

<b>Teaching and Learning Policy</b>	
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### 1. The School's curriculum

The curriculum school's is orientated around the following key aspects:

- The Steiner Waldorf curriculum
- The Practical Skills curriculum of Ruskin Mill Educational Trust
- The National Curriculum
- The Independent School Standards
- The therapeutic needs of the individual student

These aspects are combined to a highly individualised therapeutic education with the pupil/student at its centre and the central theme of human development

### 2. Aim

The school will provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows students to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

- enable pupils/students to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster pupils/students' self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop pupils/student's self-respect and encourage children and young people to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable pupils/students to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help students grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

**Four key principles** will underpin these aims and will be embedded in our provision and day-to-day working:

1. showing our learners **respect** - we are committed to listening to them and speaking up for them whenever they want us to;
2. Helping them to achieve **self-determination** - we will support them to make choices about, and take charge of, their own lives;
3. Be **included** - we will support them to take their place in their own community;
4. Helping them with **relationships/interactions** - we will help them get to know different groups of people and to build friendships.

We are committed to a person-centred approach to curriculum development. It drives our planning decisions, which in turn guides the development of our learning opportunities. We have an integrated approach to deliver the 24-hour curriculum through a transdisciplinary approach between Education, Care and Health. This multi-disciplinary approach is a key feature of the school curriculum. Teachers, tutors, therapists, teaching assistants and where there is a residential provision, residential staff (mangers/ Support workers and/or key workers). There will be joint planning, assessment and review all centred around the pupils/student's needs. Curriculum will be delivered through the teaching day, extended activities and within the residence and local community.

### 3. Effective learning

Pupils/students will learn in many different ways; through well planned lessons and good assessment, through good role modelling and through the materials and activities within the land and craft based curriculum. We recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all to learn in ways that best suit them. The psychologist Howard Gardner identifies seven main areas of intelligence which go beyond the purely academically defined intelligence: linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working, and interpersonal/reflective. These different forms of intelligences are taken into account when planning teaching and learning styles.

The school offers opportunities for pupils/students learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of IT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- watching television, plays and responding to music or tape-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making;
- Participation in athletic or physical activity.

How do we know learning has taken place? If pupils/ students can:

- Explain the topic in their own words
- Provide new examples of the topic at work
- Apply the acquired knowledge and skills to new, unknown situations
- Justify through offering of evidence
- Compare and contrast with other situations contextualise the knowledge
- Generalise into a broader context

Pupils/students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn - what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

#### 4. Effective teaching

- High quality teaching, based upon well planned lessons delivered with integrity, skill and enthusiasm for learning.
- Lessons provide opportunities for independent learning, supported by teachers' commitment to the process. Pupils/students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own thinking, standards of work and personal organisation where appropriate.
- Work is matched to pupils/students' needs and abilities through appropriate differentiation
- Assessment is at the heart of the learning process. Pupils/students and their parents are aware of their progress records, the criteria for making good and outstanding progress and know what they have to do to move to the next level.
- Targets are set within the ILP which is reviewed on a regular basis.
- The transdisciplinary approach that permeates the school- education, care, health and therapy ensures that the experience for the pupils/students within the curriculum is of high quality, consistent in application and meets the learning, social and emotional needs of the student across the 24-hour curriculum
- Lessons are planned on a consistent basis with clear learning objectives and evidence of cross curricular themes - literacy, numeracy, science and IT embedded, assessment activities outlined (formative and/or summative), range of activities/tasks and resources identified and an evaluation of the progress made.
- The school will have a lesson plan format that will be consistently used across all curriculum areas. Where there is a residential provision, plans will also be used in the settings. Plans will outline the key objectives for the lesson, the learning outcomes, the range of resources used, deployment of other support staff, the learning to take place within the lesson, differentiation for individual students and any preferred learning styles, pupils/students review and feedback and an evaluation of the session.
- A programme of monitoring lessons through observation linked to coaching and mentoring of staff gives opportunities for improvement.
- Teachers monitor and track pupils/students' progress and coverage of the curriculum
- Teaching Support staff have clear guidelines on their work within the curriculum and know how best to work with the pupils/students to meet their needs. They record their work, regularly feedback and discuss pupils/students' progress with the teacher and the transdisciplinary team and have an input into annual reviews.
- Pupils/students specific special educational/emotional/care needs are regularly reviewed, time is allocated throughout the week and in specific blocks of time for the transdisciplinary team to meet and evaluate progress and plan the next steps.
- The learning in wider areas such as SMSC, PSHE, RSE and values are enacted through a curriculum programme and the ethos of the school.

