adult Life, PSHE, PE and KS5 options. This organisation also allows teachers and HLTA's to teach a subject 'specialism' where appropriate, for example our English and Maths coordinators lead Advanced English and Advanced Maths for KS3 and KS4.

A variety of teaching methods and strategies are employed to enhance student learning. The methods used will vary with the age and ability of the student, with an emphasis laid on approaches being appropriate to the age and learning needs of the student and their interests. Teaching across the curriculum aims to illicit students' independent responses and motivation and to enhance personal autonomy within the context of the daily school routine. Students are encouraged to engage in purposeful activities throughout the day by following adult role models, within structured play and work sessions. The nature of some of the students' learning needs necessitates the provision of a tight structure and organisation, however all students are encouraged to take greater control of their own learning and use of time as appropriate. Challenge and high expectation is implicit.

The range of activities and experiences offered varies as the student progresses through the school. However the importance of repetition is acknowledged in order to assist students generalise and retain knowledge and develop understanding/ awareness of the learning experiences. Familiarity supports students as independent learners and increases their sense of personal achievement.

Appropriate enrichment activities such as educational visits to local facilities and places of interest, appropriate links with mainstream schools and school journeys are offered throughout the school. There are also links with local schools where individual students, or groups of students, come into Greenvale on a regular basis. (*see Inclusion Policy*)

Teaching must always be differentiated to meet the needs of the student in order to ensure involvement at the appropriate developmental level. **Differentiation** is the process of teaching to meet the individual learning needs of students. Effective differentiation is central to effective learning and can be achieved through a variety of means, such as:

- differentiation by input – through the planning, ability group work, support offered
- differentiation by task – through the practice (task set, materials used, teaching strategies employed)
- differentiation by output – through the recording/expectations, learning outcomes.

The students are at an early stage of development globally and in their language/communication development particularly. Some students have English as an additional language. Teaching and learning across the school aims to support the development of language skills, both receptive and expressive via various approaches. (For example concrete experiences, stories and predictable routines and use of common vocabulary reinforced by 'unit of study' cycle, Makaton, Picture Exchange Communication (PECs), communication aids, use of symbols).

There is an emphasis on encouraging students to be involved in decision making and, where appropriate to take control of their own learning. The ability to make informed decisions is a crucial skill which the students need to develop and opportunities to encourage this are routinely provided. In teaching the students, teachers develop each individual's full potential and maximise personal autonomy by ensuring that the individual nature of their learning is respected and not compromised. Approaches used are appropriate to the age, ability and special educational needs of the student.

Staff share expertise and experience through staff meetings and joint scrutiny exercises, collaborative teaching opportunities and professional development programmes. These serve to enrich individual skills and to promote effective teaching and learning throughout the school.

Curriculum and planning

The curriculum content is based on the National Curriculum, with the addition of a relatively substantial Personal, Social and Health Education element. This aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to students' needs. (*see Curriculum Policy*)

The focus of Teaching and Learning is on using first hand experience and 'starting where the student is at'. By using students' own motivations and experiences and building on them, their understanding and knowledge of the world is extended and they are encouraged to be more independent, confident and tolerant individuals.

There are separate documents for Schemes of Work (**SoW**) for each subject. These support planning for learning and ensure the full curriculum is accessed by students. Subjects are delivered through a 2 year cycle of "Units of Study" for Key stages 3 and 4, a three year cycle for Key stage 5 and a one year programme of cross curricular units for Year 7 students. The schemes of work for these subjects consist of medium term planners for each unit within a continuing scheme. There is overlap between some curriculum areas in any meaningful learning experience. In Key stage 5 there are age-appropriate, work related, cross curricular modules that encompass foundation subjects and consolidate functional skills in addition to core subjects. SoW are carefully selected from the termly modules that best meet the needs of each High Needs class.

Class teachers are responsible for planning for their own classes, teaching groups and individuals with whom they work. HLTAs/TSA's have planning responsibilities for nominated activities/groups. This planning should be accessible to others – for example to their own class team, supply teachers, other class teams, and the senior team. Information should be clearly displayed on a class notice board; either daily/weekly planning, or indicating where the teaching file is for ease of access etc. Class teams have a responsibility for assisting new staff/ visitors to understand the daily routine in order to ensure the best continuity for the students as is possible and to maintain the teaching and learning processes.

Teaching & Learning Environment

The environment of the school provides the context in which teaching and learning takes place. All staff, visitors and students have a responsibility for ensuring the school is a safe, secure and attractive working space.

Classroom environments and resources are the responsibility of the class teacher and class team who should ensure that the room and materials are appropriate and accessible to the needs of the current class group. This includes, where possible, taking into account the specific needs of some individuals without being detrimental to the class group as a whole.

Displays have multiple purposes in that they contribute significantly towards a stimulating and attractive environment; provide centres of interest relating to themes and projects; enable students to display their work and celebrate achievements both in and out of school. Displays will be presented in a way which aims to enhance the environment and value students' work. Subject co-ordinators can utilize these when monitoring subject breadth and balance.

Resources for teaching and learning

Resources and materials for teaching should be appropriate to the age of the student and where necessary adapted to facilitate access to the curriculum. Equally resources and equipment that are motivational to the students, but not necessarily 'age appropriate' should be utilised for some students to promote interest and participation in learning activities. Resources should be designed to maximise students' motivation and attention to task.

Class Teachers are responsible for ensuring that their classes have resources that are appropriate and accessible. They are responsible for the allocation and spend of the annual dedicated class budget, and delegating responsibilities to their class team. HLTAs/TSA's and Learning Support Assistants are an integral part of class teams, as are meal supervisors

over the lunch time period. They should have input into the planning and preparation process and a clear role in monitoring and recording students' progress. Staff are a key resource in the teaching and learning process and participate in a cycle of continued professional development and training to maintain and extend skills and knowledge.

Central resources are the responsibility of subject co-ordinators. There are major central resources for whole school use in most curriculum areas. These resources cover the content of the 'continuing' Scheme or Work planning and the 'Unit of Study' focuses as designated by the Medium Term Planners. Subject co-ordinators are responsible for maintaining and improving resources annually in line with the school financial budget procedures.

Information Communication Technology is a major resource used across the school. Classrooms have an interactive white board and have at least one computer which is on the school network, as well as at least one iPad. Use of digital photography is widely used for teaching and learning and as a means of recording progress. The school has an Interactive room for switch work, cause and effect, sensory stimulation and interaction opportunities.

Access to specialist teaching facilities is available to all students on a timetabled basis according to student need, for example the school has a hydrotherapy/ swimming pool, art and DT room, life skills room, music and drama room, science room, library etc. Therapies (e.g. Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy) support the education of many individual students.

Parents, Volunteers and Students on work placements assist in the classrooms and provide valuable help and increased adult: student ratios for some sessions.

Recording, Assessment and Planning

Please see Greenvale School Assessment Policy.

The policy will be reviewed in 3 years in line with policy revision practice in the school.

Agreed June 2016

Signed: _____

Dated: _____