

Teaching and Learning Policy

This policy has been written for...	All staff and students at West Heath School
Copies of this policy may be obtained from...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School web site - http://www.westheathschool.com • It is available as a hard copy on request from the school office • Hard copies for reference are filed in the staff room and staff library
This policy links with the following policies	This policy is referenced in a number of other policies: Curriculum Policy, SEN Policy, Quality of Opportunity Policy
Participants and consultees in the formulation of this policy were...	The Principal, senior leadership team, student services committee and the trustees of the School. A representative group of parents were invited to make comments and suggestions.
Edition, Review frequency and dates	This is edition 5, released March 2018 This policy will be reviewed every one year It is due for review in March 2019
Relevant statutory guidance, circulars, legislation & other sources of information are...	
The Lead Member of staff is	Vice Principal Teaching & Learning
Definitions and key terms used in this policy...	
The Rationale and Purpose of this policy	This policy provides an overall purpose for learning and teaching in West Heath School and describes how we address the diverse needs of all our learners.
Appendices	This policy has 3 appendices: Assessment Recording and Reporting, Differentiation, Work at Home
Copying	No school policy is ever written in isolation. Acknowledgement of sources of advice and significant influence in the development and recording of policies at West Heath School are noted on the front page. We request that any schools or organisations incorporating large sections of this policy without alteration should make similar appropriate acknowledgement.

Introduction

The ability to learn is absolutely crucial for life in our ever changing world of education, work and leisure. West Heath School has a key responsibility for developing successful learners and providing the highest possible quality of teaching and learning experiences.

It is recognised that learning is a natural human activity which takes place in a range of contexts. Learning takes place in the home, workplace and wider community, utilising a vast range of resources and media and ICT. As a school we actively seek to support and facilitate excellence in learning and teaching through quality partnerships which involve learners, teachers, parents, employers, other education providers and the wider community.

The learning process takes account of the learners' current progress. Assessment is integral to the learning process and includes feedback on ongoing and overall progress made by the learners. Continual reflection and adapting of practice is central to continuous improvement in learning and teaching and raising achievement.

People learn in different ways and in contexts. West Heath School encourages and promotes diversity in learning strategies to include all learners and to meet the needs of the individual.

Learning establishments are about people and the relationships established. There is a strong link between excellence in learning, high self-esteem and good relationships. It is also recognised that motivation, high expectation and collaborative working are essential factors in promoting successful learning. The creation of a positive climate and ethos promotes positive behaviour which is essential for effective learning to take place.

Those who facilitate learning recognise that they are leaders of learning. They should be successful learners themselves and take part in the relevant review and development process and appropriate training opportunities.

The Aim of this policy..

That the Community of West Heath School understand their role and responsibility in providing first class learning opportunities.

The Objective of this policy..

That all children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society.

Procedures & Practices

Policy statement

The main components for this policy are:

1. Climate for Learning
2. Contexts for Learning
3. Successful Learning and Teaching
4. Assessment
5. Lifelong Learning
6. Partnerships in Learning
7. Leading Learning

The outcomes and responsibilities outlined in this policy take account of the principles described above

1. Climate for Learning

Impact statement:

Climate, ethos and relationships which encourage successful learning are evident in all learning environments.

SLT will:

- provide guidance to support Learning and Teaching to develop positive learning experiences for all learners;
- provide opportunities, which are accessible to all, for the development of learning experiences which promote enjoyment, challenge, relevance, innovation, mutual respect and positive relationships;
- provide resources, according to need, including continuing professional development (CPD)/ training opportunities for all employees which support effective learning and teaching;
- value and celebrate successful learning and quality teaching;
- support sharing of effective practice throughout and across the Learning Community.
- Learning walks to monitor to quality of T&L and to provide incisive feedback for teaching staff

Learning Directors will:

- lead the creation, development and maintenance of a climate which supports all learners to become confident individuals, successful learners, responsible citizens and effective contributors;
- provide resources including CPD/ training opportunities which are accessible to all employees which support effective learning and teaching;
- value and celebrate successful learning and quality teaching;
- support sharing of effective practice within the establishment and partners.

