Learning & Teaching Policy

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1. Aims

At Serenity School, we believe that every student 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.

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2. Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles at Serenity School are deeply rooted in our commitment to **Inclusion, Independence, and Self Worth**. These principles underpin all aspects of teaching and learning:

- **Inclusion:** We believe that every student has the right to access a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum. We provide a supportive learning environment that meets the diverse needs of all students.

- **Independence:** We encourage students to develop autonomy in their learning. This includes fostering decision-making skills, encouraging problem-solving, and promoting the ability to work both collaboratively and independently.

- **Self-Worth:** We aim to build students' confidence and self-esteem through positive reinforcement, celebrating achievements, and providing opportunities for students to reflect on their progress.

Pupils learn best at our school when they:

- Have their basic physical needs met
- Feel secure, safe and valued
- Feel a sense of belonging to the group
- Are engaged and motivated
- Can see the relevance of what they are doing
- Know what outcome is intended
- Can link what they are doing to other experiences
- Understand the task
- Have the physical space and the tools needed
- Have access to the necessary materials
- Are not disrupted or distracted by others
- Can work with others or on their own, depending on the task
- Are guided, taught or helped in appropriate ways at appropriate times

- Can practise what they are learning

- Can apply the learning in both familiar and new contexts

- Can persevere when learning is hard

- Can manage their emotions if things are not going well

- Recognise that all learners make mistakes and mistakes can help us learn

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

Teaching and learning at Serenity School involve a collaborative effort from all members of the school community. Each stakeholder has specific roles and responsibilities:

- **Teachers:**
  - Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards   Teachers' Standards
  - Plan and deliver high-quality, inclusive lessons that cater to the diverse needs of students.
  - Use a range of assessment strategies to monitor student progress and provide constructive feedback.
  - Foster a classroom environment that promotes independence, inclusion, and self-worth.
  - Update parents/carers on pupils' progress half termly, and produce a written report on their child's progress during Annual Reviews.
  - Engage in continuous professional development to enhance their teaching practice and subject knowledge.
  - Meet the expectations set out in our Curriculum Policy, SEND Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Academic Assessment Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

- **Progress Partners:**
  - Know pupils well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs.
  - Provide targeted support during lessons to help students access the curriculum and achieve their learning goals.
  - Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness.
  - Use agreed assessment for learning strategies.
  - Use effective marking and feedback as required.
  - Engage in providing inspiring lessons and learning opportunities.
  - Feedback observations of pupils to teachers.
  - Liaise with class teacher during planning to make sure they have understood expectations for learning.
  - Identify and use resources to support learning.
  - Have high expectations and celebrate achievement
  - Engage in ongoing training to better understand and meet the needs of the students they support.

- o Meet the expectations set out in our Curriculum Policy, SEND Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Academic Assessment Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

- **Subject Leaders:**

  - o Oversee the development and implementation of curriculum plans within their subject areas.

  - o Support teachers in delivering high-quality lessons that align with the school's core principles.

  - o Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies and student outcomes within their subject area.

  - o Meet the expectations set out in our Curriculum Policy, SEND Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Academic Assessment Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

- **Senior Leaders:**

  - o Set a clear vision for teaching and learning that aligns with the school's core values of inclusion, independence, and self-worth.

  - o Provide strategic direction and support for curriculum development, assessment, and staff professional development.

  - o Ensure that resources are allocated effectively to support high-quality teaching and learning across the school.

  - o Meet the expectations set out in our Curriculum Policy, SEND Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Academic Assessment Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

- **Students:**

  - o Take an active role in their learning by setting personal goals (where appropriate), engaging in lessons, and completing tasks.

  - o Reflect on their progress and work towards becoming independent learners.

  - o Show respect for the learning environment and the rights of others to learn.

  - o Meet the expectations set out in our Curriculum Policy, SEND Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Academic Assessment Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

- **Parents and Carers:**

  - o Support their child's education by ensuring regular attendance and engagement with school activities.

  - o Communicate with the school about their child's progress and participate in parent-teacher meetings.

  - o Encourage and reinforce the school's core values of inclusion, independence, and self-worth at home.

- **Governors:**

  - o Monitor the implementation of the teaching and learning policy and hold the headteacher accountable for its effectiveness.

  - o Ensure that resources are used effectively to support teaching and learning.

  - o Review and approve the school's strategic plans related to curriculum, teaching, and learning.

