



Teaching and Learning Policy

Aims of the Policy

We are committed to the highest quality of education for our students.

This policy sets out our expectations related to the process of teaching, learning, assessment, feedback and reporting of students' progress at school.

Philosophy of Education:

At Abbot's Lea School, we have developed the ASD model of education. This model places equal weighting to each of the following areas of education:

- Academic Progress – enabling students to make progress academically and gain the knowledge and understanding to be successful in their lives after Abbot's Lea School
- Specialist Support – Providing students with the specialist support through multi agency working so that they can access their learning.
- Development of Life Skills – providing students with a bespoke curriculum that enables them to develop transferable skills that they can use throughout their lives.

The aims of our school are:

- To provide outstanding education to the students
- To work in united partnership with the families
- To recruit, develop and retain the best professionals
- To lead innovation and positive change in the field of Autism

Principles of Education at Abbot's Lea School

In our educational work, we aim to:

- Provide a supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment
- Have high expectations and value all members of the school community;
- Recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements;
- Ensure children can develop as literate, numerate and technologically competent individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum;
- Provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- Provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- Develop individuals with enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;

- Encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional wellbeing;
- Develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- Develop enduring values of respect, honesty, equality, integrity, tolerance, fairness and trust;
- Encourage children to respond positively to the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of a rapidly changing world;
- Encourage children to value the diversity in our society and the environment in which they live;
- Encourage children to become active and responsible citizens, contributing positively to the community and society;
- Providing a calm and effective working environment, in which each child can produce his or her best work;
- Providing a welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered;
- Providing positive role models;
- A supportive environment where students can express themselves and ready for learning;
- Effective management of learning time to ensure students make every opportunity to learn count;
- Developing links with all stakeholders and the wider community;
- Valuing and celebrating pupils' success and achievements;
- Ensuring that students have access to a high level of professional expertise and multi-agency working to support their learning.

As a school, we are committed to our mission statement – 'To be the International Centre of Excellence in Autism Education, Research and Professional Development'

Implementation of Teaching

Learning and teaching is a shared responsibility and all members of the school community have an important part to play, with all members of the school community working towards the school's aims, by:

- Seeing children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs;
- Fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
- Providing a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and supportive to all student's needs;
- Offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures;
- Encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships;
- Working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

Scheme of Delegation for teaching and learning

- **Headteacher** – sets the vision for the school and the education for its students
- **Deputy Headteacher** – sets the curriculum intent for all Key Stages across the school and quality assures implementation and reports on impact
- **Head of Care and Safeguarding** – sets the curriculum intent for the Safeguarding in the curriculum
- **Key Stage Leaders** – ensure implementation and high quality of the curriculum throughout the school
- **Careers Lead** – ensures implementation of high quality careers education across the school

- **Teachers** – deliver curriculum and record students' progress
- **HLTA** – Plan and deliver Life Skills curriculum in their given class/phase
- **Teaching Assistants** – Support and implementation of the curriculum in their class/phase

Planning

The foundation for curricular development is the School Development Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff, and approved by governors.

At Abbot's Lea School, we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2014. The Deputy Headteacher and the Operational Leadership Team (Key Stage Leaders and Job Coach) draw up a cycle of National Curriculum Programmes of Study. This is carefully balanced to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum, PSHCE and RE, whilst also providing a sequential plan across all phases of the school. We follow a cross curricular/thematic approach to learning where subjects are taught through a topic/theme and some are covered as discrete subjects. Regular team meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Planning takes place weekly through collaborative planning, with reference to the National Curriculum 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage, EQUALS, Pearson and Open Awards Functional Skills, OCR Life and Living Skills, AQA Work skills. Swimming instruction with specialist instructor's takes place at the local swimming pool, with each students in EYFS – KS4 accessing a two week block each year.

At Abbot's Lea School we are committed to raising standards of basic skills. By basic skills, we mean the ability to read, write and speak in English and to use Mathematics at a proficient level to facilitate learning across the curriculum.

Delivery

The learning environment is developed in such a way as to support each student's preferred style of learning.