All Staff will:

- recognise the importance of, and develop, positive relationships, climate and ethos in promoting effective learning and teaching for all learners;
- recognise individual needs and set high standards with all learners;
- offer learning experiences which promote challenge, relevance and enjoyment;
- value and celebrate innovation and achievement with all learners;
- monitor, evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness and impact of the learning experiences offered in collaboration with the learners;
- take part in appropriate CPD and modify practice as required;
- take opportunities to share their own practice.

2. Contexts for Learning

Impact statement

All learners benefit from a wide range of contexts and learning environments including the home, the educational establishment, the workplace and the wider community.

It is evident that staff are knowledgeable and receptive to the most appropriate contexts for learners and take advantage of these to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

SLT will:

- keep abreast of research and educational developments nationally and internationally;
- ensure that all staff have access to opportunities to develop their knowledge of current research and developments in relation to contexts for learning;
- take account of the wide range of contexts for learning which allows for inspirational learning and teaching;
- monitor and evaluate the impact on the learning and teaching of these contexts for learning and use this information to support continuous improvement.

Learning Directors will:

- take account of current credible research and maximise the potential of new developments in establishments/services;
- take account of learning opportunities in a wide range of situations;
- provide leadership and foster inspiration to promote effective use of contexts for learning;
- create a balance between structured frameworks and creative approaches;
- have a duty, where appropriate, to foster positive partnerships with parents/carers and the wider learning community as a crucial context for learning.

All Staff will:

- be aware that learning takes place in circumstances other than structured, planned programmes;
- access opportunities to develop their knowledge of current research and developments in relation to contexts for learning;
- be confident with a range of learning and teaching contexts and adopt or adapt these to suit the needs of learners;
- achieve a balance between structured framework and creative approaches;
- have a duty, where appropriate, to foster positive partnerships with parents/carers and the wider learning community as a crucial context for learning.

3. Expectations for Successful Teaching & Learning

Impact Statement

I enjoy learning at West Heath because my lessons are exciting and challenging. Staff are aware of my strengths and help me to know what I need to do to improve. Staff understand my personal challenges and modify lessons to help me – Mission statement for teaching at West Heath - N Taylor - 2016

Lesson expectations at West Heath School

All lessons will have:

Key vocabulary always available

Progress-focused learning outcomes always available
Success criteria always available (3 levels of modification).
Stretch and challenge for all levels
Learning modified for all learners to be able to access
Good pace to maintain engagement

Successful learning is achieved through progressive, high quality teaching and positive interactions between and among staff, parents, carers and learners.

Formative assessment is an integral part of effective learning and teaching: learners understand learning intentions and success criteria and are given feedback on how to develop their learning.

All staff and learners identify and have an opportunity to reflect on their personal learning experience and use the evidence to inform next steps.

All learners' play an active part in, and take responsibility for, their own learning as appropriate.

The needs of individual learners are met through the use of a variety of teaching approaches and resources including the full effective use of ICT.

Learners have opportunities to learn in collaborative situations.

SLT will:

- promote learning and teaching to reflect the findings of current research and educational developments;
- ensure that time, resources and CPD are made available to facilitate quality learning and teaching;
- challenge, support and evaluate the impact of practice;
- Encourage the establishment of partnerships which support the full range of learning and teaching approaches.

Learning Directors will:

- lead effective learning and teaching developments;
- encourage staff to be aware of and make effective use of formative assessment strategies;
- make arrangements for learners to discuss their learning regularly;
- challenge and support staff to maintain and improve learning and teaching approaches and monitor practice;
- encourage all staff to participate in CPD opportunities to maintain and improve effective learning and teaching;
- identify and facilitate the sharing of good practice, ideas and approaches to learning and teaching.

