

Wren Spinney Special School

Learning and Teaching Policy



Approved by: LGB

Date: January 2020

Last reviewed on: December 2019

Next review due by: November 2021

Mission Statement

(written by class teams)

Our Learners will:

- ✓ Be given participation in every opportunity in and outside of the classroom in order to develop in every aspect of their life
- ✓ Make progress and achieve their potential
- ✓ Enjoy learning
- ✓ Respect each other
- ✓ Learn to manage their behaviour
- ✓ Socialise and play
- ✓ Be treated as individuals
- ✓ Express themselves in an appropriate way
- ✓ Feel safe and learn in a happy environment
- ✓ Enjoy being at school and want to be here
- ✓ Develop lifelong skills

Our Staff will:

- ✓ Encourage and inspire
- ✓ Provide dynamic and creative educational opportunities
- ✓ Enjoy their job, be happy and take pride in their work
- ✓ Be respectful of others and their values and be part of the team
- ✓ Follow school policy and procedures
- ✓ Work with all professional agencies
- ✓ Show willingness to continuously develop their knowledge
- ✓ Demonstrate professional skills at all times
- ✓ Nurture, support, enrich and ensure dignity is always maintained
- ✓ Be role models
- ✓ Listen and respond to individual needs
- ✓ Be approachable and supportive to everyone
- ✓ Work co-operatively together to achieve the best outcomes for our students

- ✓ Pursue opportunities for our learners
- ✓ Respect everyone within the school environment (professional judgements)
- ✓ Communicate effectively

Our School:

- ✓ Provides a warm welcome to all families
- ✓ Provides a safe, caring, happy environment in order for all to achieve
- ✓ Delivers a dynamic curriculum centred round personal pathways
- ✓ Offers a creative and enriched professional development opportunities
- ✓ Is equitable
- ✓ Positively promotes enrichment in learning
- ✓ Builds positive community links
- ✓ Welcomes all professionals partners
- ✓ Celebrates success

Individual Student Needs

The students at Wren Spinney have a broad range of complex needs which affects their learning, these fall within one, or often more, of the categories of need as stated in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of Practice 2014:

- Cognition and Learning; e.g.
 - Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
 - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
 - Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
- Communication and Interaction; e.g.
 - Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
 - Autistic spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties; e.g.
 - Attachment Disorder
 - Anxiety
 - Sensory processing difficulties
- Sensory / Physical Difficulties; e.g.
 - Visual Impairment
 - Hearing Impairment
 - Cerebral Palsy
 - Complex medical and health needs

In addition to the above some students have specific syndromes and health issues that may also impact on their learning.

All students at Wren Spinney have an Education Health and Care Plan which indicates a learning difficulty (SLD or PMLD)

In response to the complexity of student need, the school provides a stimulating and accessible learning environment which promotes Social Moral Cultural Mental and Physical development and provides access to a relevant and meaningful curriculum.

At Wren Spinney we believe that our students learn best when they:

- feel safe and secure;
- are confident and happy;
- are interested and motivated;
- know that their opinions are valued and respected;
- have clear boundaries and consistent routines;
- have access to a communication friendly environment;
- are appropriately challenged and stimulated through personalised curricular experiences;
- achieve positive and successful outcomes which are regularly praised and celebrated.

Curriculum

Our Curriculum Purpose:

To provide our pupils and students with the skills to live as independently as possible in an ever changing world, to be:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens

Key Skills underpin learning for all students regardless of their levels of ability and needs.

These are: -

Key Functional Skills:

- Communication;
- Application of mathematical and number skills;
- Using Information and communication technology.

Skills for Learning:

- Working with others in a team;
- Reflecting on learning;
- Problem solving and independent enquiry.

As our students move through the school these skills will become more focused on Preparation for Adulthood and skills for:

- Further Education and Employment
- Independent Living
- Community Inclusion
- Health

Curriculum Content:

To be successful our children need to feel safe and build trusting relationships. Only when we enable this will our children be able to engage in learning activities and develop the skills necessary.

Our curriculum is based around 3 themes of safety:

- Of self – the ability to self-regulate and manage own emotions and so engage in learning experiences
- For self – the ability to be independent and autonomous (do things not only by yourself but for yourself)
- With others – the ability to manage and develop positive relationships

These 3 themes ultimately lead to the 4 outcomes for Preparation for Adulthood:

- Employment
- Independent Living
- Friends, Relationships and Community
- Good Health

Our students have faced, and do face, numerous obstacles to learning and it is our role as educators to put in place whatever strategies are necessary to remove all barriers to learning. Across our trust we will utilise all available resources to ensure our students are available to learn.

