



# Serenity School

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## Learning & Teaching Policy

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## Aims

We believe that every student in our school is entitled to the best possible education that we can provide. We ensure that all our students achieve their full potential and gain the skills and knowledge necessary to become successful citizens in the future.

We believe that high quality teaching and learning is key to achieving this aim and this Policy reflects our high expectations of all staff and students who work in our school.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that high quality learning takes place in every lesson, which results in high standards of student achievement
- To embed an agreed range of good practice across the school
- To ensure consistency throughout the school
- To provide new staff with a clear vision of the school's expectations
- To provide agreed focus for monitoring learning and classroom practice.

## 2. School Expectations for Students

- ✓ We Take Care of Ourselves
- ✓ We Take Care of Each Other
- ✓ We Take Care of Our Learning
- ✓ We Take Care of Our School, Our Community and Our World
- ✓ We Take Care for Our Future

## 3. Teaching

We expect to see a range of the following from lessons:

- Staff to have secure subject knowledge and understanding – when support is needed teachers can seek advice from Senior Leaders or other subject specialists
- Staff to plan appropriately for all groups of students and access high quality resources.
- SOL to be ready at start of half term and amended weekly to reflect current progress.
- That every lesson has clear Learning Objectives which are explained to the individual student and class and remain on display throughout the lesson and that these LO are clearly linked to half termly assessment targets
- That all lessons demonstrate key elements of good AfL practice (Accelerated Learning Cycle Model)
- Lessons to include or promote the use of the focused literacy and a numeracy targets
- 'What's the Point' is embedded within the SOL
- That activities are differentiated to ensure that students explore, develop and practice new skills/concepts and SEAL Principles
- That staff cater for a range of differing learning styles and cultural diversity thus ensuring student participation and understanding e.g. the use of visual stimuli and practical activities, ability groupings, peer and teacher modelling, visual support, repetition, emphasis on Speaking & Listening, scaffolding, talk partners

- Staff to provide appropriate resources which support learning outcomes and provide challenge for the more able students
- That time targets are set within lessons to ensure pace is maintained
- That staff have high expectations of presentation, quality and quantity of work
- Staff to assess students' learning regularly and gather evidence against Teacher Standards
- That staff are not chair / desk bound in lessons. Furniture is flexible and can be moved for purpose
- Progress Partners to be fully involved in lessons
- Staff mark students' work on a daily basis and that a summative progress comment is offered each week to be completed by the pupil
- Staff encourage students' independence
- All lessons have a plenary when the learning during the lesson can be reviewed and assessed against the Success Criteria

#### 4. The Learning Environment

##### All classroom walls should include:

- Examples of student work – with written feedback / praise (to be referred to in teaching)
- Literacy and numeracy strategies e.g., lists of key words for your subject
- Commonly used literacy symbols / words
- Curriculum levels / Assessment Criteria
- SEAL links to your subject
- Consider use of Assessment tracking, interclass competitions and/or subject rewards

##### All corridors should include:

- Photographs of enrichment activities (trips / clubs etc.)
- Gifted and Talented provision – such as details of competitions
- Displays of famous graduates in your subject or careers in your subject
- Promotion of subject / Rewards given and/or opportunity
- Pathways of subject choice KS3 to KS5 and beyond

##### Other good ideas may include:

- ✓ An "Any Questions" wall
- ✓ Thunking blackboard
- ✓ Model answers (with teacher annotation)
- ✓ Class boards with the class name at the top and the class help to display the work as well as create it
- ✓ Key pages from textbooks or exam specifications blown up and laminated

##### Avoid:

- ✗ Messy areas and random books left lying around
- ✗ Small unreadable messages for learners
- ✗ Making it too complicated

## 5. The Curriculum

The whole curriculum should enable learners to:

- Acquire knowledge, skills, understanding and practical abilities with the motivation to use them
- Develop qualities of mind, body, feeling and imagination
- Extend the effective use of language
- Develop the effective use of number
- Appreciate human achievement in all areas of activity including art, music, science, literature, mathematics and technology
- Acquire an understanding of the social, economic and political nature of society
- Help develop the full potential in individuals for their lives at home, at work, at leisure, in the community and as active empowered participants in society
- Develop a sense of self-value and self-respect and to understand and respect the right to social and cultural differences amongst others
- Develop British Values within all our students

With the help of the whole school community, Serenity School has developed a curriculum which we feel is relevant and exciting and addresses the aims above. It is a knowledge and skills-based curriculum which aims to draw curriculum links in a meaningful way and takes into account the new national curriculum introduced in September 2014 as well as the final report of the Rochford Review.

