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PARKWOOD HALL SCHOOL

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

"Learning and Living Together "

School Policy File: I

Whole School

Learning and Teaching Policy

Parkwood Hall School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

' Parkwood Hall School aims to provide a caring and safe environment with a specialised and holistic approach to education, allowing each individual to reach their maximum potential and to prepare them for life outside school.'

PARKWOOD HALL SCHOOL

Learning and Teaching Policy

SECTION 1

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY:

Parkwood Hall School is a residential and day school for students aged 7 to 19 with Moderate to Severe Learning Difficulties and a variety of additional needs, including aspects of the Autistic Spectrum and Speech Language and Communication Needs. This means that our approach has to be highly specialised and holistic, trying to ensure that all the professionals working with and on behalf of the students (e.g. Speech, Language and Communication Therapists, OTs and psychotherapists) do so in a fully integrated manner.

CORE VALUES:

At the core is our motto: "**Growth through Personal and Social Development**".

This does not just apply to the students with whom we work; we believe that we must constantly develop and grow as professionals, individually and collectively.

We are:

- **Optimistic** – we look for the best from ourselves and our students. Many of our students are "differently-abled" rather than disabled.
- **Nurturing** – we know that meeting a person's basic physiological and emotional needs enables them to achieve more (Maslov's hierarchy)
- **Opportunistic** – we look for the occasions when we can "seize the moment" and make the most of it.
- **Student-focussed** – everything we do should focus on meeting individual needs and result in improved outcomes for our students.

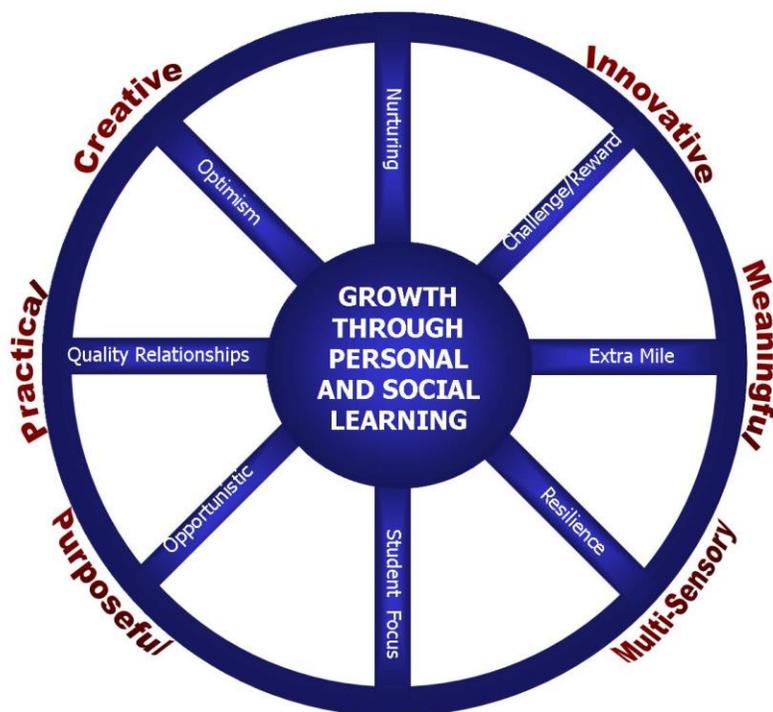
We aim to:

- Develop **Resilience** - in ourselves and others, to help us and our students overcome barriers to learning and achievement.
- **Challenge & Reward** – setting realistic but suitably ambitious goals for ourselves, each other and our students; rewarding through recognition.

- Go the **Extra Mile** – asking ourselves what else we can do to improve the outcomes for individuals and groups.
- Develop and maintain **Quality Relationships** –between staff and students, amongst students and staff groups and with parents, families and others.

