



# **ROWHILL SCHOOL TEACHING LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY**

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**Policy ratified**

**Policy Review**

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# ROWHILL SCHOOL TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

Curriculum policy  
Curriculum matrix  
Provision matrix

## MISSION STATEMENT

Rowhill School expects that all students should aspire to be:

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors

## PHILOSOPHY

This policy reflects the school values and philosophy in relation to teaching and learning. It sets out a framework within which all staff can operate and gives guidance on practice within school. Its purpose is to impact positively on classroom practice and to ensure that it promotes high expectations of staff and pupils about pupil achievement, teaching standards, and the learning environment.

## INTRODUCTION

At Rowhill School we believe that carefully planned, purposeful and well directed teaching and learning is essential to achieve raising of standards in our pupils. Pupils who come to the school will usually arrive with a history of exclusions, part-time education, several changes of school and periods of very little formal education. Many will have had little support in their learning beyond school and have no incentive to increase their knowledge or skills and to achieve their potential. An increasing number have emotional damage that is so embedded that they are not able to absorb new concepts, skills or information despite them having the cognitive potential to do so. As a result pupils will have weak basic skills, including their literacy and numeracy, and fear taking risks when faced with any new challenge. This complex combination of need significantly impacts on their ability to learn and requires constant reinforcement, encouragement, flexibility, reassessment and refocus collectively from all staff in all potential learning situations. Pupils will therefore have formidable barriers to traditional learning practices and as a result strategies and interventions will be needed to reduce the blocks before pupils are comfortable accessing and engaging in lessons.

## AIMS (INTENT)

The aims of this policy are to ensure that, through high quality teaching, we enable all our pupils to:

- Engage in the learning process and hence improve self-confidence and esteem
- Achieve their potential through quality SEND teaching
- To gain functional literacy and numeracy competency accreditation
- Grow and develop in a positive learning environment

- Be supported with their social, emotional and wellbeing
- Be safe and make informed decisions in life
- Have access to a wide range of academic, vocational and life skill experiences
- Possess a strong sense of moral values with a tolerance, appreciation and understanding of other cultures, faiths and backgrounds within our communities

## **OUR PRINCIPLES**

The following principles underpin all teaching and learning at Rowhill School. Thorough planning of Programmes of Study, Schemes of Work and short-term plans give a detailed overview of the focus of all planned learning intentions and activities for each year group in every subject. And focus on broad coverage, functional content, strategic focus on learning needs and well sequenced progression to ensure all pupils access are relevant curriculum offer.

- Phases within lessons should support the learning objective of the lesson by introducing, developing and reviewing this focus while maintaining a sharp beginning, cohesion across the phases of the session and a clear end
- Pupils should know what they are learning, and why, as well as the extent of the progress they are making
- While the teacher orchestrates the structure of learning, pupils should have opportunities to enquire, question and explore so that they can apply their learning and practitioners can consolidate and build on pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes
- Opportunities to reinforce literacy, numeracy, ICT, creativity are integral to all planning and teaching
- Timings of different parts of the lesson should fit the purposes of the intended focus for learning
- While it is necessary to plan across terms and weeks, to build in progression and to cover content, such planning should be adapted to meet the needs of pupils' learning in response to assessment and on-going review
- Within the Lower Primary Hub the importance of building on children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) should be recognised; looking at learning across all six areas of learning provides the best foundation for children's future success
- All planning makes full use of any Support Staff resource available to encourage effective learning, independence, focus and classroom organisation

Assessment and evaluation is ongoing both formally and informally and includes planned opportunities for self and peer monitoring

## **HOW LEARNING TAKES PLACE (IMPLEMENTATION)**

We know that young people learn in a variety of different ways. Understanding the different strategies they use for learning is important in planning and delivering successful lessons. The following principles all play a part in ensuring our pupils can learn effectively:

- Pupils experiencing success are more likely to succeed at the next task therefore all activities set should give them the opportunity to succeed
- Pupils are more likely to respond positively to a challenge that extends their knowledge, skills and understanding which is enjoyable, stimulating and interesting