All staff will

- meet the needs of all learners by providing an effective balance of activities which support the diversity of learning styles and teaching approaches, including working collaboratively and the full and effective use of ICT;
- organise learners in appropriate and flexible groupings based, as appropriate, on interest, experience, attainment, stage and purpose;
- evaluate the effectiveness and impact of assessment procedures

and practices;

- share the learning intentions and success criteria with learners in an appropriate and relevant format and provide feedback to learners to inform the next steps in learning;
- help learners to identify and regularly reflect on their own evidence of learning and to enable them to set personal learning goals;
- provide a range of opportunities for learners to take an active part in their learning.
- reflect on their own learning and participate in relevant CPD to maintain and improve teaching;
- reflect on their own practice and share new ideas and approaches to learning and Teaching
- take account of the needs of all learners in planning and providing experiences.

4. Assessment

(See Assessment & Marking policy).

Impact Statement

Agreed standards are used consistently by those who facilitate learning.

At appropriate stages assessments are used to confirm the learner's progress and inform future learning.

Relevant reporting procedures are in place in line with appropriate guidelines.

SLT will

- Provide guidance on all aspects of assessment
- disseminate effective practice on assessment throughout all establishments and services;
- evaluate the effectiveness and impact of assessment procedures and practices;
- moderate assessment across the school;
- Develop a robust system to replace KS3 levels

Learning Directors will

- provide staff with time to discuss assessment strategies in relation to their own practice;
- provide staff time to discuss the quality and standard of learning with other professionals;
- challenge and support staff to maintain and improve assessment practices;
- put appropriate arrangements in place for summative assessment and tracking progress;
- ensure assessment outcomes are documented and shared with learners and relevant partners.

All Staff will

- plan for and use a range of evidence to assess learners' progress and to plan future learning;
- work together with other staff to share standards and assessment outcomes;
- report summative judgements to learners, parents and to others as appropriate.

5. Lifelong Learning

Impact Statement

All learners have the confidence, necessary skills and motivation for lifelong learning and preparation for adulthood

All learners experience as smooth a transition as possible in order to promote continuity and progression in their learning.

SLT will

- provide guidance, resources and frameworks to facilitate lifelong learning;
- provide opportunities for lifelong learning and encourage participation;
- provide guidance to establishments to facilitate and develop

- continuity of learning especially across all periods of transition;
- monitor, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of all periods of transitions;
- engage in learning opportunities to demonstrate the importance of lifelong learning.

Learning Directors will

- ensure staff are providing equality of opportunity for learners to develop the skills necessary for successful lifelong learning;
- promote continuity of learning, especially at periods of transition;
- ensure systems are in place for all staff to take account of prior learning and that it is recorded and shared with learners and partner establishments;
- engage in learning opportunities to demonstrate the importance of lifelong learning.

All Staff will

- promote learning as a lifelong activity;
- encourage learners to take advantage of lifelong learning opportunities;
- encourage learners to gather, organise and interpret evidence of their own learning to inform their next steps;
- take account of prior learning and learners' views and aspirations;
- record and share appropriate information;
- engage in learning opportunities to demonstrate the importance of lifelong learning

6. Partnerships in Learning

Impact Statement

Quality partnerships exist across each Learning Community.

Quality partnerships, including parents and carers, other groups and organisations support effective learning and teaching.

All staff are proactive in fostering and nurturing quality partnerships.

SLT will:

- provide leadership, advice and support to ensure effective partnership working with key groups, organisations, businesses and the wider community;
- promote partnership working which reflects national advice and research;
- provide support to enable quality partnership working to take place;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of partnership working on learning and teaching;
- provide appropriate CPD to enable effective partnership working to take place.
- quality assure external providers

Learning Directors will:

- encourage and ensure quality partnership working;
- create and maintain a climate which supports quality partnerships;
- support staff in providing opportunities and resources for partnership working;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of partnership working.

All Staff will:

- acquire knowledge and understanding of the range of partnership working;
- recognise their own role in working with partners and embed partnership working in their practice;
- convey to learners the role they play in any partnership;
- participate in CPD in order to develop quality partnership working

7. Leading Learning

Impact statement

All Staff recognise their role in leading learning.

All learners are given opportunities to take an active role in and take responsibility for their learning.

All staff work collaboratively in leading learning.