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. Planning

Curriculum planning at Serenity School is an ongoing, reflective process that involves all members of the teaching staff. Planning is structured into three levels:

- **Long-Term Plans:** These outline the broad topics and themes that will be covered throughout the year, ensuring a cohesive and comprehensive curriculum.

- **Medium-Term Plans:** These provide more detailed outlines for each term, identifying specific learning objectives, teaching strategies, and assessment methods.

- **Short-Term Plans:** These are daily or weekly lesson plans that include specific activities, resources, and differentiation strategies to meet the needs of all students.

All planning is informed by regular assessment of student progress and is adapted to address the evolving needs of our students.

7. Learning Environment

The learning environment at Serenity School is designed to be inclusive, supportive, and conducive to learning:

- **Classroom Setup:** Classrooms are arranged to support a variety of teaching methods, including group work, individual learning, and hands-on activities. Resources are accessible to all students, and displays reflect student work, key concepts, and positive reinforcement of the core principles.

- **Safety and Well-being:** Classrooms are safe, clean, and welcoming. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning spaces, reflecting our principle of independence.

- **Visual and Sensory Support:** We use a range of visual aids, sensory tools, and adaptive technologies to support the diverse needs of our students, ensuring that all learners can engage meaningfully with the curriculum.

8. Differentiation and Adaptive Teaching

At Serenity School, differentiation is at the heart of our teaching practices. We adapt our teaching to meet the diverse needs of all students, ensuring that every learner can achieve success:

- **Individual Learning Plans (ILPs):** Each student has a personalised learning plan that outlines their specific goals, strategies, and support needs. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated.

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Lessons are differentiated by task, outcome, and support to ensure that all students can access the curriculum. This includes using varied teaching strategies, such as scaffolding, modelling, and peer support.

- **Specialist Support:** We work closely with a multi-agency team, including therapists, counsellors, and specialist teachers, to provide additional support for students with specific needs.

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9. Assessment, Recording, and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process at Serenity School. We use a range of assessment methods to monitor student progress and inform teaching:

- **Formative Assessment:** Ongoing assessment is used to provide feedback during the learning process, helping students understand their strengths and areas for improvement.

- **Summative Assessment:** Formal assessments are conducted at the end of each term or unit to evaluate student achievement and progress against set targets.

- **Personalised Targets:** Students are involved in setting their own learning targets, fostering a sense of ownership and independence in their learning.

- **Reporting:** Regular reports are shared with parents and carers, detailing student progress, areas for development, and next steps.

- **Recording:** Students' progress is recorded using the school's assessment tool – Solar, and for Nurture pupils, MAPP Assessment trackers. Progress is updated at least weekly. Pupils are recorded as making Beginning, Developing, Secure, Enhanced (BRAG) progress.

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9. Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning, regular monitoring and evaluation are conducted throughout the school:

- **Lesson Observations:** Senior leaders and subject leaders conduct regular lesson observations to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Where staff are identified as needing support, this is provided to ensure that pupils benefit from high quality teaching.

- **Learning Walks:** Informal learning walks provide opportunities to observe classroom practices, student engagement, and the learning environment.

- **Data Analysis:** Student progress data is regularly analysed to identify trends, areas for improvement, and the effectiveness of interventions.

- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Feedback from students, parents, and staff is gathered through surveys, meetings, and consultations to inform school improvement efforts.

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10. Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Continuous professional development is a key priority at Serenity School. We provide ongoing training and development opportunities for all staff to ensure that they are equipped to meet the diverse needs of our students:

- **INSET Days:** Regular INSET days are scheduled for whole-school training on key areas such as inclusive teaching strategies, behaviour management, and assessment for learning.

- **Staff Meetings:** Weekly staff meetings provide opportunities for sharing best practices, discussing student progress, and planning collaboratively.

- **External Training:** Staff are encouraged to attend external courses and conferences to stay updated on the latest developments in education and to bring new ideas back to the school.

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11. Links with Other Policies

This policy is linked to several other key policies at Serenity School, which together support our core values of Inclusion, Independence, and Self Worth:

- Behaviour Policy

- Curriculum Policy

- SEND Policy and Information Report

- Marking and Feedback Policy

- Assessment Policy

- Equality Information and Objectives

- Home-School Agreement

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governors to ensure it remains aligned with our school's mission and effectively supports the needs of all students.