



# Teaching and Learning Policy

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| <b>Written</b>                  | October 2019      |
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| <b>Signed:<br/>Head Teacher</b> | _____             |
| <b>Chair of IEB</b>             | _____             |

## **The aims of the policy**

A Teaching and Learning policy is about the quality of interaction between the teacher, support staff and the learner. This policy aims to clarify, create and maintain a common approach at Northfield School for effective teaching and learning. It seeks to

- ensure that teachers' expectations are consistent throughout the school,
- ensure that continuity and progression are maintained through our adherence to common beliefs,
- promote what constitutes high quality teaching and learning,
- raise standards of attainment,
- ensure a personalised approach for all learners which considers their SEND, religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic needs,
- provide learners with a safe and secure learning environment.

## **Our vision for Orion Academy**

We are committed to guiding and encouraging our community of learners towards reaching their full potential by demonstrating

- the ability to be independent and successful in adult life and the wider community,
- the ability to embrace change,
- respect for one another,
- tolerance and understanding of individual needs,
- self-discovery,
- commitment to provide the best teaching, whilst ensuring learning is enjoyable and engaging yet challenging and meets the need of each individual student.

We have a positive ethos with a culture of mutual respect. Standards for behaviour are high, with our main aim being to

- recognise all students for their positive contributions to the school,
- encourage good behaviour and self-respect in our learners,
- promote self-discipline among learners whereby they are given opportunities to take responsibility for their own behaviour, through the restorative approaches recognised by the whole community,
- encourage respect for the expectations of the school community and those that facilitate them.

We believe that learning is most effective through first hand experience and having the opportunities to explore, investigate and experiment. Our learners are actively encouraged to 'have a go' and to 'take risks' in the knowledge that their ideas will be respected and their efforts valued. This approach is central to our philosophy of education and is reflected in the way that problems are presented and questions are asked in the classroom. We encourage every student to have an active mind and body, and to take full part in a variety of learning experiences.

We recognise our responsibilities for ensuring that learners acquire the essential basic skills of English, mathematics and ICT. We aim to develop initiative, a repertoire of strategies, a range of skills, the ability to learn for oneself and the confidence to cope with an ever-

changing technological world. We believe that these aims will be met by developing our students' self-esteem, regard for their own work and that of others, and respect for other members of the school and wider community.

### **Fundamental attitudes, values, personal, social and learning skills**

#### **We will actively seek to foster and develop a range of attitudes and values including**

- an open and inquiring mind,
- an enthusiasm for learning,
- a realistic confidence in their abilities,
- a respect for peers, authority, community and society,
- an awareness of their place in society,
- independence, self-reliance, self-discipline, self-respect, self-motivation, tolerance of others and honesty,
- a growing awareness of the consequences of their actions.

#### **We will support the students to develop the following *personal* and *social skills***

- the ability to co-operate with others,
- the ability to work within a variety of social groupings with due respect for the attitudes, abilities and opinions of others,
- the ability to make a mistake and learn from this mistake, accepting the support and advice of those around them,
- responsibilities for their own possessions and respect for the possessions of others,
- the ability to communicate effectively with others in a variety of ways,
- positive attitudes to cleanliness and a pride in personal appearance,
- choosing behaviours which are appropriate to different situations,
- an awareness of the needs of others,
- tolerance, patience and understanding when interacting with other members of the school.

#### **During the course of our everyday work, we will seek to foster and develop the following *learning skills* and the ability to**

- work with others in a variety of groupings,
- develop concentration, persistence and the ability to see work through to its satisfactory conclusion,
- research and collate information,
- hypothesise, predict, evaluate and test theories,
- read, write and communicate effectively and confidently in a variety of ways,
- count, measure, sort and estimate,
- develop the basic skills of manipulating tools and materials so that they can design and realise an idea,
- observe closely and listen carefully,
- organise and make well-considered decisions,
- evaluate the quality of their work and be prepared to make necessary improvements,
- accept routines and work to accept adaptations to changing routines.

**We believe that our students learn most effectively and become successful learners when we, as teachers and support staff**

**In our working environment**

- work as a team,
- hold positive values and attitudes,
- adopt high standards of behaviour in our professional role,
- model restorative language and actions with students and staff,
- plan collaboratively to ensure continuity and progression,
- have strong subject knowledge and the ability to develop progression within a subject/range of subjects, at all levels of ability,
- contribute to policy making, working parties, staff meetings etc,
- act upon advice and feedback, and be open to coaching and mentoring,
- ensure teachers have a close working relationship with support staff, who are aware of their role and their contribution to raising standards of teaching and learning,
- are reflective about our practice,
- make effective use of INSET,
- are flexible and adaptable.