SLT will

- encourage, support and develop leadership skills and expertise;
- recognise, value and share practice in the leadership of learning;
- develop a shared vision that focuses on leading learning and teaching;

Learning Directors will

- support the development of professional expertise for all staff;
- recognise, value and share good practice in the leadership of learning;
- promote effective systems and communications to support leadership of learning and teaching;
- value the collective skills and experience of staff so that individuals and teams feel confident in leading learning and teaching;
- create opportunities to share good practice in leading learning and teaching.

All Staff will

- lead learning and teaching, both individually and collectively
- are committed to developing their own leadership skills
- recognise, value and share practice in the leadership of learning
- provide opportunities for learners to play an active role in and take responsibility for their learning
- learn from their own experience and that of others.

Persons with particular responsibilities

Vice Principal, Teaching & Learning

Other Participants & Stakeholders

Appendix 1

Assessment, Recording & Reporting

Introduction

The assessment, recording and reporting arrangements at West Heath School have evolved over several years to accurately reflect the complex needs of our students, the many and varied participants and stakeholders in their education and the variety of purposes served by their assessment.

Aims & Objectives

- To provide **accurate and current information** about the needs and difficulties, attainments and progress of students for the purposes of celebration (summatively) and planning (formatively).
- To assess **comprehensively** on all aspects of student achievement – educational, personal and social development and contributions made to the life of the school
- To involve and inform **all stakeholders and participants** in the educational process – the students, teachers and other staff, parents, local authorities and external agencies and other sources of specialist advice.
- To build confidence and a sense of **self-worth** in our students through an appreciation of their own successes.
- To enable students to take increasing **responsibility** for their own behaviour and **independence** in learning.

Strategies

The School has a comprehensive array of systems and procedures designed to serve a variety of purposes. These are set out below in two tables.

Table 1 sets out a description and explanatory comment for each component. For further details the individual assessment and reporting pro-formas should be consulted.

Given that our students have a complex combination of special educational needs addressed through a variety of interconnecting elements of provision and with several stakeholders and participants, it is not surprising that these arrangements are quite complex and perhaps at first bewildering. They have been designed to be fit for purpose without being administratively cumbersome. Nevertheless the commitment to assessment, recording and reporting at the New School is considerable and forms a higher proportion of staff time than is the case in a typical mainstream school.

The following table provides additional detail about each system.

Assessment and record of assessment	Description and explanatory comment
Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These reports and assessments are prepared outside the school. For their use in the Admission Process see that policy. The Statement of Special Educational needs informs and guides the whole of a student's career at the New School. • It is summarised in the form of a one page mind map by HEART Learning Director. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the relevant content for each student. This is a sensitive and confidential document and should not be released into the public domain. Any printed copies are the responsibility of the member of staff who produces them. • The supporting documentation is more technical and more sensitive this is kept in the students file in the school office in a secure cupboard. SLT, Learning Directors and Teachers have access to these files and make information available to other colleagues as is relevant and useful. Statements may be updated after annual reviews or at times of transition.
Education Health & Care Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are now in place for the majority of students to replace the existing SSEN and most students have gone through a transfer process to the new document. The documents are now kept up to date each year and reviewed three times per year. They are now a working document, focused on SMART targets for the forthcoming year ahead, in all areas if applicable – Education, Health and Care.
Preadmission Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Admission Process Policy
Post Admission Documentation Scan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the induction process a student's documentation is scanned by staff responsible for literacy, numeracy and language and communication. The purpose of this is to identify whether there are any issues that will affect a student's ability to access the curriculum. • If there is an issue with literacy a WRAT Assessment will be given to inform planning, if necessary a programme of support is planned. Part of the Language and Communication assessment is a classroom observation by a qualified Speech and Language Therapist. If significant issues are suspected a full Speech and Language assessment will be requested at the End of First Term Review. • HEART Learning Director alerts teachers to curriculum access issues either personally during the induction process or at staff meetings.