Opportunities will be made for:

- Whole class teaching;
- Group work;
- One to one teaching;
- Conferencing;
- Collaborative learning in pairs or groups;
- Independent learning.

All areas of the learning environment will be planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- Workstation will be tidy and have relevant symbols and structure to support students;

- Visuals around the classroom will enable students to engage with learning without distraction or overload of sensory needs;
- Personalised sensory equipment will be available for students who require this and they will be able to access this at structured/unstructured times of the day;
- Quiet spaces will be maintained for students and enable them to reintegrate into learning when then are able to regulate their emotions.
- Emotional regulation charts will be available to all students, in line with the schools Zones of Regulation Methodology.
- Areas for imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner;
- Pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources. Classrooms provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, including thought provoking and stimulating displays.

Classroom support is available in the form of both Higher Level Teaching Assistants and Teaching Assistants. Higher Level Teaching Assistants are responsible for the delivery of the schools Life Skills Curriculum and are used at the discretion of the teacher for other teaching activities. Teaching Assistants are used at the discretion of the Teacher and Higher Level Teaching Assistant to support the function of teaching and learning, but also the support of the students.

Teaching Strategies and Styles

In order to ensure equality of access and effective matching of tasks to needs, teachers will employ a variety of teaching strategies in any one session. This will include:

- Provision of an integrated curriculum;
- Workstations are designed specifically for students, with visuals that are bespoke and unique to support learning and transition
- Displays are specific and meet the sensory needs of each student
- Sensory time is at structured/unstructured times throughout the day to support students
- Quiet spaces are made available to students and are used on a needs basis
- Teacher observation;
- Discussion and questioning (open and closed as appropriate);
- Previewing and reviewing work;
- Didactic teaching;
- Interactive teaching;
- Conferencing;
- Listening;
- Mind mapping;
- Providing opportunities for reflection by pupils;
- Demonstrating high expectations;
- Providing opportunities for repetition/reinforcement;
- Providing encouragement, positive reinforcement and praise;
- Making judgements and responding to individual need;
- Intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to encourage development;
- Providing all children with opportunities for success;
- Using a range of communication strategies – verbal and non-verbal.
- SCERTs Framework is used to support student's communication development and social interaction
- The use of Emotional Regulation Charts (Zones of Regulation) are used within classrooms to support students in readiness for learning.
- Restorative Practice techniques are used to support relationships between all stakeholders

Activities should show a balance in terms of individual, group and whole class work. Specialist teaching is available from specialist teacher and in form of external advisors, including, but not limited to School Improvement Liverpool.

The emphasis of our policy is on a good variety of experiences and we encourage children increasingly to take an active role in their own learning. Thus:

- Investigative work is used;
- Students are encouraged to communicate findings in a variety of ways;
- Opportunities are provided for children to become involved in decision making and to take responsibility, along with staff, for their own learning.

At Abbot's Lea School, we recognise the importance of key skills. Opportunities will be made available across the curriculum to develop:

- Application of number;
- Communication;
- Computing skills
- Problem solving;
- Working with others;
- Experiential opportunities to develop transferable skills.

Thinking skills will also be developed across the curriculum. This will include:

- Creative thinking;
- Enquiry;
- Information processing;
- Reasoning;
- Evaluation.

At Abbot's Lea School, we recognise the importance of formative assessment and the important role it has to play in creating a learning culture. We believe that formative assessment furthers and deepens learning and consists of four basic elements, underpinned by confidence that every child can improve and an awareness of the importance of children's high self-esteem.

Differentiation

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- matching the curriculum to the individual needs of the students
- make sure that there is a solid foundation of knowledge and understanding so that gaps in knowledge are built on
- Revisit learning through a spiral model of education and a planned sequential curriculum that meets the needs of the students
- Lessons are paced at an appropriate level for each student;
- Content taught is at the appropriate level for the individual needs of the students;
- Tasks are differentiated at an individual and personalised level;
- Resources match the needs of the curriculum coverage and individual needs of the students;
- Extension opportunities are provided to stretch students;
- Students are given opportunities for scholarship of their own learning;
- teacher/adult support is provided where needed.