These values are set out in the circle below:

The Core Values Wheel:



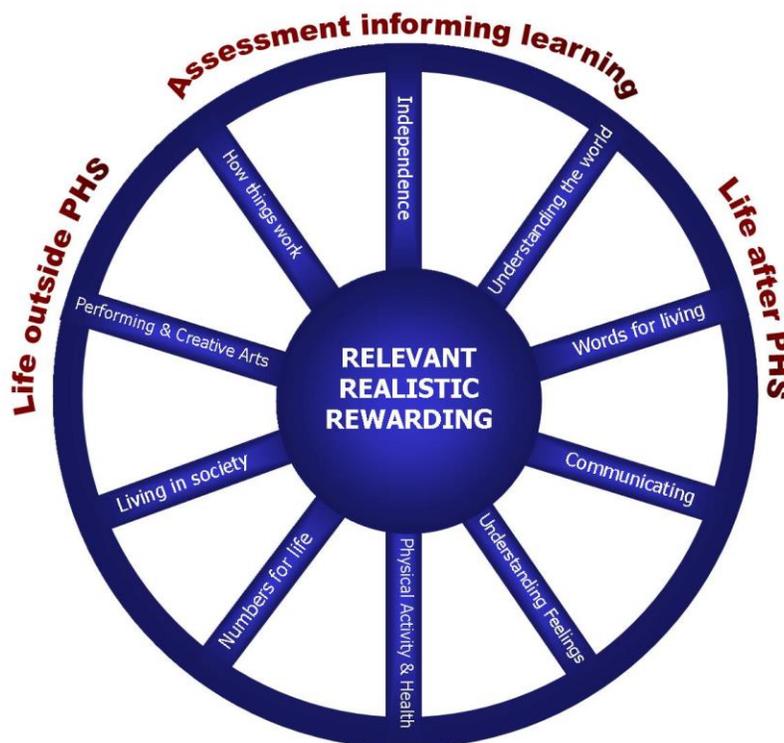
Around the rim of the Core Values wheel can be seen the core values which should apply to our approach to all learning and teaching within the school. It should be creative (at its best innovative), meaningful, practical, purposeful and multi-sensory.

Our curriculum model is based on the second wheel which is to be found on the next page. Our version of the “three Rs” states that learning should be Relevant, Realistic and Rewarding. As a consequence, we do not describe learning and teaching in terms of traditional school subjects (which have tended to form the headings for the National Curriculum) and we use the following 10 headings instead:

- Communication – via speech, symbol, gesture, signing or electronic means

- Independence – gradually developing ability to take responsibility for oneself
- Numbers for Life – relevant and realistic application of everyday maths
- Words for Living – literacy within the young person’s scope and context
- Understanding the World – making sense of where we are
- How Things Work – encompassing aspects of technology and science
- Living in Society – developing social knowledge, understanding and skills
- Understanding feelings – one’s own and, wherever possible, other people’s
- Physical Activity and Health – the importance of good body maintenance
- Performing and Creative Arts – raising self-esteem, confidence and teamwork

The Curriculum Wheel



Around the rim of the curriculum wheel are reminders that we need to think about the life that our students live away from school – usually with their family, where they may show a very different set of abilities, knowledge and skills; the kind of life they may lead when they leave Parkwood, whether attending a college, working or accessing local adult services, where the criteria for support may be very different.

Finally, assessment should be for the purpose of informing learning and the planning of learning and teaching experiences and strategies. It must be proportionate and relevant to the needs and abilities of the individual. It should enable progress to be identified and tracked and compared in terms of others with similar needs, or in terms of gender, ethnic group, deprivation etc.

The way in which this curriculum model leads to the planning and implementation of the learning and teaching experience for our students forms the subject of the next two sections.

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION:

All educational staff, in line with the 3Rs (relevant, realistic, rewarding) of the School's vision, will ensure that the curriculum is underpinned by a practical approach. Over-learning will be encouraged and facilitated with planning for learning to be developed in incremental stages/steps according to the needs and abilities of the student/s.