Assessment and record of assessment	Description and explanatory comment
Preliminary IEP Target Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students new to the school agree up to three preliminary targets with their Group Tutor. These usually relate to issues to do with induction and settling into the School. They are usually selected from a Target Bank. Sometimes they are highly particular to the student's situation and need – such as a phased induction of an intensely phobic youngster. These targets are used to plan the first round of daily targets against which progress is set. See guidance sheet on Target Setting.
Initial Curriculum assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally speaking our students react very negatively to formal testing which they find very intimidating. This is not surprising given their low self esteem and past negative experiences. Teachers therefore use informal methods – observation and discussion to ascertain students' knowledge and understanding. Although it may take some time to build up a full picture the knowledge gained is more complete and better informs planning. In particular, some students, who have missed topics, may have very erratic profiles – being very weak in some areas and strong in others. This approach therefore matches their needs better.
Daily Target setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily target setting is one of the main activities in Group Tutor Time, a 20 minute session at the start of the day which prepares and orientates students for the day ahead. They are informed by an assessment of performance on the day preceding, the I.E.P targets, and other prevailing issues. They provide a student with the next achievable step towards their long-term goal. Since over 80% of the objectives of SEN are social, emotional & behavioural - daily targets are mostly of this nature. Academic targets form part of lessons and are negotiated between teachers and students in that context. Students also set a daily points score relating to the Lesson by lesson tracking. (See below)
Lesson by Lesson Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' commitment to personal responsibility in relation to lessons is assessed at the end of each lesson according to the Respect Campaign indicators (Gold, Silver or Bronze star for positive behaviour and Red, Amber, Green for negative behaviour. Students are frequently invited to assess their own performance. Where their scores differ from the teachers this provides an opportunity for critical reflection and explanation. These qualitative scores are converted to points which are used to provide a day total. Taken together students have something to aim for each lesson and for each day.
Student Self Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some subjects teachers have developed pro-formas for students to make self –assessments at the end of the lesson. These are linked to lesson objectives and learning outcomes. These provide students with a sense of achievement and a focus for their efforts. Student Self Assessment is being increasingly developed as part of the school's efforts to encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.
Weekly Group Tutor reporting to Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This usually takes the form of a phone call discussion. Group tutors communicate to parents the progress and achievements of their son / daughter. The focus of the discussion is usually commitment to learning and positive achievements. However the communication is a two way process and parents are able to contribute information on the student's experience beyond school which may shed light and context on their school experience.

Assessment and record of assessment	Description and explanatory comment
Initial Placement Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a mini-annual review. • Full subject assessments are made and the issue to be decided is whether the placement should be made permanent. • Sometimes additional assessments (such as Speech and Language) are requested or additional provision such as individual report.
Annual Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are conducted according to the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice. See separate policy. • A full set of subject reports is provide comments on additional provision such as literacy, speech and language • There is also a reflective comment by the group tutor and Learning Director. The meeting is chaired by a Learning Director
Annual Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This gives an overview at the end of the academic year of students' positive achievements. • It may contain words of encouragement and guidance for the future but its tone is generally positive and celebratory. • They are presented by a visiting celebrity in the presence of an invited audience of parents and friends.
Parents' evenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are meetings held in January and February, one for each of Key Stages 2/3 and 4. • Parents have the opportunity to meet with each subject teacher for approximately 10 minutes to hear of progress and to discuss any concerns. • They are usually well attended and often students come with their parents / carers • A questionnaire is given to parents to ascertain their opinions. • Teachers have their subject records and examples of work available for parents
Placement (subsequent) Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This takes the form of an annual review in terms of the assessments and reports required. • In addition there will be incident reports. • A placement (subsequent) review is held when the assessment placement cannot be confirmed at the Initial Placement Review or there are difficulties with the placement; the outcome is usually a modification of the curriculum, additional support arrangements or in the event that these things have been tried and not succeeded, a termination of the placement.
Key Stage 3 Teacher Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As National Curriculum Levels have now been removed, we use SIMS Programme of Study to track KS3 student performance.
GCSE predicted grade tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See SIMS Achievement
GCSE results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are released in the third week August. • They are communicated to students by post and in addition over the telephone should they contact the school on the release date.
Achievement Planner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 11 students receive this instead of Progress report on Leavers' Day in July. • They take it with them to college or work.

