Oakdale School

To be the best we can be

TEACHING
and
LEARNING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy is a statement of the aims, objectives, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at Oakdale School.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

The policy was reviewed September 2015 and approved by the Governing Body.

The policy will be reviewed and updated as required.

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

Oakdale School caters for children with a wide range of special educational needs and disabilities. All of the children at the school have difficulties with cognition and learning with the majority having severe learning difficulties. Some of our children have profound and multiple difficulties some have social communication difficulties including Autistic Spectrum Disorders and some have sensory impairments.

Teaching and learning is a dynamic and interactive process and is a core function of the work of the school. We acknowledge that the quality of teaching directly affects how well pupils learn; we also understand that, while our pupils have the same broad educational needs as other children and young people, they require an approach that is always highly individualised and often specialised.

Teaching staff are expected to be knowledgeable, skilled and competent practitioners who, guided by the statements in this policy, create a stimulating, challenging and vibrant learning environment in which pupils develop and grow and learning flourishes. Planning and delivering high quality teaching and learning for pupils with a range of complex needs are demanding tasks for classroom staff. Moreover, teachers are expected to be reflective practitioners who are continually evaluating the quality of their work in the light of learning outcomes for pupils within their classes. This policy therefore makes staff development a high priority.

A good school is effective when governors and staff share a clear vision of good educational practice and this is the commitment that we offer

Mission Statement:

A happy place

This is a welcoming, friendly, bright and happy place where our children feel secure, where independence and self-esteem is promoted and where they enjoy growing up and developing their unique potential.

This is an inclusive school where all are treated equally regardless of gender, disability, race or culture.

Excellent education

Education at this school is the blend of excellence and enjoyment.

Our children are treated as individuals and teaching and learning is differentiated to take account of individual need.

High expectations

Our children are encouraged to aim high.

Progress, achievements and success are celebrated.

Partnerships

Parents, families and the wider community are seen as equal partners with the school and we encourage involvement in school life.

Aims:

1. To be an inclusive school and ensure that everyone is given equality of opportunity and treated fairly.

2. To promote and achieve high standards by ensuring that teaching and learning is of the highest quality.

3. To acknowledge that all children are individuals and teaching and learning is differentiated to take account of individual needs. We will celebrate small steps of success and progress

4. To provide well for children's care, health and safety

5. To provide well for children's physical, emotional social, spiritual, moral and cultural needs

6. To ensure that all children benefit from a rich, broad, balanced curriculum presented in interesting, exciting and imaginative ways and they are supported to make connections between subjects to develop and reinforce key concepts

7. To enliven and enrich the curriculum by visits, visitors and the extensive use of the environment.

8. To help children understand the key skills they need to develop in order to make progress

9. To support each child to develop an effective communication system

10. To support each child to be as independent as possible in personal and social skills and to encourage that independence, self-confidence and responsibility by contributing to the community.

11. To make parents, governors and the wider community equal partners with the school and to involve them in the evaluation of its progress

12. To ensure this school is a welcoming, friendly, bright, lively , happy place where children feel secure and enjoy being in school

CURRICULUM ENTITLEMENT

Refer to Curriculum Policy for information on curriculum provision, approach and rationale

TEACHING and LEARNING

The aims of teaching and learning at Oakdale School are to:

- Enable pupils to achieve their full potential
- Inspire curiosity, a desire and the skills to learn and continue to learn beyond their formal education
- Make learning enjoyable and fun
- Encourage staff to learn from each other and be part of a professional culture that encourages and values discussion, research and experiment
- Help staff retain a desire to learn and meet new challenges throughout their professional career

This is achieved by reference to policy documents and schemes of work (developed by curriculum teams at Oakdale School) and related to the foundation/national curriculum where appropriate and relevant.

Good teaching at Oakdale School is characterised by:

- Setting clear and high expectations - tasks will meet the individual needs of pupils, progression will be easier to identify if pupils are interested, challenged and engaged, with elements of choice in which they can become involved.
- Lessons will have appropriate pace
- The use of appropriate subject knowledge, understanding and pre-requisite skills - asking the right questions to check on, consolidate and extend pupils learning; explain and demonstrate ideas clearly and in a variety of new ways
- Effective planning - activities and resources are closely matched to objectives, with good match between pupils needs and relevant activities, learning will build upon prior knowledge
- The use of appropriate methodology - staff are confident and able to use a broad range of teaching methods; select appropriate methods from a wide repertoire to suit the purpose of lesson; with good questioning techniques; and sensitivity to intervene at the right moment to extend pupils' learning.
- Good knowledge and understanding of pupils' learning needs and the provision of appropriate tasks that cater for and encourage differing learning styles
- Recognising and meeting the needs of all. Pupils will experience success through differentiation, through the use of (DLO's) Desirable Learning Outcomes that break down learning into small steps and using individual education plans (IEPs) with precision and imagination.

