

Newfield
Inspire | Support | Achieve | Together

Teaching and Learning Policy 2023 -2024

Introduction

An Individual, needs led approach to teaching, learning and progress:

For the children and staff at Newfield the curriculum and teaching and learning covers every minute of their time with us in school. Throughout their journey with us our pupils and young people are given opportunities to develop skills that will best prepare them for their future in Modern Britain.

All children and young people with learning difficulties have unique ways of learning. **We see our pupil's strengths first, and work with these to develop other areas.** Alongside this our core focus is to ensure students achieve their potential with the maximum level of independence possible.

Never do anything for a student that they can, could or should do for themselves.

Different learning needs require different teaching approaches, which often change over time. As a school we actively research new methods to impact on learning and progress for all our pupils absorbing these into current practice in order to enhance provision.

At all times we strive to ensure that teaching fits to the needs of the current groups of students, and is therefore responsive and adaptable. **In simple terms we focus on teaching the way students learn best.**

There is no one delivery model which could possibly fit all our pupils. Each needs a unique set of learning approaches and experiences which extend beyond the school day into their lives beyond.

We achieve this by investing in staff training at all levels to equip the team with the knowledge, skills and resources needed to work with such complex students. We provide them with the box of tools and they select the best ones for each student!

We pride ourselves on providing a set of learning experiences across a child's time with us **which places the needs and the abilities of the learners at the heart of provision and planning.** It is based on outcomes we want the pupils to achieve at each key stage of their learning journey. For every pupil regardless of age or ability we seek to support them to become **as independent** as possible in all aspects of life and learning.

Above all, we believe everything we do, and everything each learner experiences, **must be useful and relevant for their life outside school in their home and wider community.**

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To achieve this we have developed our very own integrated approach. This is based around a thorough, holistic and ongoing assessment of need in the areas we consider fundamental to developing the whole child. We can then find the best teaching methods, interventions and environment for each learner.

This journey is planned in consultation with the people best placed to make decisions, supported by the knowledge of expert professionals.

We firmly believe this allows our children to make the progress they are capable of – an approach which focuses therefore on what they can *and will do*, rather than what they can't. To us there is no such phrase as 'I can't' we just say 'You can't yet'

We acknowledge the need for a cognitively appropriate, 'broad and balanced curriculum' and have developed a set of coherently planned and sequenced learning experiences that encompass all required areas of learning across the ages in school.

We are therefore flexible in using ideas and methodologies and advices from various sources including the early year's curriculum, national curriculum, and study programmes. From these we empower our teaching staff to take what we feel is relevant and appropriate to the developmental needs of each pupil.

Each piece of planned learning and progress forms part of a functional and meaningful path for that child taking whatever direction the learner needs. This means we have no pre-conceptions of any learner's path of progress and do not limit our expectations, to allow the learner to lead us in their journey.

Aims

At Newfield School we believe effective learning takes place when pupils are engaged and motivated. They are also supported to develop appropriate learning behaviours to support transfer of knowledge and skills to long term memory.

Effective learning depends upon effective teaching. Effective teaching is provided through carefully planned, ambitious sequences of learning, where staff support pupils to the achieve their learning intentions across the short, medium and longer term. The core premise to achieve this is accurate understanding of where the student is currently at in their learning and what the next steps to support progress are.

It is our aim to equip our teachers with the skills to be consistently outstanding practitioners. This is to meet the complex and varied learning needs of the students taught. We achieve this through regular professional development and a robust monitoring and feedback cycle.

It is our aim to equip our pupils with the skills to be effective learners and provide a curriculum which ignites their thirst for knowledge and skills mastery and generalisation into the wider world.

Teaching is the process that all staff undertake to help the pupils develop skills, strategies and understanding which will enable them to learn new skills, strategies and problem solving.

As a staff we feel it is important that children feel happy, safe and secure in school, and that the school has a positive learning culture. It is vital that staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs, the stages of child development, how key learning skills develop and strategies to support different types of special needs learners.