Appendix 2

Work at Home

Introduction

Many of our students arrive with very negative feelings towards education. They have, in the main, experienced a lot of failure and unhappiness in the world of education. Often they have given up and perceive themselves as unintelligent and as "no-hopers". They often tell us so. They often avoid work as a strategy to avoid being seen as failures both at home and school. Homework has therefore to be seen within the broader context of restoring positive feelings towards education in general.

The Homework Policy at our school is such that students are not pressured to take huge amounts home as, for most, their experience of school and in particular the process of learning leaves them lacking confidence to work independently. Additionally many students are also poorly motivated and find the prospect of homework so daunting that it further impinges on their willingness or ability to engage with the curriculum.

We want our students to appreciate that learning is part of life and not just something for the years of compulsory schooling. We would like them to understand that they can learn much from the world of home and recreation, their local community and social interactions and through experiences of life – both success and failure. This takes time.

For those who have made some progress towards becoming independent and self-motivated learners, work at home can be of immense value. It helps to break down the artificial barriers between formal and informal learning and cultivates interests, habits and skills that will serve them well long after they have left us.

The implementation of this policy is therefore a matter of sensitive professional judgement. Students are treated equally, in that they all receive according to their needs and capacity. For some this will mean a minimal amount of homework with plenty of latitude. For others it will mean a generous helping of stimulating and thought provoking work served with encouragement and high expectations!

Homework Packs are sent home at the beginning of term one to be used in the event of the school being closed for snow or other such circumstances. Pupils wishing to complete this early are rewarded for their efforts.

At Key Stage 5, students are expected to complete coursework depending on the requirements of the external provider/course. We have systems in place to support learners to complete their studies and we try to use the terminology 'coursework' or 'non-contact work' as opposed to homework.

Aims & Objectives

- To provide opportunities to *complete* work begun in lessons to a high standard.
- To provide opportunities to *extend* work begun in lessons by further reflection, research and follow-up.
- To provide opportunities for *practice* and *consolidation* of skills, knowledge and understanding
- To provide opportunities for careful *preparation* for work done in school
- To provide opportunities for independent enquiry and learning and for cultivation of the discipline of study

Strategies

Work set to be done at home should be easier to reinforce success and less demanding than when students have support and instruction from a teacher.

Those students for whom homework is a realistic and appropriate expectation are issued with a planner in which to record homework as it is given. There is space for a due by date and to tick when done. Parents are encouraged to sign on completion of homework set. Students are encouraged to keep their planners with them at all times and staff should exercise vigilance to ensure that students use their planners to record the setting of homework. Students who fail to bring their planners are given a substitute sheet that should be copied up.

Students who complete the work set for home should be given lots of praise. It is important to acknowledge the effort made - quite apart from the quality of the work itself. Points may be used to reward such effort.

Students need to receive the message that they are doing the work for themselves. If it is not done, they are depriving themselves rather than the teacher. Therefore the use of sanctions is inappropriate for students who fail to do their work at home, though they certainly need to hear the message that they would be better off had it been done. This approach will, in the long run, stand more chance of bringing about the change we are seeking. The key is encouragement rather than demand.

The discipline of doing work at home is often one of the first targets set.

Special Circumstances

Parents also share the responsibility for work done at home. They are our partners. However, it can be counter-productive when there are unhappy relationships at home. In such cases parents prefer not to provoke ructions by making homework an issue.

Some homes are not conducive to homework. In such cases staff have to be flexible and tolerant. There may be no suitable room with a table and chair to work free from interruptions and noise. Sometimes students may need particular support. There is also the facility of a homework club during lunchtimes on request. This is particularly useful for GCSE students completing coursework.

Our response to pupils not doing homework is flexible and decided in relation to the particular student's needs and capabilities. In these cases the parents will be involved in the discussion and our aim will be to help cultivate a homework routine even if initially the steps are small.

Staffing & Resources

Some of our students are fortunate enough to have a computer at home. This is an additional resource and students are encouraged to use IT and to bring their work in on disk or send it to the teacher attached to an E-mail.