Wherever possible and relevant, learning will be outdoors – to enable the acquisition of real life experiences through repeated visits within and beyond the school's boundaries. To this end an 'Outdoors learning coordinator' will be appointed to lead on and support colleagues' planning for learning 'outside the classroom walls'. This will incorporate but will extend beyond work currently being done under the Forest Schools umbrella, for example, with the most able students planning then taking themselves down to the Café for lunch on some occasions, developing independent travel skills, going off to Bluewater unescorted (when all stakeholders judge them competent enough), accessing new leisure activities e.g. rock climbing, etc.

Robust planning (at all stages – long, medium and short) will be expected to incorporate the highest quality elements: a clear and relevant learning objective or objectives; a focus on the organisation – students, resources, staff, environment, etc; the learning experiences to be had; how learning and teaching will be adapted to meet the needs of individuals, how individuals will be challenged to attempt new learning and how learning will be assessed and achievement recorded and this information used to drive new learning. Staff will be encouraged to plan jointly, learning from peers but more able students will also be encouraged and expected to contribute to the planning for their own learning experiences. Peer learning will be encouraged and facilitated for staff and students alike.

High quality teaching and learning experiences will result from the implementation of the detailed planning.

ROLES OF ALL INVOLVED IN LEARNING AND TEACHING:

SLT: the SLT as a single entity has the role of setting the strategic direction of the school, leading and implementing any changes necessary and ensuring that the

school runs well and all students are achieving according to their abilities. Within the SLT, different members will have different roles and responsibilities (see different job descriptions) to ensure that the learning and teaching process in the school is facilitated and enhanced and in Ofsted terminology, ranges from Good to Outstanding.

All Education staff:

All staff will know the 10 steps in the cycle of learning and the 5 stages of the learning process (see Appendix 1) and will ensure this is incorporated into their work.

SALTs/As: the speech and language therapists along with the therapy assistants will liaise with colleagues across both the teaching and residential sectors, assessing the communication abilities, needs and skills as well as language use and/or difficulties and advising on best strategies to be used to enable all students to access learning (these strategies will include supporting with the preparation of learning resources and delivering training where relevant). Their roles will be more clearly outlined in their respective job descriptions.

Teachers: have responsibility for planning, assessment, learning and teaching for the students assigned to them. They also have responsibility for supporting their peers and directing and leading the teaching assistants in their classrooms. It is a teacher's responsibility to know the learning needs, the strategies and abilities of each of the students in their classrooms or groups they may work with (e.g. during Enrichment) and to plan with the intention of consolidating prior learning, building on this and introducing new learning opportunities (skills, experiences, knowledge, etc), adapting as necessary to meet individual needs and abilities. This planning needs to encompass wider learning and teaching strategies such as behaviour management, classroom organisation, etc. Teachers also have the responsibility for their own further development and contributing to that of their colleagues, for example through peer learning (the 'buddying' system – see list - Appendix 5). Each teacher as part of a pair, will also be assigned (in negotiation as far as possible) responsibility for a subject/curriculum heading and will work in collaboration with the relevant member of the SLG to ensure learning and teaching in their assigned curriculum area falls in the Good or Outstanding categories. It is their responsibility to know the Teacher Standards and to adhere to these.

AESL: in line with his/her job description will work to design extended provision to further enhance the learning of the students with their work complementing and/or enhancing that done by colleagues across the school.

Teaching Assistants:

have the responsibility of supporting learning and teaching working with whichever teacher/s and student/s they are assigned to. They also have the responsibility of ensuring they know the learning needs, the strategies used with/by and abilities of each of the students. They will be proactive at all times and will know and adhere to the TA standards. Within the TA team, different members at different levels (e.g. HLTA, STA) will have different roles and responsibilities which will be detailed in their respective job descriptions.

Residential Education Team:

in line with their various roles (as detailed in their job descriptions), they will be responsible for developing and/or supporting the learning of the residential students (in particular).

Written by: Christine deGraft-Hanson

Date: December 2013

Approved by: C&S on 16th January 2014

Review Date: January 2016

APPENDIX 1

10 STEPS IN THE CYCLE OF LEARNING & THE 5 STAGES OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

1. Equips learners for life in its broadest sense.
2. Engages with valued forms of knowledge.
3. Recognises the importance of prior experience and learning.
4. Requires the teacher/learning leader to scaffold learning.
5. Needs assessment to be congruent with learning.
6. Promotes the active engagement of the learner.
7. Fosters both individual and social processes and outcomes.
8. Recognises the significance of informal learning.
9. Depends on teacher/learning leader learning.
10. Demands consistent policy frameworks with support for learning and teaching as their primary focus.

