

Heart of the Forest Community Special School

Teaching and Learning Policy



Approved by:	HOF Governing Body	Date:	
Last reviewed on:	March 2023	Next review date:	March 2025
Website	Yes	Type	Non-Statutory

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding policy, Marking, Feedback and Annotation Policy, Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy and whole school curriculum document.

1.0 Rationale

This policy reflects the ethos and vision of the school. All staff share in the responsibility for ensuring that the statements made within the Teaching and Learning Policy influence, and are reflected in, the quality of the delivery of our curriculum. It aims to ensure that our pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement enabling them to gain skills and knowledge whilst also ensuring their emotional well-being. Heart of the Forest is a "learning community" where Teaching and Learning is of fundamental importance. Our pupils have a range of Special Educational Needs which require development and adaptation of a range of appropriate teaching and learning strategies to meet their individual needs and to prepare them for lifelong learning and equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society. Teaching at Heart of the Forest includes planning and implementation of learning activities, inclusion of multisensory approaches, play, life skills, independence and preparation for work as well as assessment, recording and reporting.

2.0 Curriculum Intent

At Heart of the Forest Special School our aim is to make a fundamental difference to all, pupils with special educational needs. ***Our school vision is to engage, enrich and inspire, together for now and the future.***

We provide a focused provision to all, ensuring every child receives a personalised quality education, ensuring breadth and depth through progressive and sequenced teaching and learning with communication at the centre.

We strive to provide a healthy and safe caring environment where safeguarding is paramount. Pupils can identify who to seek further help and guidance from and learn to manage risk safely. We ensure everyday inclusion opportunities and encourage independence whilst providing an enabling learning environment; preparing pupils with experience and skills for the wider modern world. Pupils are supported to '**catch up and keep up**'

We continually strive to ensure that our curriculum

- Has consistently high expectations
- Engenders excitement and enjoyment in learning
- Extends the essential skills of communication, reading, writing and mathematics
- Empowers pupils with knowledge that is useful and relevant
- Focuses on developing pupils' skills to be as independent as they can be

- Makes exceptionally good links between subjects
- Encourage individual creativity
- Ensure pupils have an understanding and identity in a culturally diverse society.

Our curriculum is developmental, but person centred, with our recognition that each pupil will be supported through a personalised pathway. We recognise pupils' strengths, needs and interests and build on these to promote achievement and success.

Our curriculum aims to promote the social inclusion of all pupils and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences for adult life. As the pupils transition through the school, the skills they need for living become an integral part of learning. Our curriculum aims to ensure breadth and depth in teaching and learning through a progressive educational journey that is bold, brave and prepares our pupils for life beyond school.

As a specialist provision for children and young people it is essential that our focus is to prepare our pupils for participation in the adult world. Our curriculum prepares pupils for adulthood through gaining experience and an understanding of the diverse world in which we live.

Our school provision is personalised through identification of pupil needs and outcomes translated from the EHCP. At the very core of our curriculum offer is the intentional to nurture each pupils sense of identity and belonging within the school and wider community. This is achieved through inclusive practice, celebration of successes and an emphasis upon delivering independence wherever possible alongside an effective communication system.

Implementation

To provide high quality teaching and learning to promote consistency and high standards and to equip pupils for life within and beyond Heart of the Forest.

To achieve this aim we believe that learning is most effective when:

- Pupils are happy, interested and motivated
- Pupils are confident, feel secure and are aware of the boundaries
- Pupils are given learning tasks which match their ability
- Pupils clearly understand the tasks they are given
- Pupils achieve success and gain approval
- Pupils are challenged and stimulated appropriate
- Pupils are given to opportunity to learn through sensory exploration
- Pupils are encouraged to become active learners, thinking about the ways they learn
- Learning builds on existing concepts, skills and knowledge

- Pupil's individual learning rates are reflected in curriculum planning
- Individual preferred learning styles are taken into account
- Learning is through practical first-hand experiences, including play and self-help skills
- There are close home/school partnerships
- ICT supports curriculum access for learners at all levels
- There are opportunities for purposeful practice, repetition and reinforcement of skills
- Learning is revisited in systematic and planned ways
- Pupils are encouraged to be involved in the planning of their work and to reflect on what they have learnt
- Learning outcomes are in small, structured steps within core skills and strategies and are sequenced towards cumulative knowledge and skills for future learning and employment
- 'Mistakes' and misconceptions are used to plan for future learning
- All pupils are equally included in the full range of learning opportunities
- Specialist curriculum strategies are delivered both separately and within the classroom environment

We believe that teaching is most effective when:

- There is appropriate balance between practical and listening tasks
- Tasks are carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils
- It is based on the outcomes of assessment for learning
- Planning and preparation are effectively undertaken
- Consistent approaches are used throughout the school
- Time and resources are managed efficiently and effectively
- ICT is used as a key teaching tool for all pupils
- There are opportunities for the development of pupils' interests and for the expression of creativity and use of imagination
- It is planned and delivered within meaningful and purposeful contexts
- The transition of pupils from activity to activity group to group, class to class and from school to community settings is carefully planned and supported. It enables pupils to feel a sense of achievement and celebration of successes. It provides a sense of security through continuity.

Impact

At Heart of the Forest we want our pupils to develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well. We want our pupils to be ready for their next stage of education and then to be able to move on and live as independently as possible. We want all of our pupils to achieve the best possible outcome that they can.

The impact of the school's curriculum is measured through several means:

- Progress and attainment
- Attendance data
- Behaviour logs
- Pastoral support
- Engagement in enrichment activities
- Student voice
- Co-production of EHCP's through statutory annual review process

Monitoring, evaluation and review of teaching and learning is an ongoing process which is undertaken of various levels and is informed by:

- Monitoring of timetabling and planning
- Lesson observations by subject leads, SLT, School improvement advisors and jointly with other colleagues and professionals
- Work and book scrutinise
- Learning walks
- Day to day contact and incidental observations and conversations
- Judgements on the quality of teaching triangulate evidence of pupil's learning and progress with assessment data and work scrutiny
- Pupil progress is assessed and recorded regularly using an online assessment tool (SOLAR).

Please refer to school assessment, recording and reporting policy. Teaching and Learning are monitored throughout the school year using the School's monitoring and evaluation schedule. Regular reports are provided to the Governing Body.