**In our approach to teaching and helping students to learn**

- develop Thematic Approaches to Learning (TAL) and Vocational and Life Skills across the curriculum,
- develop SEND knowledge, skills and understanding of the whole school community,
- consistently use our unique teaching features, e.g. Sound Reading, Restorative Approaches and self-reflection practices to support metacognition and independent learning,
- communicate effectively with all learners using a range of strategies,
- have high expectations and ask open ended, thought provoking, challenging questions of students,
- provide experiences which are active, practical, first hand, involving individual and collaborative opportunities, exploration, questions, prediction and investigation, including a programme of educational visits and enrichment days to reinforce and stimulate learning,
- make effective use of ICT and a wide range of resources,
- make effective use of the target setting (TOPs) and EHCP process,
- create a stimulating and safe environment for learning to take place,
- are sympathetic to students' diverse needs and learning styles,
- are aware of the need for appropriate pace and transition in a lesson,
- value all students' contributions and encourage student participation in their learning,
- ensure that all classrooms adhere to the Northfield School criteria.

**An autistic friendly classroom**

Many classes in the school contain a high level of ASC students. To support these students, classrooms are carefully considered and adapted to meet their needs. Our ASC friendly classrooms include

- the use of pastel colours, as this is calming for our students,
- minimal visual distractions, such as bright colours and untidy classroom resources,
- quiet learning spaces, including the use of individual work stations where appropriate,
- high levels of visuals to support students in understanding the structure of the day (visual timetables etc),
- clear instructions and routines through all aspects of lessons, in particular during transition times,
- clear concise use of language, which is familiar to our students.

### **Our approach to assessment**

- assessment without levels,
- make use of assessment to inform planning – formative, summative and statutory,
- make use of baseline and 3x yearly data collection to set targets, track progress and plan interventions,
- make marking meaningful and a tool to move learning forward,
- use a range of recognised accreditation to highlight student achievement.

For more information about assessment and marking please see our Assessment Policy and our Marking Policy.

### **We believe that our students learn most effectively and become achievers when they are**

- in a safe and secure environment,
- aware of their own learning targets,
- happy and confident,
- feeling they are recognised and valued as individuals,
- co-operative, enthusiastic and well-motivated,
- encouraged to try hard and are rewarded for genuine endeavour,
- encouraged to use their initiative in the knowledge that their contributions and efforts are valued,
- aware that they can ask for support and help and this will be provided,
- given clear instructions for activities which have been planned to meet their needs and for which they see the purpose and value,
- able to feel that they make a genuine contribution to the life of the school,
- able to fail without feeling the sense of failure,
- able to make independent decisions about their learning and to share the responsibility for the planning and evaluation of their work,
- allowed sufficient room, the appropriate level of noise, adequate materials and tools and enough time,
- at ease in the company of their peers, their teacher and supporting adults in the school.

### **Achievement is recognised, acknowledged and celebrated by**

- students being encouraged to recognise their own progress and achievements through positive self-evaluation, using learning passports, TOPs and Annual Review meetings,
- genuine praise wherever possible,
- teachers' individual rewards and encouragement routines,
- using recognition boards in each classroom,
- prizes and certificates being given out in the weekly assembly,
- positive and constructive comments, usually make verbally,
- well-displayed examples of work from all students in the class,
- individuals or groups taking their work to show other classes.

### **The role of the governors**

Our governors

- support in the implementation of this policy,
- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by ensuring an appropriate level of resources,
- monitor teaching strategies in light of health and safety regulations,
- monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies in terms of raising student attainment,
- ensure that performance management, support staff appraisals and staff development promote good quality teaching.

### **The role of parents and carers**

We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role in helping their children to learn. We aim to inform parents and carers about what and how their children are learning by holding information evenings three times a year and by sharing Annual Reports, TOPs and Annual Reviews with them.

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

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible,
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform (including a PE kit),
- inform the school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect their child's performance or behaviour at school,
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general,
- communicate any concerns they may have to us so that we can work together to find a positive solution.