## 6. Assessment

We share the belief that consistent use of assessment for learning should:

- Enable student to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do using the core components of our Assessment Model – **Beginning**, **Developing**, **Secure**, **Enhanced** (BRAG)
- Be used to make students' aware of the level at which they are working
- Ensure students are aware of the learning outcomes and success criteria to support their means of achieving success (6 Termly Targets Model)
- Give students positive reinforcement that celebrates their achievements
- Provide useful information that enables teachers to plan differentiated work that addresses the learning needs of each student through the use of Personal Learning Checklists. PLCs are a list of skills and knowledge that the pupil is to secure as part of the curriculum offer. The PLC will map out performance using BRAG. This informs both formative and summative assessment monitored by both the teacher and pupil to decide if the pupil is making progress or needs intervention.
- Involve students and teachers in recognising what needs to be done to improve their work based on '*I Can Statements*' that frame our assessment model
- Use DIT lessons/tasks/activities to embed knowledge, build on knowledge or secure knowledge.
- Inform the target setting process by identifying areas that will support the progress of individuals and groups using the Smith Pro-forma.
- Be used to provide information for parents during consultations and inform homework tasks
- to support their child's learning at home
- Provide information to inform whole school evaluation and strategic planning

## Assessment Statements used to judge student progress

Progress targets are set each academic year at whole school level. Targets for each class are set at 80% of all students achieving at least '3 Steps of Progress' as measured from the baseline assessment. These targets are then personalised for each student to ensure they make at least 3 steps of progress towards their Minimum Expected Outcome (MEO).

Teachers and Progress Partners use the following Statements to judge Progress:

### **Beginning - Red**

New learning - the student has been introduced to the skill however they cannot grasp the concept at this time, or the student is at a pre-learning state and not accessing the skill or curriculum at present. They are currently not on track to achieve their Minimum Expected Outcome

### **Developing - Amber**

The student is starting to develop their understanding of the concept and is starting to use the skill in their work. This may not be done independently. However, they are currently on track to achieve their Minimum Expected Outcome

### **Secure - Green**

The student is able to use the skill independently and accurately overtime and therefore currently on track to exceed their Minimum Expected Outcome

### **Enhanced - Blue**

The student has mastered all the skills in greater depth i.e., they are able to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar situations and are beginning to reach onto skills that are in the level above their Minimum Expected Outcome

## Forms of assessment

We recognise the importance of formative, summative and diagnostic assessment and plan opportunities for all three to take place. At the start of the year or when a new pupil/s arrives, it is vital that the student takes a baseline test to gauge where their starting point is.

**Formative assessment** involves both student and teacher celebrating successes that have been achieved as well as identifying areas for development so that next steps can be carefully planned to meet individual learning needs.

When formative assessment, or assessment for learning, is embedded in our daily classroom practice, it provides information that can be used to inform planning for teaching and learning that is well matched to students' needs. This will give individual students the opportunity to make good progress and achieve their potential.

Assessment for learning involves sharing learning goals, effective questioning and use of oral and written feedback. For further details about Assessment for Learning (AFL) see below.

**Summative assessment** involves making a judgement of a students' attainment at a point in time in order to assess their performance in terms of a particular standard.

Moderation exemplars are used throughout the school to level samples of work and are overseen by members of the SLT as well as the school, working with Schools Learning Partnership. Teachers discuss students' assessments with parents on a termly basis. Teachers also have Student performance meetings with the SLT called Progress Meetings after each cycle of assessments to ensure gaps are identified early and intervention is immediate to support all learners achieve expected in year progress.