The Learning Process (likened to learning to drive a car) may be laid out as follows:

- i. Acquisition - learning about the steering wheel, clutch, etc
- ii. Fluency - learning to change gears
- iii. Maintenance - reversing around the corner, etc
- iv. Generalisation - driving on a B road, then an A road, then an M road
- v. Adaptation - driving different models of cars or on foreign roads

At Parkwood, emphasis is placed more on some of the steps than on others, for example, steps 3 – 8 are most important as teaching and residential education staff focus on personalising the learning and providing secure scaffolding. Rigorous assessment will be used to inform teaching which is aimed at enabling the student to attain all 5 stages of the Learning Process or as much of it as they are personally capable of.

Staff are tasked with getting students to develop appetites for learning, encouraging them to use all the abilities they have, knowing that *functions not used are lost*. To this end, staff should encourage and facilitate over-learning but should also be aware that unvaried repetition leads to rigidity and boredom which can lead to disengagement and incidences of inappropriate behaviours. Differentiation MUST be evident in planning and in practice across all learning and teaching activities.

APPENDIX 2

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

PLANNING

The emphasis is on a cycle of assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating and putting this into daily practice. There is less emphasis on producing masses of paper, so although all stages of planning (long, medium and short term) are expected, teachers and residential education staff are not required to produce lesson/activity plans for each lesson/activity of every day. Teachers are required to submit Weekly Planners which clearly show the learning objectives for the students and the roles of teaching assistants. For lessons which will be observed (for whatever reason) it is both good practice and school policy for the class teacher to provide the observer with a lesson plan). For purposes of monitoring, a lesson plan per week may be required from all class teachers.

Medium and short term planning MUST clearly show differentiation and assessment opportunities.

ASSESSMENT

At Parkwood, personalisation of learning lends naturally to ***individual, differentiated assessment***, which is an aim of criterion referenced assessment. All staff are tasked with assessing and reporting on what a student knows, understands and is able to do and this is used to provide feedback as well as to inform future planning and learning. Using criterion referenced assessment enables staff to give a detailed representation of each student's progress and achievements. It also ensures that progression is independent of age and/or ability, with every student progressing in accordance with their own abilities. Assessment will be both formative and summative.

The principles of Assessment for Learning will be incorporated into the work of all education staff and student self assessment as well as peer assessment will be encouraged and supported.

Moderation will be conducted regularly in order to secure the consistency and accuracy of judgements made by different members of staff and to reassure them that their judgements are accurate, valid and consistent with national standards.

While the National SEN Progress Guidance will not be used for target setting across the school, it will be used as a reference point and a check that school staff know what good progress looks like for learners with SEN. School leaders will be guided by this to challenge targets set and progress reported by staff.

APPENDIX 3

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS/DIFFERENTIATION

All staff will ensure they know their students as learners (their learning needs, styles, abilities, etc) and will gear their planning for learning towards meeting these needs.

There are a number of recognised differentiation strategies which can support learning and teaching. Staff at Parkwood are expected to actively plan for and make differentiation an integral part of their work choosing from amongst the various methods below:

Differentiation by dialogue/communication – Staff at Parkwood excel at employing this method of differentiation. It is where staff carefully choose and/or modify their language or mode of communication to meet the needs of the student, for example, either by signing information or requests, by using the PECS, by using less language, by speaking a little slower, using whole-body communication where appropriate, etc.

Differentiation by outcome or response – this is where all students work on the same task but end up with different 'end results'. For example, if they were set the task of 'drawing a face', one student's work would depict a circle and yet another's would depict a circle showing eyes, nose, mouth, etc.

