



*Making a Difference*

Phoenix Park Academy



# Teaching & Learning Policy



WELLSPRING  
ACADEMY TRUST

We Make A Difference

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## Teaching & Learning Policy

The Teaching and Learning policy sets out a holistic approach to pupils' social, emotional and academic development.

These are the core principles for working in all settings:

- Nurture principles of positive relationships, consistency, structure and routine are the foundation for engagement
- Base line assessments are accurate and barriers to learning identified
- Learning opportunities are relevant, compelling, engaging and challenging
- Staff are able to use a range of approaches to learning to engage, motivate and inspire pupils to achieve
- Social skills are taught to build co-operative learning skills
- A 'Growth Mindset' approach is embedded across all classes to build resilience
- Pupils achievement is celebrated to fuel aspiration
- Regular professional learning sessions are used to develop and cascade best teaching and learning practice on a regular basis along with coaching and shared planning

### **Phoenix Park and Sevenhills Academy non-negotiables**

At Phoenix Park Academy and Sevenhills Academy, we view learning as a journey. In each teaching episode we aim to build upon the skills and knowledge developed previously.

We understand that for pupils to be fully engaged with all aspects of the curriculum, a secure knowledge of the key skills for English and Mathematics is vital. Whether a student is with us for a short placement or a longer period of time, we understand that all our learners should have the confidence, resilience and increasing maturity to deal with changes in school and at home, whatever they may be.

We expect them to have developed:

- A love of reading
- A thirst to enquire; ask questions and find out
- Positive relationships
- Good behaviour
- An ability to problem solve both within and outside the classroom
- Key Maths and Literacy skills to prepare them for their next phase of education

These areas are addressed by rigor in practice and stretch and challenge in the learning environment. This is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team as part of ongoing quality assurance and observation processes.

### **Expectations**

Teachers have high but achievable expectations of learning and progress for all pupils. High expectations of learning and behaviour are evident in the classroom and through standards in books. Expectations are evident through the learning pupils produce. Teachers must not accept learning at a lower level than a student has been assessed.

### **Pace**

Teaching sessions are well paced to make effective use of time and respond to the learners emerging needs within the lesson. No learning time is wasted as a result of careful planning and organisation of lessons.

### **Pitch**

All lessons are well differentiated and pitched to support and challenge every learner including EAL, SEND, PP and More Able/Gifted and Talented. Pupils should be encouraged to become independent learners, making informed choices for themselves. Pupils are encouraged to develop independence in their learning through choices. Learning walls should support children in becoming independent, providing a resource to aid learning.

### **Climate for Learning**

Teachers create a positive learning environment in which children are interested and engaged through positive pupil/ teacher relationships. An environment where pupils are not afraid to make mistakes are created by establishing clear systems of support..

### **Quality of Inclusion**

Lessons are well planned and differentiated according to personal need. Information on learning preferences are unique to each learner and available to all involved in the teaching and learning process to ensure that a consistent and personalised approach is offered at all times.

**Differentiation:**

Staff consider pupils' needs. Work is differentiated to meet each pupil's learning and behavioural needs allowing them to engage with their work, experience challenge and success in order to ensure motivation and progress.

Contexts for learning inform planning and pupil profiles are read and contributed to by all staff to support this process.

Assessment is embedded to ensure work is differentiated appropriately for each individual.

**A holistic nurture approach:**

Staff have unconditional positive regard for pupils and use therapeutic language to support pupils and break down barriers to learning.

Teachers have an understanding of child development, of individual pupils' Special Educational Needs including social, emotional and mental health difficulties such as attachment difficulties and incorporate strategies into their teaching to address gaps in learning and development.

**Pupil voice**

Pupils are listened to in tutor/nurture time where they have an opportunity to share their thoughts or feelings with staff in order to settle to learn.

Pupils' contributions to co-construct learning are encouraged.

Curriculum topics are chosen that will have relevance to the pupils, whilst widening their horizons.

The strong trusting relationships between pupils and staff enables pupils to feel confident to express their thoughts and feelings.