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We believe supporting communication and interaction should underpin all learning. We also believe in setting and modelling the highest expectations for children in terms of behaviour and ambition. We seek to create a learning environment where children are given opportunities to make mistakes (problem solving) and develop independent learning strategies (learning to learn)

Principles of Teaching, Learning and Progress

Throughout their journey at Newfield we are educating and equipping pupils to progress through life in an ever-changing world. Together we develop positive attitudes for learning and high levels of ambition. This is delivered within the framework illustrated below:

Meaningful and relevant life long learning



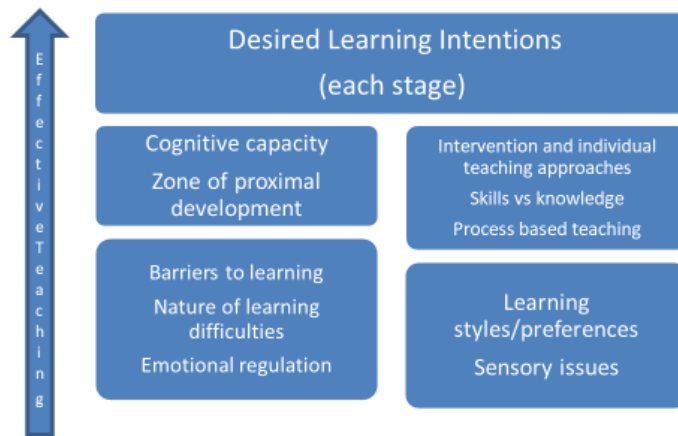
Independence and Preparation For Adulthood

Adapted From Cherry Gardens School

We consider learning in its fullest, holistic sense incorporating the individual needs and circumstances of each child in our school. The learning abilities, styles and preferences are considered when devising teaching and learning opportunities. It is vital, in order to promote learning, that a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment in provided for pupils.

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Pupils learning is a dynamic web of interrelated building blocks which focus on ensuring the best possible LEARNING intentions for each pupil via a quality first adaptive teaching approach



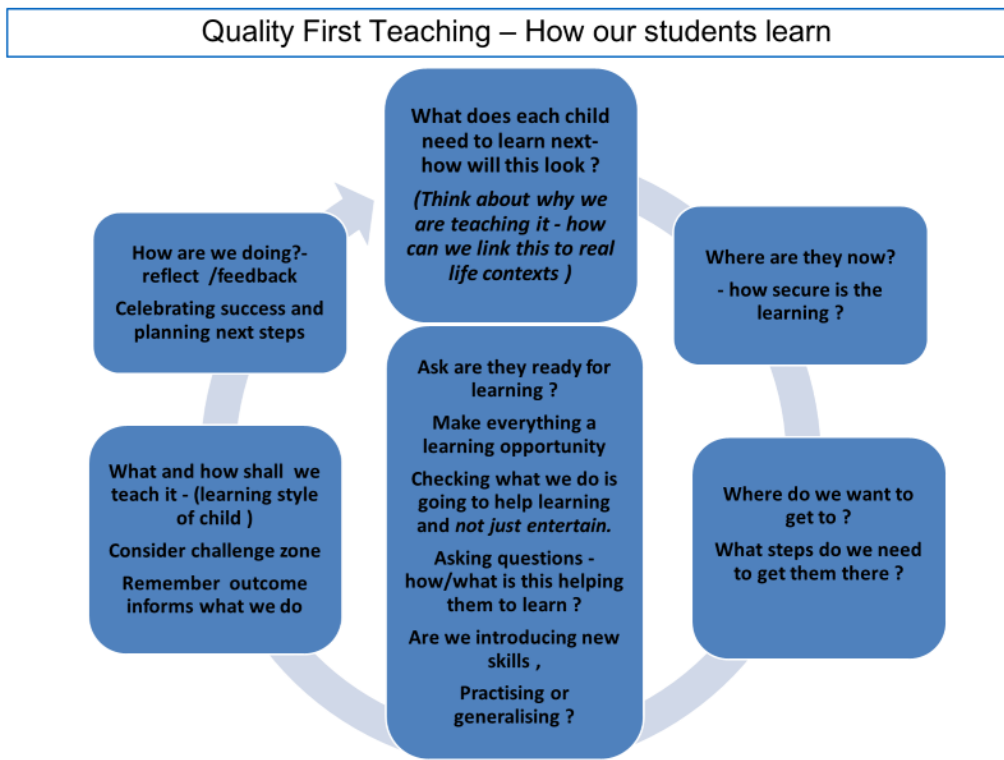
The best teaching comes when thought is given to the desirable outcomes of a lesson or series of lessons ie what we want students to learn in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding. This in turn should shape what we teach and how we deliver it.

We believe effective planning and lesson design is the starting point for quality led teaching, learning and progress. It is best viewed as a series of decisions which build into planned series of learning opportunities with appropriate learning focuses and expected outcomes.