- Managing the learning atmosphere and pupils behaviour effectively

- Effectively managing time and resources with, lessons starting on time, linking resources, technology and support staff to the purpose of the lesson

- Assessing pupils' work and using the information gained constructively

- Providing a learning environment that will encourage pupils to learn, demonstrate commitment to a stimulating learning ethos, be rich and colourful, welcoming and efficiently organised

- The learning environment will be appropriate to the needs of all learners including SLD, ASD & PMLD

- Good deployment of support staff who have a good understanding of their role and the needs of the pupils with whom they work.

- Evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning, taking into account feedback and points for development.

- Expectation that pupils perform at the best standard of behaviour and find ways to reinforce, extend and generalise what pupils have learned, outside the classroom.

- The effective use of assessment to inform planning and target-setting.

- Promote equality of opportunity and a sense of inclusion.

- Ensure appropriate access to resources.

Effective learning will be dependent on pupils:

- Interacting meaningfully with human and physical resources

- Accessing a wide range of resources, materials, experiences and environments

- Having opportunities to acquire, practise and consolidate new skills

- Being actively involved in lessons and having opportunities to explore, experiment and problem solve

- Being given the opportunity to work alone, in groups and in teams

- Acquire knowledge and skills through their work, increasing understanding or deepening/widening experience and extending their range of activity;

- Showing engagement, application and concentration;

- Developing the skills and capacity to work as independently as possible and to work with and alongside other people.

- Showing interest in how well they are doing and how they can improve, by responding to feedback from adults and ultimately, to motivate themselves.

Teaching Methods

Teachers are required to adopt a range of teaching strategies and techniques, and sessions may vary according to lesson content. Whole class teaching, small group and individual teaching will take place. Groups may or may not be in the same room since teachers will use whole school resource areas to deliver different elements of the curriculum.

Repetition and revisiting key skills in a wide range of settings helps the transference and generalisation of skills. It also means prerequisite skills can be constantly reinforced within a broad and balanced curriculum.

The curriculum alone cannot provide breadth and balance. Other priorities are agreed in consultation with parents and colleagues from the health authority. Cross-curricular activities and extended school activities provide breadth. (See Curriculum Model and Curriculum Policy).

Provision for those pupils who require a specific specialised/learning environment - Responding to Pupils' Diverse Needs

The individual needs of particular pupils will dictate a variable balance in the whole curriculum (E.g. Pupils who display challenging behaviours may need intensive individual sessions working on interaction and learning to learn skills before they are able to join in with group activities). Pupils are organised into cohort groups in order to focus directly on their very specific needs.
Cohort groups consist of PMLD, ASC and SLD with appropriate staffing levels and approaches to classroom organisation and curriculum delivery that target need.

Pupils who experience PMLD require access to:

- A multi-sensory curriculum

- Staff with specialist knowledge/expertise including therapy support

- Specialist equipment – access to ICT

- Facilities to enable pupils to be moved safely

- Adapted equipment to facilitate access to the curriculum and personal hygiene routines

- Storage space for larger pieces of equipment i.e. wheelchairs, standing frames, side-lyers etc.

- A total communication environment

Pupils with ASC require access to:

- Staff with specialist knowledge/expertise in complex learning difficulty

- Environments that support specific and special communication needs

- A highly structured teaching environment

- A total communication approach to speech and language with an emphasis on the use of visual supports.

- Access to ICT

Pupils with SLD require access to

- Staff with specialist knowledge/expertise in complex learning difficulty

- A total communication approach to speech and language

- Staff with a good understanding of the needs of pupils with developmental delays and specific syndromes.

- Access to ICT

- Opportunities to practise and generalise skills

"Many pupils with learning difficulties have individual needs which are central to their learning and quality of life…..provision for these needs is a legitimate and essential element of the curriculum and should be planned for". **QCA Guidelines 2001**.

Access

All pupils are individuals and as such have special needs, gifts and talents. All pupils receive equal access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, utilising a range of strategies. This may include the use of switches, ICT, physical aids, adapting workspaces, equipment or the individual support of teaching assistants. Pupils require varying levels of support from teaching assistants

Therapies

Staff at Oakdale School work closely with speech therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists to ensure the personal and therapeutic needs of pupils are met. The joint setting of pupil targets with Physio, OT, SALT is an expectation, particularly with pupils with very complex needs.