**Behaviours for learning**

Behaviours for learning are taught across the curriculum, modelled by staff and include behaviour and learning which takes place outside of the classroom. A nurturing start to the day enables staff to focus on behaviour for learning through SEMH activities and targets. A skilled team of behaviour specialists support the learning of all students.

**Literacy and Numeracy across the curriculum**

Strengthening literacy skills such as reading, writing, spelling, speaking and listening and numeracy skills such as problem solving and arithmetic is a priority across all curriculum areas and key stages.

All teachers are responsible for addressing literacy and numeracy progress for their learners which is target led and personalised.

Strategies to develop literacy and numeracy in a holistic way include drama and role play, speaking and listening opportunities, adult modelling, word/number games, and focus key words in all subject areas.

Opportunities to improve literacy and numeracy are nurtured in real world opportunities, such as enterprise initiatives, community partnerships and field trips.

Dedicated reading time is supported across the sites and assessment tools such as Renaissance Reading are embedded.

### **Thematic Approach**

This is a thematic curriculum around umbrella themes across key stages 2 to 4. Subjects are taught using a context with encourages learning to engage pupils and with a focus on the relevance of the learning to the world around them. Our objective is to ensure that through the curriculum we enhance pupils' social and emotional development as well as develop knowledge skills and understanding so that they are able to make the transition into successful adulthood.

### **Assessment, Feedback and Pupil Progress**

Assessment for Learning and Assessing Pupils' Progress are used for formative and summative assessment in order to ensure work is meaningfully differentiated, that pupils know what they need to do to make progress and is also used to develop learning at a deeper level.

Feedback that is responded to by pupils is essential – strategies are used to support pupils in accepting and acting upon feedback.

Feedback should be effective and teachers will show how students have made progress based upon their commentaries.

Progress is monitored and data analysed by teachers on a regular basis to inform future planning and interventions.

Work is standardised across staff, across sites, across academies and externally to ensure quality assurance at regular intervals across the school year.

### **The Classroom Experience**

Teaching and Learning at Phoenix Park and Sevenhills Academies embraces SEMH, academic and vocational learning.

Teachers have a good understanding of each child's need based on rigorous baseline assessments, and comprehensive personalised records (Pen pictures, Personalised Learning Plans, Positive Handling Plans).

Assessment opportunities are planned for in ALL lessons and include: observations, guided sessions, questioning, marking, verbal feedback, mini plenaries, self-assessment and peer assessment.

- Where written feedback is given and next steps set, children must be given time to respond.
- Purposeful intervention takes place by the teacher (within the lesson) and via specialist intervention processes when identified as a need.
- Delivery of lessons are made up of a variety of different strategies which will be personalised to assessment, learner and task.
- Learning Objectives must be clear to children. They all must know what they are learning and why they are learning it. Students should understand how learning relates to the last teaching episode and what they must do/achieve in order to progress.

### **Learning beyond the classroom and homework**

To extend learning beyond the classroom the formation of a positive relationship between the school staff, in particular the form tutor, teaching assistants and parents/carers is essential.

Primary children are encouraged to take a book home from the library to share with parents/carers.

Review days provide an opportunity to have a learning conversation where parents are given a fuller understanding of what their child needs to do to make further progress and what they can do to contribute.

When necessary and appropriate, students are given the option of taking work home to develop learning further.

### **Safeguarding and E Safety**

The safety of pupils is paramount in all teaching and learning environments. Risk assessments are made for all visits and parental permission received.

Staff have been trained in E Safety and pupils are taught about E safety through lessons on E Safety and when the opportunity arises.

(See separate policies on E Safety and Safeguarding)

### **Quality Assurance**

Teachers in our academies are given the autonomy to be creative, individual and to showcase individual teaching styles. This personal expression and freedom provides a rich learning experience which echoes the diversity of the real world.

Practice is, however monitored for quality assurance. Observations and book and planning scrutinies form part of our teaching calendar.

### **Formal Observations**

All teaching staff in the Academy will be observed on **3 separate occasions during the academic year**. This will inform performance management.

- Observations will be conducted by either the Principal, Head of Centre or Key Stage Co-ordinator. It may be paired with a governor/additional member of staff