The school has a detailed programme of professional development and ensure that teacher's subject knowledge, practical skills and awareness of issues are continuously updated.

All our teachers and support assistants reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. As a school we do all we can to support our teachers and support assistants in developing their skills so that they can continually improve their practice.

Performance management has a strong emphasis on learning and student progress with key priorities set by the *Head teacher/Provision Leader* for all staff.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all and ask teachers and tutors to be positive role models to our pupils and students.

### **5. The role of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees for the school will determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil/student attainment;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from co-ordinators and the annual Headteacher's/Provision Leaders report to the board as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff.

### **6. The role of Parents and Carers**

We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. For some of the pupils/students at the school this role will be fulfilled by the residential staff. We will ensure that parents and carers are fully informed on a regular basis about what and how their children are learning by:

- provide the guide for parents and the guide for pupils/students prior to entry;
- holding 'parents and friends' evenings' to explain our school strategies around a holistic education;
- hold regular coffee-mornings
- sending regular reports to parents and carers in which we explain the progress made by each pupil/student and indicate how they can improve further;
- sending out the monthly newsletter;
- provide evening events on various topics;

We believe that parents/carers have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents and carers to:

- be aware that the working together of school and home is crucial for the development and educational as well as personal progress of the child;
- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with suitable clothing and PE kit (if required);
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;

### **7. Monitoring the Quality of Teaching and Learning**

The Head Teacher/ Provision Leader will monitor the quality of teaching and learning on a termly basis. In addition, the school employs an experienced School Improvement Partner for schools who will moderate the school's own judgement of their performance and undertake at least annual observations of the following:

All lessons with all teachers/instructors

Moderate the school's own judgements and train senior managers, teachers/teaching assistants and care workers to peer assess

Residential and extended activities

Meetings held by staff to review progress

Discussions with pupils/students on their feelings about the experiences that they are receiving and what have they learnt - what are they going to do next?

Any parents/carers or other stakeholders that wish to share their views

All staff observed will receive feedback and constructive ways to improve. The completed lesson observation form will be shared with the member of staff observed and then filed in their personal file. Head Teacher/Provision Leaders will report on the Quality of Teaching and Learning to the Director of School and Board of Trustees.

### **8. Recognising and Celebrating Success**

For pupils/students within our schools, progress is about change and development. For most pupils/students with learning/social emotional/behavioural difficulties, achievements can be predicted and planned for and progress can be demonstrated in terms of increased knowledge, skills and understanding. Some may follow the same developmental pattern as their fellow pupils/students, but not necessarily at the same age or rate. Progress may be made in some areas of the curriculum but not in others. For some pupils/students' progress may be difficult to predict or idiosyncratic and may only be demonstrated in a certain environment with a specific person or materials. A range of evidence will be gathered including photographs, observations, student feedback, and video materials. Pupil and student work will be displayed and celebrated in a number of ways, through sharing with the community, festivals and assemblies and work displayed around the school, home, Trust and community.

A key feature of the curriculum process and development is the eliciting of the pupils/ student's voice. Pupils and students will have a range of opportunities to voice their ideas and feelings (e.g. in key-worker sessions, student councils and review meetings). This process will be an integral part of assessing progress and identifying the next steps.

### **9. Ensuring the Teaching Meets the Needs of the Students**

Teaching sessions will recognise the different learning styles of the pupils/students and adapt the materials accordingly. Pupil/student experience will be effectively planned and delivered in order that the pupil/ student makes the maximum progress possible.

Teachers will prepare half-termly planners for numeracy, literacy and main lesson topics referring to the relevant levels for each student to ensure that teaching is differentiated to meet all students' needs.

### **10. Addressing pupils' personal priority needs:**

Some pupils/ students will have therapeutic needs or require specific intervention for their behaviour and mental health difficulties. Addressing these needs is an essential part of the curriculum and should be planned for. We aim to enhance students' readiness to learn many ways, for example:

- supporting the accurate identification and assessment of individual needs in language and communication;
- working in a collaborative way with therapists and other professionals to improve access to the curriculum.

### **11. Policy review**

The teaching and learning policy will be reviewed regularly to take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

### **13. Links to Other Policies and Documents**

Curriculum Policy

Feedback Policy

Assessment Policy

Quality Assurance Cycle  
Reports to the Board of Trustees