The Learning Environment

We acknowledge that learning takes place in a variety of environments within our school and in the wider community. For example, specialist areas in school such as the sensory room, food technology room, outside area and The Shop, local community sports and leisure facilities and the wider community.

The learning environments and resources reflect the needs of the student groups and from necessity will vary in their structural organisation, presentation and locations.

Students' access to our school's curriculum is supported by a broad range of people. These will include:

- their peers;
- teachers and teaching assistants;
- trainee / apprentice teaching assistants;
- Pastoral Support;
- school nurse and health care professionals;
- occupational therapists;
- speech and language therapists;
- physiotherapists;
- Careers Service;
- Enrichment visits.

Effective Learning

The organisation of the learning environments should ensure that students have opportunities to:

- be included and take part as independently as possible in a wide range of educational experiences;
- communicate effectively;
- engage in active learning experiences;
- work independently; in small groups and as a whole class;
- develop and extend their individual social skills;
- develop their problem solving and thinking skills;
- develop their creative potential;
- regulate their emotions and sensory needs.

At Wren Spinney our teaching is focused on the specific needs of every student, informed by their Education Health and Care Plan. Our curriculum incorporates the following, where appropriate:

- Annual Map;
- Individual care plans (Care and Safety plans);
- Equals – learning themes and cross-curricula topics;
- Accredited Schemes of Work;

- Experiences of the world of work and work based learning opportunities;
- Educational visits and visitors;

Planning

Target Maps

All students at Wren Spinney have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), an annual map and the individual targets for the student for the next twelve months. These are reviewed 3 times yearly and at each statutory review with parents / carers and other professionals. Individual targets will be fully incorporated into all areas of the curriculum as appropriate and there will be liaison with parents/carers in order for the targets to be continued out of school. These targets will be additional to and different from the usual curriculum offer as described in schemes of work.

Differentiation

Learning opportunities and experiences are provided to support all students in accessing the curriculum, and therefore differentiation is a fundamental part of the curriculum planning process at Wren Spinney.

Teachers will differentiate learning through considering; content, access, grouping, outcome, level of support, resources, pace and timing.

Personalisation

Differentiated learning objectives form part of each unit of work, however individual objectives (some linked to Individual Education Plans) for each student will be incorporated into the planning; for example activities offered to students may have the same theme – for example ‘teamwork’ however may be delivered for one student through games, and another through playing music.

Teachers will personalize learning for the individual through considering content, interest, access, curricular sequence, structure, grouping, and through different teaching styles.

Long Term Planning at Wren Spinney

Our long term curriculum maps ensure that learning is sequenced and that there are opportunities to revisit and build upon key themes and skills, providing the opportunity for skills and knowledge to be developed, built upon, applied and mastered:

- Doing more
- Learning more, and
- Remembering more.

The long term maps are used to guide and inform our teaching and detail the learning themes to be taught to each group of learners at each stage of the school.

The curriculum is being developed so that the core themes of Preparation for Adulthood that underpin the curriculum are linked with a theme that is relevant to the students.

Medium Term Planning at Wren Spinney

Medium Term Plans outline a description of what each subject will deliver in relation to the agreed theme, where appropriate, and at Wren Spinney we use a ‘wardrobe’ of activities that a teacher can use at any specific point of time to deliver the key themes.

Collaborative planning allows teachers to ensure the learning is relevant and meaningful for students. Ideas and resources will then be shared to inform teacher’s short term planning.

Short Term Planning

There is no requirement for short term planning, however good practice requires that all the adults involved in an activity are aware of the purpose of the activity, where it fits in within the students' learning journey, the resources required, and the expected learning outcomes for individuals. It is widely recognised that a short term / lesson plan is the best method for this.

Short Term Planning is influenced by the medium term planning. It outlines the subject, number of lessons/or cluster of lessons (showing how the activity builds upon prior learning and is part of a sequence towards an end goal), intended learning outcomes, learning opportunities, classroom management, including groups and staffing, IEP links, resources, key skills, skills focus and augmentative activities. There are recommended proformas for planning which staff can choose from. It may be necessary for staff to develop a plan that suits the needs of particular groups. Routine plans are used for some groups of students within identified classes.