**Diagnostic assessment** is used when a student is identified as not meeting age related expectations. The assessments identify a student's learning strengths and difficulties so that the appropriate help and guidance can be provided. This may be in the form of additional interventions. This is organised and led by the school's SENDCo and may involve consultation with agencies working in partnership with the school to support individual student. This often informs the process of setting individual IEP targets for students. The SENDCo is responsible for deploying staff and planning an overview of intervention programs to meet the needs of student that require additional SEND support.

**Initial (Baseline) Assessment:** All students are assessed on entry and yearly thereafter using different assessment tools depending on their curriculum pathway.

**Formal Pathway**

Students on a Formal Curriculum Pathway are assessed using different of GL Tests as follows:

Assessment Type	Assessment Used
SPAG and reading comprehension	GL Progress Test English
Mathematical Skills and Knowledge	GL Progress Test Maths
Scientific Skills and Knowledge	GL Progress Test Science
Dyscalculia Screening	GL Dyscalculia Screener
Dyslexia Screening	GL Dyslexia Screener
Attitudes and Emotions	GL PASS Assessment

All data are collated on our Assessment Centre and reported in standardised score (SS) format and used to inform planning and intervention. Dependent on outcomes, assessment data is shared with all staff and informs whole class planning, our Rising Star Program, In-class intervention or 1:1 / 1:2 or smallgroup interventions as detailed below:

**Standardised Scores**

SS 115 or more	Rising Star Programme + Watch List
SS90 or more	Watch List
SS 89-85	In-class Intervention – Teacher led – classroombased. Informed through CAP data
SS 84 or less	1:1 / 1:2 or small group intervention – withdrawn where possible. Informedthrough AC data

Students with a standardised score less than 90 are tested twice per year, mid-January and mid-July. Students with a standardised score of 90 or above are supported with the safety net of the 'Watch List', which ensures that any drop in attainment is quickly identified and addressed, re-testing if necessary.

### Semi-Formal Pathway

Where students are not able to access the GL Progress Tests, they are assessed using STAR Assessments. STAR Assessments are shorter assessments which use computer adaptive technology and also a series of multiple-choice questions. Unlike the GL Tests which last up to 50 minutes, STAR Assessments take 20 minutes and also generate standardised scores.

Assessment Type	Assessment Used
SPAG and reading comprehension	Accelerated Reader Star Reading Assessment
Mathematical Skills and Knowledge	Accelerated Reader Star Maths Assessment
Dyscalculia Screening	GL Dyscalculia Screener
Dyslexia Screening	GL Dyslexia Screener
Attitudes and Emotions	GL PASS Assessment

### Informal (Nurture) Pathway

Student on our Informal Pathway are planned for, assessed and progress reported using the EQUALS MAPP Milestones. We recognise that there are difficulties which arise from using linear assessments for these students and as a result, Milestone Statements which identify important skills within domains of learning form the basis for setting personalised learning intentions for each student. Progress towards these intentions are then systematically tracked by the teachers and used to inform future planning.

Assessment Type	Assessment Used
Teacher Assessments	EQUALS MAPP Milestones

### Access Arrangements

All students are assessed for access arrangements to support them during their exams. Assessments are carried out by specialist personnel and submitted to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) as required. These arrangements will be used to inform staff on how best to support a student in an exam and what the rules and regulations are.

### Therapeutic Intervention Model to ensure Engagement and students Accessing Education

Meeting pupils' most basic physiological, safety and belonging needs, through intensive individual support, before pupils are able to move towards independent learning in groups is a core aim of Serenity School. Our pupils face multiple obstacles to engagement; this may include long-established treatment resistance to academic and clinical assessment which has prevented their underlying mental health needs from being identified.

### Six-part process

1. **Engagement** – we work 1-1 on understanding a pupil's interests, strengths and abilities so as to form a strong, functional relationship with the child
2. **Stabilisation** - Our staff stabilise pupils and ensure attendance through our CaseCoordination model.
3. **Assessment** - Once a secure attachment has formed with their teachers, pupils are more willing to engage in formal assessment with our clinical team, exploring and validating the initial hypotheses. Our assessments include well- established and evidence- based tools.