Strategies

At Sixth Form, students are supported to complete their non-contact work. In providers where more students are located, staff are based in rooms on site where direct support is offered to help complete coursework.

External Links

Parents, as discussed above, are our partners and we rely on them to exert their influence in the home. We encourage our students to use the local library for research material.

Appendix 3

Modification of Learning (Differentiation)

Introduction

Treating our students as individuals lies at the heart of everything we do. Our teachers are first of all focussed on students and secondly on their subject. This is the essence of what makes West Heath School special.

Modification of teaching to promote learning (differentiation) is based on the understanding that each student is a unique individual. They are “different”. They have:

- diverse backgrounds with different experiences
- different emotional and physical needs
- differing abilities
- different interests and preferences
- different learning styles
- different social needs
- different personalities

Whilst they are entitled to be treated equally it is entirely inappropriate to treat them all in the same way. The objectives of a lesson will usually be the same or at least similar for all but a range of strategies will be needed to help students achieve them. This is the challenge and the skill of modifying learning.

Aims & Objectives

*I enjoy learning at West Heath because my lessons are exciting and challenging. Staff are aware of my strengths and help me to know what I need to do to improve. Staff understand my personal challenges and modify lessons to help me – Mission statement for teaching at West Heath –
N Taylor - 2016*

Work will be modified in order:

- to help all students to access the curriculum as fully as practicable
- to help all students to fulfil their potential
- to deliver the curriculum to each individual in the way which is most appropriate, enjoyable and beneficial
- to identify opportunities for support in learning

Strategies

It is not the purpose of this document to produce a comprehensive description of the many strategies that are available to the teacher. Many good books have been written on the subject. Below is a list of illustrative examples under 6 headings of some strategies which are available to the teacher. It is expected that schemes of work will provide details of how the work will be differentiated in order to satisfy the lesson objectives.

1. **By understanding and knowledge:** - Our SENCo provides a database of primary diagnoses and recommended strategies from each individual students' EHCP. This informs teaching and learning.
2. **By task:** - Students new to a group may need to fill gaps in their knowledge and understanding. In hierarchical subjects such as mathematics and languages students may work at different levels. A variant of this is to provide a bank of tasks from which students may select or be directed according to their needs.
3. **By outcome:** The same task may be completed with varying levels of sophistication. In art, for example, one student may produce a piece of work showing a great deal of imagination and skill, while another will produce work of a much lower standard. Teachers are encouraged to set tasks that allow for success at a range of levels. Positive marking will both acknowledge this and point the way forward to higher achievement.
4. **By support:** A variety of methods are available including teacher support, the use of a Teaching Assistant (TA), the use of templates for IT, and vocabulary lists.. Teachers are encouraged to find varied and imaginative ways to assist students to perform tasks. Teaching Assistants (TA) are a much-valued part of our team. Whenever possible, TAs receive training from teachers on Staff Training Days and this will include an overview of the Schemes of Work as well as specific issues relating to that subject. This reduces the time needed to brief support assistants before and during lessons.
5. **By feedback:** This is given in a way that is most appropriate for the educational and emotional needs of the students. Students with literacy needs are given plenty of verbal feedback and any written comments within their literacy capability. Some people with low self-esteem react very badly to criticism. They need to have plenty of praise with deficiencies and areas for improvement pointed out with great sensitivity. It is important that students learn to take and even to invite constructive criticism.
6. **By objectives:** In a wide ability group it may be appropriate to devise a number of activities with a variety of objectives.
7. **By grouping:** It is sometimes helpful to group students positively to take account of friendships or negatively to avoid conflicts. Some students prefer to work individually.

Staffing and Resources

- Each teaching group has a support assistant attached. Some students with statements have individual support. Subject teachers have a subject budget with which they are expected to build up an appropriate selection of resources to meet individual needs.
- A programme of peer observation has been organised to enable teachers to benefit from the opportunity to see how their colleagues plan and teach. This is a helpful means for spreading good practice - one aspect of which is skilful differentiation.
- Support from SENCo – Database of strategies informing practice.