Differentiated tasks will be detailed in planning and learning objectives will be specified for all differentiated teaching will meet the individual needs of the students.

As all students in Abbot's Lea School have a diagnosis of Autism and other special educational needs (including gifted and talented children), they receive support provided by

Teachers set individual targets through the students My Plan and this is reviewed on a termly basis. This is in addition to the formative assessment targets the teachers communicate to the children on a weekly or daily basis where appropriate.

Home Learning

Home learning takes place whilst considering the specific needs of the students across the school and their point on their learning journey.

Feedback and Marking

At Abbot's Lea School we recognise the importance of marking and assessment, whether this be written or oral feedback, and that when well-managed, marking has the capacity to move our pupils' learning forward. Marking is essential in ensuring that each student achieves his or her potential. In order to enable and empower each pupil in their overall learning, marking and feedback should take into account the specific needs of the student, not just within the relevant subject area but also in the promotion of life-long learning and transferable skills. We also recognise the importance of marking and feedback in encouraging our students to love learning. It is the constant reinforcement, recognition and praise of their individual work that ensures their continued efforts and provides them with their next steps in learning.

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform future planning. Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child's progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning.

Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in Years 2 and 6) with SATs (where applicable) and teacher assessment. Phonics are tested in Year 1 and re-tested where necessary in Year 2. Initial assessment is used in Reception/Early Years within six weeks of starting school and Foundation Stage Profiles are maintained.

Assessment methods used in Abbot's Lea School:

- Group discussions;
- Teacher assessments;
- Photographs;
- Recordings;
- Specific assignments for individual pupils;
- Discussions in which students are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress;
- Student observations;
- SATs (where applicable)
- Functional Skills assessments from Entry Level 1 to Level 2

- ASDAN assessments
- Vocational and Life skill qualifications
- STAR Reader
- STAR Mathematics

All results from assessments are analysed and used to inform future planning and future interventions.

Reporting to parents is done twice a year through consultations and once through a written report. Results of individual pupils' assessments are made available to the parents concerned and the overall statistical profile (but not individual results) is made available to parents, governors, LA and national government.

Whole school marking procedures

- Work should be marked in green pen
- Self-assessment of work (where applicable) should take place, with the following strategies used:
 - 'I feel confident in this area/piece of work' – Green stamp/mark
 - 'I feel that I have gained some understanding of this area/piece of work – Amber stamp/mark
 - I feel that I need support to help me understand this area/piece of work – Red stamp/mark.
- Students who are able should also be encouraged where possible to write a comment justifying why they have marked the work with a particular colour.
- At least every third piece of work should be marked with a comment.

Strategies for marking work

- Staff annotation of work for responsive teaching purposes.
- Students who can engage with constructive feedback should have meaningful comments written on their work to them.

Students also receive feedback about their work, within a lesson students receive the following feedback:

- Verbal feedback through discussion with the student to inform learning and progress
- Visual feedback using symbols and other tools that the school has adopted.
- Peer feedback through discussions with peers; this can be 1:1 or small groups, whole class. This will be further enhanced with the practices of Restorative Practice

This is a consistent approach that is applied to all phases of the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated regularly in each of the core curriculum areas by the Deputy Headteacher, Key Stage Leaders and teachers. Regular meetings are held with all members of the teaching staff in the form of Pupil Progress Meetings which includes discussions around our whole school therapeutic interventions and the impact of the

interventions that are used. The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Key Stage Leaders will observe each class teacher in a specified curriculum area on a regular basis. The Performance Management cycle informs learning and teaching and targets are set against the School Development Plan priorities and also areas for curricular development.

Use of Visits and External Visitors

At Abbot's Lea School, the use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is valued and these are used throughout the school to widen children's experiences and support learning across a range of subject areas. These include;

- College and transition visits
- Employer engagement (Internal/External)
- External speakers in classes, assemblies, 1:1
- Sports Coaches
- Community Visits

All staff are responsible for the risk assessment of any trip or visitor entering the school and two members of staff are taking the lead as the Educational Visits Coordinator, authorising any trips and visits into the community and school. The named person on the risk assessment is the leader of the trip.