Quality First teaching:

- Sets high realistic expectations giving every learner the confidence they can succeed
- Builds on prior learning clearly identifying next steps for future learning in small achievable steps
- Gives all pupils access to fun, motivating, challenging and enjoyable activities
- Provides opportunities for children to “learn how to learn” and develop independent learning strategies
- Uses assessment to inform their planning and target-setting to meet the needs of individual pupils and groups;
- Ensures all children are involved in their own learning, success is celebrated and assessment for learning ensures all achievements are celebrated, promoting positive self esteem
- Gives pupils access to a range of stimulating and engaging resources to enhance and enrich a skills-based curriculum for all pupils
- Provides children with opportunities to develop skills and knowledge, including self-help skills
- Inspires learning through enthusiasm, passion, encouragement and a suitable level of challenge
- Evaluates the quality of teaching and learning, and takes into account any feedback they are given;
- Finds ways of reinforcing and extending what pupils have learned, outside the classroom;

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Effective Learning should :

- Be evident in every lesson, staff and pupils (with apt support) should be able to comment on what learning has taken place
- Show all pupils engaged and behaving appropriately
- Result in the acquisition of new skills
- Consolidate existing skills towards mastery and generalisation
- Enable students to work with increasing independence
- Show the application of skills in other settings
- Show the ability to work with or alongside others
- Extend range of experiences and interaction with world around us
- Show engagement, application and concentration
- Motivate pupils to improve – via zone of proximal development

Specific Enhancements

As part of their individualised curriculum offer pupils also have access to specific support in the following areas. This takes the form of specific sessions or a more integrated approach.

- TEACCH approach
- Hydrotherapy
- MOVE and physiotherapy programmes
- Speech and Language Therapy programmes
- Sensory diets/ regulation
- VI support

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Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of teaching and learning is closely scrutinized via a variety of monitoring and evaluation processes. This schedule is agreed in advance and linked with focused governor visits.

The cycle is also aligned to appraisal and also key areas within the school improvement plan.

Within this cycle agreed observation foci are used, and areas for development are addressed as well as strengths highlighted. There may also be additional peer or area of learning coordinator observation depending on the school's priorities.

Lesson observation is quality assured by triangulation within the school Senior Leadership Team. We also have a school improvement partner who validates our judgements.

Teachers are encouraged to critically reflect upon the learning & teaching within their classrooms. Newfield School aims to create a culture of sharing good practice & continuing professional development in terms of practice. All staff will be expected to share feedback from professional development opportunities so that individual development supports the continuing development of our learning community.

The schools Assessment, Reporting and Recording (ARR) Policy describes some of the ways in which learning is monitored, but in addition to this pupil achievement is a key feature of lesson observation and is monitored through the Annual Review process and pupil progress meetings.

Planning for learning and progress: Core Principles for lesson delivery

Classroom Organisation: the layout of the room and the seating arrangement of pupils should be in keeping with the activity being undertaken and the individual needs of the children. Rooms should be orderly and fit for purpose with due regard given to health and safety. Resources used should be visible/ accessible and pupils should be seated comfortably.

Learning Objectives: the purpose and focus of the lesson should be clear and shared with staff and pupils. Learning objectives should be differentiated to offer opportunities for learning and progression for children working at all levels, within mixed ability and booster group teaching. There should be personalised objectives in place for each pupil.

Lesson Structure: Lessons are organized and structured according to the needs of the individual pupils within the group. Transition during and the start and finish of the lesson should be well managed and orderly.

Lesson Pace: The pace of lesson should be at the correct level to maintain pupil engagement. The deployment of staff in lesson time should support the maintenance of an effective lesson pace.

Resources: The selection of resources in a lesson should enhance the learning and capitalize on pupil motivation and engagement. The resources should be appropriate to the age of the pupils, be of good quality and utilize ICT where appropriate.

Staff Deployment: Staff should be deployed to maximize learning outcomes for pupils. They should provide planned support to access activities or minimize barriers to learning.

Behaviour for Learning – Regulate to Educate: Lessons should reflect a calm and purposeful working environment. Where behaviour issues occur, they should be dealt with in a calm way by staff who have a clearly agreed way of working with the pupil to help them to de-escalate the situation and minimize any

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disruption to learning. There should be evidence of pupils being taught to develop strategies to manage their own regulation strategies.