- Learning needs to be revisited with many concepts and skills returned to and presented differently and / or extended. Frequent practice through repetition and reinforcement has an important part to play in the mastery of key skills
- Learning is mastered more easily if it is based on practical experience and makes use of as many senses as possible. Many of our pupils learn kinaesthetically and visually and will not respond to high levels of teacher talking/explaining/giving instructions
- Pupils are better motivated when they are learning in a structured and stimulating environment
- Some learning is enhanced by the opportunity to share and discuss ideas with others. Collaboration and cooperation have an important role in developing pupils' social skills
- Some learning activities are better tackled alone and in a quiet environment in which children can concentrate and reflect
- Pupils often learn effectively through discovering things for themselves and is most effective when presented in a well-structured and safe environment
- Pupils learn through question, answers and reflection. A carefully planned didactic approach to teaching which involves the whole class is one of the most efficient uses of the teacher's time and one which encourages our more reluctant enquirers to develop vital skills
- Pupils' learning is enhanced by having a flexible curriculum that responds to personal experiences and immediate events such as and enrichment projects
- Young people learn more effectively if they feel good about themselves. They need to experience praise and feel valued by both teachers and support staff

## **SUPPORTING TEACHING AND LEARNING**

At Rowhill School we maintain high expectations in terms of attitudes to work, behaviour and attendance and do not excuse the special needs of our young people as a barrier to their continued learning and developing. We have clear systems in place the support positive attitudes to these areas, which are constantly monitored and reinforced throughout the day. Our pupils are supported through difficulties they encounter in their learning by carefully tiered interventions using different personnel in the school with the ultimate aim always being to maintain each individual pupil on track with their learning. To that end every lesson is carefully planned to ensure that pupils:

1. Acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes
2. Develop a concept or process
3. Use, consolidate or refine skills and deepen understanding

Staff will include the following teaching approaches as appropriate:

- Employ a variety of teaching styles, adapted to the needs of individual learners or the demands of the curriculum. Individual, group and whole class teaching
- Use provision mapping and differentiation to ensure high quality provision for all
- Ensure that, wherever possible, teaching is interactive and supported by practical resources and auditory or visual prompts
- Use open-ended questions to engage curiosity and challenge understanding
- Identify key vocabulary and reinforce it visually

- Display key information on the classroom wall
- Create a positive and supportive learning environment in which the pupils are encouraged to be responsible, resourceful and resilient with regard to their own learning
- Publicly and privately (as appropriate) recognise and praise pupils' efforts and achievements
  - o Use thinking skills techniques to help the pupils understand their own learning
- Ensure pupils are ready to learn by having their basic needs maintained, for example food and water can ensure they have the energy they need.
- Set individual targets that are shared with the pupils and regularly reviewed.
- Encourage pupils to verbalise what they are doing, why they are doing it, what they have learned and what they need to do next
- Practice for exam/test situations

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING**

We aim to offer a rich and varied range of opportunities for learning. Many of our pupils will have had very limited experiences in their lives and are fearful of anything new. We aim to provide as many opportunities for new experiences as possible to reduce their reluctance to engage in these and to increase their confidence in themselves in a variety of situations. This is also important in motivating the pupils and encouraging them to become independent learners and includes:

- Well-structured lessons
- In literacy and numeracy interventions
- Interactive displays, including the pupils' own work
- Use of the school grounds, for example Forest School
- Visits to places of interest including the local environment, museums, exhibitions, galleries, wildlife areas, theatres, rural and coastal settings, London, etc.
- A residential visit which provides the opportunity for in-depth study recreation, social responsibility and understanding
- Assemblies, concerts and drama productions
- Shared learning across the primary and secondary phases e.g. paired reading, sports support, etc
- Specialist teachers, artists, musicians, theatre groups, coaches and other visitors both on and off-site
- Celebrating talents, interests and achievements with pupils from other special and mainstream schools
- Extra-curricular clubs and activities
- Curriculum theme weeks and Focus Days and other opportunities for cross curricular working
- Enrichment Curriculum
- Practical activities and opportunities for teamwork

Homework is always a challenge when pupils' lives outside of school present inconsistencies in support and environmental factors. Clearly there is also value in providing pupils with independent learning opportunities to be completed in their own time. Therefore, homework should not be seen as something we do not offer. Homework may be necessary to complete a particular task in school or for coursework requirements for accreditation. In these circumstances the use of the Pastoral Support Officers liaising with home to try to stress the importance of the particular assignment

should help produce a more positive outcome. Equally pupils taking home activities that develop basic skills such as reading can be offered again with individual home support enlisted as appropriate.

## **THE CLASSROOM CONDUCIVE TO TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Excellent classroom management is essential to effective teaching and learning. Our pupils need to feel completely secure in each learning environment if they are to be in a stress-free state in which to learn. Staff at Rowhill School will ensure that they provide this environment by utilising the following classroom management strategies.

