

St. John's School Policy on Teaching and Learning

Rationale

St. John's School provides specialist teaching and secures effective learning. Teaching and learning is the means by which the school promotes the presence, participation and progress of all pupils regardless of ability or background.

The teaching and learning environment will include:

- Access to staff trained in agreed specialist strategies and interventions
- Physical layout arranged to avoid unnecessary movement and disruption
- Clear rules and cues concerning movement around class areas and the wider school environment
- Seating arranged to account for the nature of the activity, pupil need and movement around the class area
- Clear rules concerning acceptable levels of noise within class and the wider school environment
- Clear rules and boundaries concerning acceptable social behaviour
- Structured daily and weekly timetable to ensure stability, predictability and balance of learning opportunities
- Resources for activities readily available to minimise disruption
- Access to ICT and specialist teaching and learning facilities
- Access to community facilities and other educational settings as appropriate

The learning environment with regard to pupils presenting PMLD/MSI will include:

- Cues of appropriate types to enable pupils to anticipate future events/activities
- Appropriate and flexible lighting for general and specific task or activity
- Classroom acoustically treated and auditory information conveyed in accordance with pupil need
- Surfaces e.g. walls, table-tops, symbols etc. to be non-reflective
- Access to communication aids and specialist resources as required

- Appropriate specialist equipment to meet the physical needs of pupils
- Landmarks and labels for pupil orientation
- Sufficient space to maintain a consistent layout to the classroom including furniture arrangement
- Sufficient space to ensure individual work areas/work stations
- Sufficient space to allow ambulant and non-ambulant pupils to work safely alongside each other
- Carpeted and non-carpeted areas to accommodate a range of activities
- Appropriate access to adapted toilet and changing facilities
- All areas clean and uncluttered
- All areas draught free and temperature controlled

The learning environment with regard to pupils with ASC or social communication difficulties will include:

- Individualised visual timetables/schedules utilising text, photos, symbols or objects
- Individualised work areas
- Sufficient space to allow clearly defined areas for specific activities e.g. choice, snack, group work etc.
- Visually uncluttered classroom and restricted exposure to verbal, auditory and visual stimulus;
- Access to communication aids and specialist teaching resources as required

Pupils will be encouraged to:

- Enjoy and actively engage in the social process of learning
- Positively respond to and interact with others in school
- Sustain attention and extend concentration during lessons
- Learn, use and generalise functional skills, knowledge and understanding in an increasing range of environments

- Make choices and take increasing responsibility for own behaviour
- Regard oneself as an effective learner
- Reflect on own achievements and participate when possible in setting new and challenging learning targets

Teachers will:

- Extend the communicative competence of all pupils in class
- Ensure pupils engage in individual, group and whole class activities
- Enhance pupil self-awareness, self-confidence and self-esteem
- Increase pupil awareness of and respect for others
- Promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Use a range of assessment tools to inform effective planning
- Use a range of assessment tools to report on pupil progress
- Utilise a carefully selected set of specialist teaching strategies
- Make effective use of time and resources
- Share planning of teaching and learning with all relevant staff
- Function effectively as part of a cohesive multi-professional team
- Lead and monitor the work of classroom support staff
- Liaise effectively with parents/carers and families
- Take full advantage of and contribute to all professional development opportunities

Rewards and sanctions:

We help pupils learn appropriate social behaviour through positive practice, prompt and praise. Sanctions are secondary options to that of reward.

Rewards

- Reward assessment will identify individual pupil preference, interests and motivators

- Rewards used are social praise, rewarding activities, and access to tactile and sensory experiences as appropriate
- Edible rewards are used only when absolutely necessary and will be faded as soon as possible
- Token economies are used for individual pupils, small groups and whole classes
- Academic and social behaviour will be rewarded with appropriate acknowledgement and celebration at assemblies
- Pupil success will be shared and celebrated with families through the home/school book

Sanctions

- Sanctions are appropriate and proportionate to the misdemeanour
- Sanctions will not threaten pupil dignity or damage self-esteem
- Shouting at pupils will be avoided unless needed to distract pupils from situations which are dangerous to themselves or others
- Teachers will focus on the behaviour for which the sanction is being imposed rather than making judgements about pupils themselves
- Pupils should not be denied access to any part of the curriculum as a sanction unless there are clear safety reasons
- Sanctions may include: interruption of break or lunchtime playtimes for short periods; withholding privileges for short periods; withholding adult attention for short periods; completion of assigned task or additional work as appropriate

Role of parents/carers and families:

We greatly value the contribution of families and see them as essential partners in teaching and learning.

- Parent and carers are encouraged to be fully involved in the reviewing, evaluating and setting of learning targets for their child
- Teachers will make homework available as appropriate and in line with school policy
- Teachers will optimise consistency of teaching and behavioural strategies between school and home

Multi-professional partnership:

St. John's operates as a multi-agency organisation. A range of professionals such as nurses, therapists, specialist teachers are involved in and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Multi-professional assessment meetings take place throughout the year and are aimed at ensuring a collaborative approach towards meeting the needs of our pupils with the most complex and challenging needs.

Monitoring and review:

The monitoring of teaching and learning is essential in supporting all pupils to maximise their achievement and progress. Monitoring will be accompanied by coaching and in-class support provided by senior teachers and therapist.

Other aspects of monitoring will include the following:

- Classroom observation and feedback from in-house and external professionals
- Teacher appraisal and professional development
- Ongoing scrutiny of pupils IEPs by senior staff
- Ongoing scrutiny of pupils work by senior staff
- Ongoing evaluation of pupil performance related data

Related policies and guidance documents:

- Policy on Teacher Appraisal and subsidiary guidance
- Policy on Safeguarding
- Policy on Continuing Professional Development
- Policy Paper on Pedagogy- 1 Principles
- Policy Paper on Pedagogy- 2 Practice
- St. John's Communication Access Document
- St. John's Behaviour Support Access Document

Policy review:

This policy will be reviewed by the Personnel & Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body every three years.