Individual needs are addressed through therapeutic approaches such as occupational therapy, Hydro or physiotherapy, where appropriate.

School Organisation:

The school is organized into 4 departments and the curriculum in each of these reflects the needs of the students. Activities are differentiated and personalised to be meaningful and relevant.

Sensory Department

The learning in the sensory department is designed to support students to develop a greater understanding of the environment around them, developing skills to have greater independence and autonomy in their surroundings.

Through a range of activities students build the skills to respond to stimuli, develop consistent responses through anticipation rather than reaction, and so developing the skills for more effective communication.

Structured Department

The learning in the structured department is designed to develop greater independence in learning, and the use of more formal communication strategies, to be able to participate more effectively in learning and interact with those around them.

Through a range of consistent activities, and learning in meaningful contexts, students are supported to develop strategies to apply their learning in a variety of situations and so develop skills for greater independence and autonomy in adult life.

Collaborative Department

The learning in the collaborative department is designed to support students to develop the skills that will support them in later life, including the development of more functional reading, writing and mathematical skills and so a deeper understanding of the world around them.

Through a range of learning activities knowledge and skills are developed working together so that they can be applied in a range of situations, not only around the school but when out of school.

Sixth Form

The sixth form curriculum is based on the DfE guidance for Preparation for Adulthood. Activities are delivered through meaningful contexts, i.e. students develop skills to plan healthy meals, shopping for ingredients and preparing the meals. Students undertake work that can be accredited at their appropriate level leading towards learning being accredited through ASDAN Awards.

Through meaningful contextualized activities students in the sixth form develop skills to prepare them for adult life, either working towards skills for more independent living or further education and training colleges.

The Importance of active learning

Active learning is an essential part of the curriculum for all our students whether at a very simple exploratory, sensory level or through shared activities. For example, students may:

- find out how a noise maker works through shaking or banging during a music lesson;
- visit local play areas and experience being pushed on a swing to support science work linked to forces and motion;
- work together to build a tower to promote the development of key skills such as problem solving and working with others.

Recording & Assessment

Assessment:

The purpose of assessment within our school is to celebrate success and identify next steps for further development.

Assessment is an ongoing activity and as such should be active – Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning, as much as is practically possible, should occur alongside students. Students should be engaged in celebrating success and identifying their next steps for learning.

EHCP outcomes (long term objectives) will be identified through the annual review process when reviewing the EHCP. We will use 'PFA Outcomes across the age ranges for children and young people with SEND'.

Annual targets will be identified during the annual review.

Any relevant annual targets for each student in the class are also included in the lesson plan. As annual targets are usually the priority key skills that the student needs to develop, this is an important way of ensuring the focus on key skills is embedded within the planning, the learning and the teaching.

Assessment of Learning will be by using MAPP and captured within Evidence for Learning, quantifying success:

- **INDEPENDENCE:** Learners complete tasks independently
 - **Can they do it on their own?**
- **FLUENCY:** Learners reach a level of mastery combining speed and accuracy
 - **Are they getting better at it?**
- **MAINTENANCE:** Learners maintain competency over time through repetition. They remember after a break
 - **Can they do it more often? Are they more reliable?**
- **GENERALISATION** - Learners achieve mastery in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or with different staff
 - **Can they do it with different people or in in different places?**

Academic targets

Academic targets are set at the start of the year (please see our school assessment policy) and are these are incorporated into teachers' planning to support differentiation of learning activities to ensure learning is aspirational and appropriately challenging.

Homework

Homework may be given on an individual basis where appropriate. Annual objectives set at Annual Review meetings are agreed with parents and carers and can often be worked on across home and school settings, for example preparing meals.

Whole School Communication System

Our aim is for our school to be 'Total Communication' environment – this means that a student is able to get their message across no matter how they choose to communicate:

- Physical – gestures, sign language etc.
- Visual – pictures, text etc.
- Verbal – sounds, words etc.
- Tactile – objects of reference, Moon etc.
- Technology – voice output devices, active display devices etc.

TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children)

Visually structured approaches to learning are useful for all young people, and especially those who may have a SEND. Wren Spinney uses **aspects** of TEACCH and this will be integral to all learning and teaching throughout the school. This will always include the use of visual timetables and a clearly defined learning environment. Other aspects will be used as appropriate to meet individual needs.