- Routines are set so that the pupils know what is expected of them at different times of the day and in different situations
- Pupils are set work that is appropriate to their ability and stage of learning
- Staff ensure that the pupils clearly understand the learning task, what they are expected to do and the reason for doing it. Learning objectives and success criteria are clearly explained to the pupils. Pupils can access the Learning Objective throughout the lesson
- Assessment for Learning techniques is used to enhance learning
- Pupils are taught to be organised and to take responsibility for their learning and generally around the school
- High standards of presentation of work are expected.
- Pupils can access their personal targets at any time
- Pupils are taught to value the school resources and to use them carefully and effectively
- Teaching resources are appropriately filed and stored and are provided in a way that enables the pupils to develop independence from the teacher
- Displays and resources support all learners by using a variety of methods and reinforcing key vocabulary

## **ASSESSMENT (IMPACT)**

Rowhill School believes that regular and assessment is essential for ensuring successful teaching and learning. Pupil development should be at the heart of our assessment policy. Assessment enables pupils to understand where they are in their learning and to understand what they need to do next. Assessment provides pupils with a means to explore their own progress and development. Assessments should involve consistent use of plenaries, soliciting feedback from pupils and evaluating every lesson to ascertain the occurrence of learning. Assessment should take into account the individual needs educational need of the pupils and to use the best means of challenging and motivating them to learn.

Rowhill School uses a arrange of assessments to ascertain need and progress and will largely dependent on the student, the content of the course and most appropriate form of assessment for the subject.

All assessment strategies are designed to ensure all aspects of student development and progress is measured in all areas, including educational, social and emotional and health, particularly mental health and wellbeing.

The role of teacher in assessment ensures they should:

- Accurately assess pupils on entry to the school to ascertain a baseline level.
- Recognise that all pupils can improve; and that the plans (sequenced and differentiated) ensure all student can progress and achieve.
- Appreciate that good assessment is an essential part of the teaching and learning
- Be positive in feedback and ensure the student understands the next steps to achieve
- Understand learner motivation by emphasising progress and achievement
- Be clear about a learner's strengths and challenges and plan accordingly
- Encourage independent learning by enabling students to take charge of their learning though developing their skills of reflection, self- assessment and their capacity to identify next steps;
- Praise progress and reward achievement through comments and other motivators;
- Recognise that assessment for learning should be used in all areas of educational `activity and not just the academic but the personal development as well.
- Make it fit for purpose, varied and use it to inform future planning and teaching.

To make feedback to pupils' effective teachers should ensure that:

- Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and what they can expect from the teacher. Pupils should expect the feedback they receive to explain what they have done well with reasons and where and how they can improve and for it to be as soon after the completed work as possible.
- The learning objectives and learning outcomes are used as the benchmark for the teacher's oral and written feedback. They should be shared and made clear to the pupils in advance of attempting the task.

Recording and reporting assessments should be consistent and effective teachers must:

- Keep assessments through use of pupil asset 3 times a year for all subjects based on starting points and agreed targets for the year.
- Keep assessments in relation to award-based qualifications in line with awarding body schedules
- Keep assessments in relation to a range of pastoral and student development areas such as behaviour, attendance, emotional regulation, Boxall profiles, and other non- academic routines. Which support personal development plans
- Use their subject knowledge and skills of the individual and the area/ subject being assessed to make quality judgements which support further learning and development.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION (MODERATING IMPACT)**

Rowhill School expectations are:

- Maintaining the quality of teaching is central to ensuring outstanding pupil progress. The school expects 100% of lesson observations to be good or outstanding.
- Teachers will be formally observed in the classroom by a member of the Senior Leadership Team three times per year. Further informal observations may take place for example learning walks and drop in observations.
- Teachers will receive feedback promptly.

- In order to ensure that quality is maintained relative to other similar establishments, external professionals, such as LA School Improvement Officers, and senior leaders from partner special schools, will be used to provide an external measure of quality assurance.
- If a lesson is graded as Requires Improvement a support plan will be developed. If a teacher continues to have lessons graded Requires Improvement they will be moved to informal capability and the support package strengthened for up to 6 weeks. Notice of a move to Formal capability procedures will be given where there is a failure to improve the quality of teaching after 2 to 3 observations.
- The SLT will carry out work scrutiny at regular intervals to monitor the quality of marking and feedback to pupils.
- Rigorous moderation will underpin the monitoring of assessment. Moderation will take place at department, whole school and inter-school levels.
- External moderation validation will take place as directed by the Local Authority supported by the KsenT group.
- The teaching standards will be used as a yardstick for quality teaching across the school