The use of therapeutic environments e.g. hydrotherapy pool and sensory room and alternative therapies are planned for as part of the whole curriculum.
Peripatetic teachers of hearing impairment and visual impairment assist with target - setting and give advice and support.

POLICY DOCUMENTS

Effective policies explain the vision and provide a focus and direction for everything that goes on in school. Policies are formulated through discussion with all teachers. Each subject area is led by Curriculum Teams.
The purpose of school policies is to clarify quality, standards and consistency and shapes teaching and learning.

Policy documents are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. All policies must be adhered to by all teachers. Written policies are not an end in themselves, but provide vision and focus on standards to improve teaching and learning.

PLANNING:

The school teaching and learning file provides detailed guidance and support to class teachers. Planning generally is reviewed on a regular basis via staff meetings to ensure effective classroom management and is part of the monitoring cycle undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team.

Aims

Teachers, working closely with colleagues assisting them or complementing their teaching (e.g. by means of therapies), should:

- Show good command of curriculum content and specialist approaches to curriculum access;

- Plan effectively, with clear learning objectives and suitable teaching strategies and ensure individual desirable learning outcomes are in place for all children

- Interest, encourage ,engage and challenge pupils;

TOPIC CYCLES

A curriculum map covering all aspects of the curriculum informs teaching and learning from Nursery to Year 6.

Classes may include a range of year groups and the rolling programme of topics has been developed to ensure breadth and balance.

Each topic cycle details the coverage to ensure breadth and balance is clear for each teacher. See Appendix C in Curriculum Policy for topic cycles. Each cycle also describes the focus of the continuous curriculum as well as topic weeks and enrichment days.

TERMLY PLANNING SHEETS

Planning sheets provide the details of teaching and learning activities that deliver the knowledge, understanding and skills involved in each subject area.

At the beginning of each term planning sheets are submitted to the Headteacher and Senior Curriculum Co-ordinator for monitoring purposes. Curriculum Team co-ordinators also overview teachers planning to ensure breadth and balance in specific curriculum areas. Both elements link into the school monitoring cycle. (See Curriculum Policy and Model for further information to support the approach to planning. See Teaching and Learning File for team site and planning sheets).

DAILY/WEEKLY PLANS

Weekly planning sheets provide a tool to ensure effective classroom management for curriculum areas will show some or all of the following:

- specific learning objectives – DLO's for each child for English / Maths / and topic work and potential extension activities if required

- activities

- differentiation

- groupings

- assessment opportunities and outcomes

- deployment of staff

- use of resources

DIFFERENTIATION

Differentiation means matching work to the needs of the individual child and is the process of identifying the strategies for effective learning. Differentiation will be guided by the teacher but is the responsibility of all staff.
Strategies for differentiation may include the following:

- Using a range of teaching and learning styles

- Building on pupils ideas during an activity

- Adjusting the conceptual demand of a task

- Varying the amount of support required to complete a task

- Varying the task to suit individual need

- Varying the response expected

- Varying the equipment required

- Varying the method of presentation

- Varying the method of recording
- Adjusting the level of linguistic demand
- Providing a range of resources and support

ASSESSMENT

The assessment is both formative and summative.

- Formative assessment is everyday, continuous and essential to the development of the individual – through the use of observations and annotations. (See Annotations and Observations Policy).

- Summative assessment is related to judgements made using PIVATS. An assessment week forms part of the annual cycle for reporting and reviewing pupil progress, which is linked to the LA data collection and SATs week, in January and June of each year.

- Summative assessment also relates to initial assessments, annual reviews and pupil progress meetings in which class teachers comment on pupil progress and review IEPs, recording progress and next steps.

- Further details of assessment, recording and reporting may be found in the school's assessment reporting and recording policy and assessment and monitoring cycle.

MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

Allocation Of Resources

Curriculum co-ordinators bid for funding to support teaching in curriculum areas. Each curriculum co-ordinator has a responsibility to ensure suitable resources and equipment is available to facilitate the delivery of schemes of work and will maintain a list of resources for each curriculum teams.

The allocation and storage of resources are the responsibility of the curriculum co-ordinator. Resources are audited as part of the schools self-evaluation process. Large-scale capital expenditure is planned for separately within the school improvement plan.

DISPLAY
Please refer to the display policy.

RELATIONSHIPS

- All staff have a responsibility to collectively create a positive and secure classroom environment

- Expectations of pupils must be appropriate and pupils need to be as clear as possible about what is expected of them, therefore staff should use all available means to communicate including signs, symbols, speech, photos, objects of reference and natural gesture and the written word and autonomy.

- Pupils will be given an appropriate degree of independence whenever it is safe to do so and should be encouraged to have ownership of their work whilst feeling secure and comfortable enough to ask for help and guidance.

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