



WATERMILL SCHOOL

Teaching and Learning Policy

Written by: Jennifer Lomas December 2011		
		Review Date:
Reviewed February 2013	Revised – J Lomas/ E Harrington	February 2013
Reviewed December 2015	Revised – Emma Harrington	December 2016
Reviewed May 2017	Revised - Emma Harrington	May 2018
Reviewed July 2018	Reviewed by Emma Harrington – Amendment made to the spelling of ‘Clifton Emag’ page 8. No other changes made.	July 2019
Reviewed November 2019	Reviewed – Helen Clayton Amendment made on page 8 to the frequency of when assessments are expected.	November 2020
Reviewed November 2020	Reviewed Emma Harrington Page 5: Displays –updated to reflect new golden words walls and working walls. Page 7: Technology – updated access to technology. (removal of RM lending library)	November 2021

Watermill School

TEACHING FOR LEARNING POLICY

Introduction

Watermill School provides a consistent structured approach to the individual needs of each pupil by attention to assessment, national curriculum subjects, the personal health and social education, communication skills, the physical, sensory and behaviour support needs of the child.

The Teaching and Learning Policy is to make explicit and accessible the shared, agreed, broad principles and practices upon which teaching and learning is based at Watermill School.

Watermill School pupils have a range of cognition and learning difficulties including Moderate, Profound, Severe and Complex learning difficulties. It cannot be assumed that our pupils will learn merely by exposing them to the conditions for learning which are suitable for children with no such difficulties. They do not learn well incidentally and as a result, need a highly structured environment. Pupils who have moderate learning difficulties will often have additional social or behavioural difficulties which can make learning more difficult.

Children learn through their total experience. This policy guides what pupils do, what teachers do, how time is managed, the organisation of the classroom and what the school as an organisation does to create an effective and well-managed learning environment in which the individual needs of each pupil can be met.

This policy is not stand alone and should be used in conjunction with the Behaviour policy, Assessment Feedback & Marking policy and the teacher standards.

Responsibilities

All members of Watermill School (teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, pupils, governors and visitors) are expected to work towards the school's aims by:

- Providing a stimulating programme of study ensuring that the teaching styles, resources and equipment pupils encounter are varied and challenging, offering opportunities for the highest standard of personal achievement by pupils across the ability range.
- Providing lessons which are prepared, structured and paced to make effective use of the time available.
- Ensuring, through assessment and accurate record keeping, that learning is progressive and continuous.
- Maintaining an up to date knowledge of the curriculum they are delivering.

Teaching and Learning

We believe that children learn best when they:

- Are interacting during the lesson
- They are encouraged and praised
- Are happy
- Are interested and motivated
- Are given tasks which match their ability
- Are challenged and stimulated but achievable
- Are confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries

The Learning Environment

This should be organised to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to:

- Work individually, in groups and as a class
- Make decisions
- Work co-operatively
- Solve problems
- Be creative
- Develop social skills
- Discuss their ideas
- Develop independence
- Receive support
- Achieve and make progress
- Receive a differentiated approach
- Communicate individually

Learning takes place in an environment which:

- Is challenging and stimulating
- Is happy and caring
- Is organised
- Is well resourced
- Makes learning accessible
- Provides equal opportunities
- Reflects the differentiated needs of the pupils
- Is welcoming
- Provides a working atmosphere

Pupils should be encouraged to develop social and independence skills through:

- Appropriate tasks
- Confidence building
- Example
- Co-operation
- Provision of suitable opportunities
- Responsibilities

Display

Displays in classrooms must include a 'Golden Words' board to identify key vocabulary for that half term. Where appropriate displays should use standard text as well as symbols (communicate in print).

Displays in classrooms should include 'working walls' and images, diagrams, facts and key concepts to support learning.

Displays in corridors should celebrate pupil achievements.

Displays should include work on different aspects of the curriculum and reflect the individual pupil's efforts as well as ability.

All display boards should clearly identify the learning objective(s).

Routines and Rules

Routines and rules in the classroom contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be:

- Clearly understood
- Fair and consistent

- Realistic and positive
- Displayed in the classroom
- Class teams are fully informed
- Stakeholders informed
- Discussed, documented and reviewed in line with the Behaviour policy

Achievement

Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on going process in all aspects of school life, by:

- Verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, Headteacher and parents
- Displays of work
- Opportunities to perform or share
- Encouraging and sharing success
- The awarding of stickers and certificates
- Celebration in assemblies
- End of Year Reports
- Annual review of Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement (ceased in 2018)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)?