Curriculum Visits

In order to make the curriculum meaningful and memorable for our students, off-site visits will be made whenever appropriate to support a particular curriculum area. This enables our students to apply their learning and demonstrate their developing skills.

Visitors and agencies from outside school will also be invited into school to support lessons and assemblies.

Staff Development

Learning & teaching will be a priority focus for training days, staff courses, for teacher meetings and whole staff INSET.

Curriculum Monitoring

At Wren Spinney the responsibility for Learning and Teaching, including subject responsibilities ultimately lies with the Headteacher, however to manage this staff may be assigned to quality assurance teams led and supported by the DHT/AHT. Please see appendix 1.

Resources

Classroom Resources:

Each classroom will be resourced appropriately for the age and needs of the students. This includes ICT provision.

Subject Resources:

Teachers prepare yearly subject bids in line with their action plans which are to cover purchasing resources and maintaining the curriculum opportunities for all students.

Parents and Carers

We believe that parents/carers have a key role in helping their children to learn and it is essential to establish good relationships with parents and carers.

Parents are encouraged to support their child's / children's learning by:

- Ensuring that their child comes to school feeling confident and positive;
- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly;
- Sharing significant information with the teacher that may affect their child's learning;
- Supporting their child by attending parent consultation evenings and statutory reviews, medicals, and other significant meetings;
- Ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct;
- Agreeing to, and supporting, the home/parent supported learning (Home School Agreement);
- Welcoming staff during home visits as appropriate;
- Responding to letters sent home from school;
- Informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;
- Supporting the school Behaviour Policy with emphasis on positive behaviour and raising self-esteem;
- Supporting extracurricular activities;
- Multi-disciplinary work between parents, teacher, therapists and other named agencies.

Parents are asked to sign a Home School Agreement at the beginning of each academic year.

Information related to their children's learning is given through:

- Annual Review meetings;
- Parent and carer evenings and groups;
- End of Year School reports;
- Home/school diaries, where appropriate;
- Homework activities (if appropriate) related to topic areas in school;
- Phone calls;
- Texts;
- Email.

Governors' Role

Governors play an important role in the learning and teaching of the school, promoting the beliefs, aims and values of the school.

It is the Governors' role to monitor and review the policy and its practice through:

- Regular visits to oversee the delivery of the scheduled subject or current school focus;
- Reporting to the Headteacher and teachers;
- Reviewing of curriculum and related policies and recommending agreed policies;
- Receiving reports from the Headteacher and Curriculum Coordinators (as appropriate);
- Attending INSET;
- Receiving reports from the site supervisor on relevant issues, in particular health and safety and following up any relevant issues;
- Promoting and ensuring, at all times, equal opportunities in relation to race, gender, class, belief, ability and sexuality;
- Promoting and ensuring, at all times, the practice of giving value to and having respect for all cultures and faiths.

Governors are encouraged to have a high profile in the school in order to have knowledge of the needs of the students, the staff, the curriculum, the resources and the teaching within the school. As well as regular planned visits and observations within school, they will be welcomed to assemblies and other school events and invited to join training days.

Community Role

The community is invited to support the school by:

- Enabling links to be established with local community schools;
- Contributing to activities, such as assemblies, artistic events, specialist outings, and clubs;
- Presenting themselves as positive role models to the students within the community;
- Organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen students' knowledge and skills;
- Supporting school events;
- Voluntarily helping in the school.

Equal Opportunities

All students regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion and belief or sexual identity will have equal access to appropriate resources. Please refer to the Single Equality Duty for further details.

Throughout the curriculum and during specific lessons, where appropriate, students will have the opportunity to:

- Explore resources from different cultures
- Experience positive role models through books and text used
- Experience positive role models from staff, governors, parents and local contacts within the community.

Wren Spinney makes every possible effort to use local contacts within the community to share their expertise, skills and experiences within different cultures.

Health and Safety

Teachers and support staff should exercise professional judgement with regard to the range of tools, equipment and materials used.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of possible health and safety issues.

Any specific issues relating to health and safety which need immediate attention should be brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel.

Refer to the school's Health and Safety Policy for further details.

Some subjects may also have specific health and safety requirements, for example science please also refer Health and Safety Policy which details the specific health and safety needs for the teaching of science and refers to relevant COSHH regulations and guidance.

Other documents that support this policy include:

- Curriculum policies;
- SEN policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;

Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Senior Leadership Team, as part of a cycle, in consultation with the appropriate staff and then submitted to Governors for final approval.