Within this approach individual students will have regulation breaks either facilitated by class staff or self-directed.

Pupil Voice: Lessons should feature opportunities for pupils to make choices and express their views. They should be developing independence as learners and taking ownership of their targets.

Differentiation – Adaptive teaching: Differentiation in lessons should promote the inclusion of all pupils to achieve their learning objectives. Differentiation may occur by altering the tasks offered to pupils, by expecting a differing outcome from the task or by the level of support offered to pupils.

Review/Plenary: Review of learning is dependent upon the needs and understanding of individual pupils. For some pupils it is more appropriate to receive immediate feedback about their learning on an individual basis. For other pupils, it is appropriate that they receive feedback in a group setting which gives the opportunity to share successes with their peers. For these classes is expected that lessons will be clearly defined and pupils will be given a planned opportunity to consolidate, reflect upon or review the work undertaken during the lesson.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Teachers employ a variety of teaching styles to engage pupils in learning activities. We promote teaching which gives pupils the opportunity to actively engage in their learning. Regular opportunities for movement and physical exercise are a feature of many classroom routines. Some children require physical support in order to access learning. Lessons should show an appropriate balance of whole class, individual and group work.

Many pupils at Newfield School learn through multi-sensory input. They benefit from being offered information and experiences through a variety of channels and this is particularly important if they have a sensory impairment. Some pupils learn best in a low distraction setting and being offered their learning experiences on a one to one basis. Other pupils benefit from a collaborative approach to learning and work well with a partner or as a group. The teacher will endeavor to provide learning opportunities in a way that best suits the learning style of the individual.

Recognising and Celebrating Achievement and Responding to Pupils' Work

Celebrating achievement is a vital part of the learning process as it communicates clearly that achievement has been made and that pupils have progressed it in a way that is acknowledged by others. The way in which success is communicated to an individual has to be personalized to accommodate the varied levels of understanding and preferences of our pupils.

Teachers assess pupil's work regularly, according to the school's feedback and marking policy. Staff should use the analysis of assessments and tracking data to inform their teaching and to structure intervention strategies as discussed in the pupil progress meetings (See ARR policy.)

Feedback to pupils is given based upon their individual preferences. Verbal feedback is often supported by gesture, sign or symbol. If a pupil does not like too much verbal input, feedback or praise can be given non-verbally through body language, gesture or use of objects or symbols (See Feedback and Marking Policy).

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Links with RRSA

As a gold level Rights Respecting School we place these principles at the heart of our practice. We teach about children's rights but also model rights and respect in all our relationships.

Curriculum Pathways- Overview to Support Focused Planning and Delivery,

The grouping of learners according to their ability and need promotes effective learning as the classes are structured to best cater for the learning styles of learners, whether that be semi-formal, pre-formal or formal learners.

Our curriculum pathways are driven by the identification of individuals' learning styles and needs. As these, we then re-assess the most appropriate pathway for them. Learners can move between pathways to achieve a personalised model to meet their individual needs. Learners have personalised targets, which are shared with parents/carers to extend learning opportunities outside of school. Our aim is to engage our learners in enjoyable learning activities that are of functional value to them now and in their futures.

We see the essential focus areas as:

- personalising learning opportunities
- developing our learner's ability to communicate and interact with others
- improving learners' physical abilities and sensory development
- enhancing personal, social, health and emotional skills
- developing cognitive skills
- developing independence

Our pathways are designed to have an innovative style to learning to stimulate our learners to acquire a continuum of learning opportunities. Our creative themed-based approach is planned to ensure it provides breath and flexibility; it is relevant, inclusive, supporting a balance of learning experiences and opportunities to meet individual needs. Our curriculum pathways have been devised to support the skills and confidence individuals need to be ready for learning, developing independence alongside therapy interventions. We acknowledge that some learners' needs may cover more than one pathway, and that those additional requirements for every learner should be taken into consideration. Through whole class sessions, small and 1:1 groups, enrichment experiences and medical, sensory and behavioural interventions we aim to use time flexibly and creatively to maximise learning opportunities.

Teaching and Learning Pathways: (Also see Curriculum Philosophy Document which outlines the progression rationale linked to the pathways)

Explorers

At Newfield School we acknowledge and celebrate the differences in the needs and learning styles of our younger children. As such the pedagogical approach taken during the formative years is an eclectic mix approach designed to optimise success for all our children. Teachers at this stage aim to develop skills through play-based approaches where children have resources and environments to explore and develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Continuous provision gives children a range of experiences and play media with adults supporting and playing alongside. The outdoor environment is also capitalised upon to provide learning opportunities.