AAC describes methods of communication which can be used by people who find communication difficult. It adds to (augments) or replaces (is an alternative for) spoken communication. AAC also helps understanding, as well as provides a means of expression. Helping pupils to communicate improves their quality of life. Many of the pupils at Watermill School benefit from AAC and it is an essential part of the curriculum. (Please see the AAC Policy for further information).

Classroom management

Approaches to Teaching

There must be a good balance of individual, group and whole-class teaching. Teachers must choose carefully the style of teaching which is the most effective and groups will differ in composition and size for different activities. There may be several different activities in progress and at these times the teacher will be supporting and leading the activities. It is

important that Learning Support Assistants (LSA) are clear and well informed about the activities, to be able to lead a small group or individual.

This can be helped by:

- Having well organised and labelled resources
- Learning objectives are made clear
- A good pace is maintained throughout each part of the lesson
- Independence and responsibility is encouraged
- There is a high expectation
- Well planned teaching activities
- Technology is used to support learning across all curriculum areas
- Making sure that LSA's are well informed
- Making pupils aware of routines and structures

Use of Resources

Classroom resources are the responsibility of class teachers and their teams who ensure that:

- There is a range of appropriate, accessible and labelled resources available for the pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to act independently as possible in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate.
- Teachers and their teams work together to establish a stimulating, welcoming and well organised environment.

Budgets will be allocated to class teachers to manage and will be reviewed at the end of the financial year. Orders can be processed via the school Business Manager and resources should only be bought from reputable providers. For items that teachers deem to be outside of their classroom budgets they should submit an appropriate application e.g. additional funds bid form, pupil premium or sports premium form. These forms should be sought from the school Business Manager

Items that may be deemed to fall outside of class teacher budgets could include: whole school resources e.g. kiln, trampoline, technology, specific software / programmes, or link to a pupils IEP or Care Plan, also specific resources for pupils in receipt of pupil premium or sports premium funding.

Additional spends should be linked to the subject leader action plan and identify where the resources meet the whole school SIDP priorities.

Technology is a major resource, which is used across the curriculum. Every classroom has a range of appropriate equipment and internet access. All teachers have access to a range of technology including but not limited to; class sets of iPads and laptops, Beebots, switches and Eye-Gaze technology. RM currently support resources and maintenance issues. Calls can be logged via the RM Support system.

All pupils have access to the specialist rooms including the food technology, computing, design-technology workshop and art room. Availability is planned via the whole school timetable and/or booking facility with the school Operations Manager.

Time Management

It is important that activities are well planned so that each pupil is working at their most suitable level, that they begin promptly and that the initial pace is maintained.

Efficient planning and classroom organisation will significantly reduce time-wasting activities. The whole school timetable must be followed and all staff must ensure that they arrive on time to all lessons. Appropriate educational learning opportunities need to be provided during lunch time cover. Lessons must start on time with minimal disruption to the class routine and timetable.

Volunteers/Work Experiences Placements

Volunteers/Work experience placements are a valuable resource and we should welcome their involvement in the classroom. They can help in many ways across the whole curriculum. Help can be on a regular basis or a specific event. In all cases it is very important that the teacher should take the time to ensure that the person fully understands and is well prepared for the activity in which he or she is involved.

Inclusion

In planning and teaching, teachers will have due regard for the following principles:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to pupils diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning, by planning for differentiation to meet individuals pupils needs

Assessment

In order to structure the pupils learning it is necessary for the teacher to assess the pupil's present level of development, taking into account any sensory/physical disabilities.

At Watermill School we use the computer programme *Clifton Emag* to record pupil progress. Assessments are updated throughout the term, data is analysed termly and appropriate targets. It is an expectation that teachers produce a report that details additional strategies and intervention support for underperforming pupils (reports to the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Assessment). Pupils who are working within the P1 to P3 range are assessed via *Roots for Learning* assessment tool.

IEP targets are set and reviewed every term and run to the following term. These are sent home within two weeks of the start of each term. All pupils have an IEP which addresses barriers to learning such as communication, motor skills and behaviour, EHCP objectives should be included on the IEP.

Every pupil at Watermill School has an Education Health Care Plan where parents and other stakeholders are invited to discuss the pupil's progress, achievements and future needs. Attainment and progress is also reported to parents and carers via the end of year report

Please refer to the Assessment, Feedback & Marking Policy for more detail.

Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development is central to the improvement of teaching, learning and assessment; our teachers and support staff have a broad programme of CPD throughout the year. All CPD opportunities are evaluated against their aims.

As part of the appraisal cycle teachers and all LSA's are involved. This sets out the person's individual targets and training needs for the year in line with department needs and the SIDP.

All new staff have an induction programme.

This programme of training and development is part of our programme to maintain and improve the teaching and learning within Watermill School.

Homework

Homework is given if it is appropriate for the pupil and the family.