4. **Treatment Phase** - Through the assessment phase, clarity has been brought to the complexity of co-morbid risks and needs. We recommend a bespoke treatment and monitoring package for the pupil and, where necessary, family members. Where the pupil is treatment resistant, work will initially centre on encouraging active participation.
5. **Integration** - We work carefully at each stage of the process to introduce pupils to working with another individual, and later in small groups. Confidence and self-esteem are developing, and pupils are increasingly motivated to achieve. This is the stage where realistic prospects of successful transitions and outcomes emerge, towards a wider social cohesion and personal resilience.
6. **Pathways** - We work to ensure every pupil leaves our service with a level of relational and emotional stability, together with a lifelong enthusiasm for learning which allows them to function effectively in all social situations. Ultimately graduating with a minimum of 5 GCSE qualifications or equivalences.

### **Why our socio-educational model works:**

We offer a comprehensive clinical service, guided by our senior psychology and psychotherapist consultants. We also work with more specialised practitioners such as behaviour analysts, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and creative arts therapists.

Our integrated and multi-disciplinary approach is drawn from relational and neurodevelopmental perspectives to meeting needs. We use therapists trained in cognitive-behavioural, systemic, psychodynamic and neurodevelopmental modalities tailored to the needs of each pupil and their family.

### **Feedback – See separate policy**

Verbal and/or written feedback will focus on the students' main learning objective rather than constantly correcting technical inaccuracies.

If there are too many comments or annotations the student may find it overwhelming which may affect their motivation and self-esteem.

Teachers therefore use their professional judgement to correct errors, e.g., spellings, grammar, punctuation, calculations and factual inaccuracies.

We believe it is important to emphasise the positive aspects of a student's work to maintain their motivation.

Work must be marked weekly and discussed with the student in DIT each week.

Students need to understand the marking criteria, so they know what the teacher's expectations are.

Students need opportunities to read their teacher's feedback in subsequent lessons and be given the opportunity to respond and improve work in DIT.

Comments should be written in language which is easily understood by the student. Where students are not able to read the feedback, such as in the Nurture Centre, annotations or stickers which they can understand will be used.

It is not always appropriate or useful to mark every piece of work in depth, but it is essential that the teacher acknowledges that the work has been viewed.

## **We utilise two types of lesson planning systems- 'Normal' Lessons and Intervention Lessons**

**'Normal' lessons:** These are the daily diet that students receive and should contain elements of the following AfL strategies:

(All staff MUST plan using the 'Accelerated Learning Cycle Model')

### **At the planning stage:**

- Use assessments from the plenary of the last lesson assessment related to success criteria
- Are student secure/require further differentiation? Peer / self-assessment
- Generate open ended questions, differentiated to assess understanding of the more able to provide further challenge in next lesson during plenary
- Use information from marking - responses from students to teacher's comments

### **During the Introduction**

- If appropriate, spend time re-visiting feedback from the last piece of work marked
- Recap on previous learning—What did you learn in our last lesson?
- Share LO for the lesson. What does this mean? What do you know already?
- Introduce Success Criteria - older students can generate their own - what will make this a good piece of work? How will know I have been successful in this lesson?
- Model the activity
- Use focussed questions to check understanding
- Ensure activities are engaging and varied Main Activity
- Identify in the planning individual students to work with for the duration of the main activity (Rotate this between students during the week)
- Use mini plenaries for example to revisit LO and Success Criteria to share a good example - have they achieved all elements of the learning objective?
- Consider extension activities for those who complete early and also means for students to be independent/self-checking whilst support staff are working with other individuals/groups

### **Plenary**

- Revisit LO and Success criteria - what have we been learning about today? Have we achieved all the success criteria?
- Peer/ self-assess work against success criteria - make an improvement
- Visual signs e.g., use of thumbs up / thumbs down
- Use of Talk Partners

### **Intervention lessons**

The intervention lessons are based on the DTT (diagnosis, therapy, testing) system. The 'normal' lessons are where a teacher would diagnose a student's weakness and the intervention is the therapy. It is vital that after the intervention (therapy), that the teacher tests the student/s on that 'I can statement' to gauge if more intervention is needed. The intervention lessons should follow the following structure:

- a. Differentiated starter
- b. Teacher input
- c. Instant feedback
- d. Testing