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Staff practice the three principles of effective teaching and learning in all aspects of the curriculum.

- playing and exploring – children are encouraged to explore their environment with as much independence as possible. Some children require additional support to be able to handle objects or explore them safely so staff aim to do this while enabling children to ‘have a go’ and explore as freely as possible.
- active learning – staff create opportunities for active learning to take place by planning activities and providing resources that are accessible for the children. They may be involved in a range of therapy programme which are integrated into their learning experience to create opportunities for them to be actively involved in their learning activities.
- creating and thinking critically – a thematic approach helps children make links and begin to develop the skills of thinking critically and creatively. Staff provide experiences that optimise the children being able to think through problems and find solutions for themselves. Some children may have significant cognitive difficulties so all experiences will be accessible to them at an appropriate level.

Staff prioritise nurturing warm and respectful relationships in all aspects of the early years and ensure children feel safe and secure to learn and flourish.

Pre- Formal Pathway

Our pre-formal curriculum takes a holistic view of learners by focussing on how they best learn through acknowledging and celebrating the different abilities and achievements of those learners with the most complex needs.

Learners not yet engaged in subject specific learning engage with the pre-formal curriculum. This focuses on the early communication, physical, personal & social and sensory & cognitive skills that are the foundation of learning.

It is a curriculum that recognises the importance of play in a learner’s development and the need for sensory and multi-sensory approaches to learning.

It is a curriculum that supports the learner’s development by employing appropriate approaches that take account of their emotional wellbeing. It recognises how our learners learn, by supporting and developing their strengths and abilities and focuses on developing the learner’s understanding of the world around him/her, and of social interactions and relationships. It is delivered in an integrated manner, incorporating learning, therapies and health needs and many opportunities to practice and achieve these learning goals are offered continuously in a wide range of settings. We recognise and understand that factors such as the time of day, comfort or choice of positioning may affect a person’s ability to concentrate and therefore learn. We understand the importance of the environment to our learners.

For those with a PMLD, or learners functioning at a pre-formal level, we should view every moment and situation as a learning opportunity – therefore the vital ‘routine’ activities such as movement breaks, postural changes, sensory regulation, toileting and assisted eating/feeding are integral areas of learning within this curriculum.

Semi-Formal Pathway

Our semi-formal curriculum engages learners in a broad range of areas which are very carefully planned for and then developed through supporting learners to access cross-curricular activities, resources and

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environments within the classroom, wider school and the local community, considering their own unique talents and interests.

The curriculum is organised into themes, which ensure a balance of both a rich breadth of exciting topics and concepts whilst taking into account the learners' individual interests and learning preferences- our aim is to motivate all learners to learn!

Each theme begins with a WOW event to engage and support learners to 'tune-in' to the new start, and ends with a celebratory event where learners can demonstrate the new skills, confidence or application of knowledge acquired.

This curriculum is delivered under the areas of Communication, Language & Literacy, Physical & Sensory Development, Personal, Social & Emotional Development, Community & the Wider World and Creativity & Expressive Arts.

Post 16

Students in the Post 16 department, apply the skills and knowledge that they have learned to real life situations in preparation for adulthood.

Students are provided with opportunities to develop their independence through practical life skills such as shopping, travelling in the community and preparing their own meals. They also have the opportunity to participate in work experience if appropriate, as well as the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme.

The curriculum is designed around individual needs and their aspirations for the future.

Each class teacher develops a timetable which demonstrates a broad and balanced coverage of curriculum areas. In all phases of the school, pupils are grouped in class/tutor groups broadly according to age and key stage.

All staff are responsible for applying the school's teaching and learning policy and procedures to provide high quality learning experiences for all pupils.

Equality Duty

Newfield School complies with the general and specific duties of the Equality Act (2010). In accordance with the duty we publish information that demonstrates that we have due regard to the need to;

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

These specific duties have been considered in relation to all our policies and procedures in school. Our objectives will be reported on and published as part of the Governance public documents available for inspection under the Freedom of Information Regulations and Data Protection duties and in the school newsletter to parents.

Safeguarding

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Full copies of Policies and Procedures related to all aspects of Safeguarding, and the Complaints Policy, are available on request from Rachel Kay, Head Teacher and Designated Senior Lead for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

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