Differentiation by resource or text – using this kind of differentiation, the teacher will provide all students with the same information in different formats or task to be completed using different resources suitable to their abilities, for example, in a bike riding exercise, all students will have participated in riding, but some will have been provided with 4-wheeled bikes and others with 3- or 2-wheeled bikes.

Differentiation by task – this is where different tasks are set for different students. It may be as 'basic' as walking with another student to deliver the register (where one student - the less able or newer student - is the one holding the register and the student staff know is more able is also 'helping' to deliver the register but not actually having the responsibility) or where one student hands over resources, which someone else ties on (if first student does not have the fine motor skills or cognitive understanding to enable them to tie a knot). In both instances, both students will have participated in the main tasks (to deliver the register or to tie knotted plastic on a lizard's leg!) but they will have had 'different tasks' set for them.

Differentiation by support – this has some similarity to differentiation by communication/dialogue. Here the adults in a classroom or in an activity will provide physical (hold hand to trace over a pattern, hold hands to balance in PE), verbal (repeating or rephrasing an instruction, reading or spelling something for a student), etc, support. A good knowledge of the student/s will be key in determining how much or how little support (and the nature of the support) that student needs and how best to provide this.

Differentiation by pace – this used to be described as *planning an activity/work for the 'fast finishers'*. Here it is acknowledged that students of different abilities work at different paces. Staff need to take this into consideration when planning activities. For example, the needs of students who will process information much more slowly must be taken into consideration and catered for when setting the pace of lessons or activities.

Differentiation by content – this is somewhat loosely along the lines of 'over-learning' and is where the student is allowed or directed to focus on developing a 'deeper' understanding of or further consolidating work done on a particular topic or skill. For example, a student who has understood baking a jam tart, may go on to bake a mince pie and eventually a pasty. This differentiation is all to do with 'how much or into what depth' the student goes on any topic.

Differentiation by independence or responsibility – a method increasing in use at Parkwood, this is where the students are encouraged to use self- and /or peer assessment, for example when cooking – a more able student may be asked to support another by leading the activity with staff only supporting by reminding or encouraging.

There should be evidence of differentiation both in written planning and in observed sessions (the actual teaching). It is expected that a selection (or mix) of the above mentioned methods of differentiation will be employed for different lessons. No one method of differentiation can meet the needs of all learners at all times and this needs to be considered both when planning and when teaching.

APPENDIX 4

THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECT/LEARNING AREA LEAD/S

Ofsted states that an effective subject leader needs:

- Accurate knowledge of the school's and pupils' strengths and weaknesses
- To be knowledgeable in their subject and have authority and influence
- Clear expectations for raising and maintaining standards
- A range of monitoring and evaluating procedures to improve teaching and learning
- Well established systems for collecting, analysing and using assessment data
- To develop a shared vision and collaboration between staff.

In effect, in everyday practice the subject lead/s must

- Understand the nature of the subject
- Have knowledge of current developments
- Have knowledge of key characteristics of quality teaching and learning
- Have knowledge of the key features of quality learning environments and teacher repertoire
- Dialogue with the LA's subject advisor (if any) and or subject association
- Develop a subject policy to share with governors, senior leaders, teachers, parents and other interested parties such as Ofsted and the LA
- Support in formulating and revising schemes of work
- Assist in the planning process
- Assist in leading CPD (INSET) initiatives
- Offer consultation and advise to colleagues
- Participate in and lead evaluation in the subject area
- Have involvement in the information gathering process
- Analyse data
- Be involved in the writing of the evaluation report, communicate findings and action follow-up
- Identify needs and resources to meet these needs
- Advice on resource deployment and training in usage
- Develop contacts and networks beyond school
- Link staff with complementary needs/expertise
- Advise on and devise appropriate forms of assessment, recording and reporting in accordance with the whole-school assessment policy.

APPENDIX 5

TEACHER BUDDY LIST 2013/14 ACADEMIC YEAR

Sarah H	Angela H
Suzanne	John H and Janine A
Danielle	Andrew J
Rosemary	Alexandra H
Penny	Keith
Kirsty	Linda D