



The Henslow School

Curriculum Implementation Policy

(Teaching and Learning)

Secondary

Rationale

Learning and self-growth are the heart of The Henslow School and our staff have high, realistic expectations for all student. We are committed to educational stability, focusing on inclusion.

Aims

All school staff share the same values and ethos in delivering lessons and supporting student. Our learning and teaching aims are:

- to provide a stable and happy environment, underpinned by a nurturing and therapeutic approach, where all student can learn well and develop into resilient learners who value the importance of education
- to provide an engaging, exciting, challenging and bespoke curriculum
- to put reading at the heart of the curriculum so that our students become confident and competent readers across a range of genres
- to equip students with the metacognition skills for a successful future
- to give student the opportunity to ask questions, put forward their ideas and reflect on their successes, so that they feel fully involved and invested in their own learning

Our approach

Our approach to teaching is aimed at facilitating the student's ability to make connections between their existing knowledge and skills and their new learning, so that there is a permanent alteration to their long-term memory. We want all of our student to 'learn how to learn' and to understand that we never stop learning. We want students to be able to actively monitor their own learning and begin to identify what works best for them so, they can make changes to their own learning behaviours and strategies.

Typically, students arrive with significant gaps in their learning, as well as their general knowledge and our approach is designed to begin to address these gaps as soon as possible. For us, this can be summarised as enriching their cultural capital by equipping them with the skills, knowledge and values which can be used to access education and help them to improve their life chances.

Induction

Our induction starts with an initial meeting with the student, who is usually accompanied by their care home manager/parent and/or social worker. This is usually held at school and is important because it allows us to explore the student's starting point. We read all the information we have been given and do our very best to track down anything that may be missing and access any prior assessments. We carry out a variety of our own assessments, typically within the first half term, so that an accurate baseline can be established. Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and difficulties in this area may guide our starting points in order that a student can develop the skills to access the full curriculum. Our therapy team (where commissioned) carry out further assessments and the results of these are shared with school, so that our teachers can be fully informed. From this point forward we build a bespoke and flexible education programme for each young person.

The classroom environment and resources (see appendix A)

The learning environment is vital if students are to make the best possible use of the programme on offer. Our subject specific classrooms include bright, engaging displays and we make available information that supports skill development in that subject to scaffold learning. We aim to balance a stimulating environment with one that is also conducive to calm, focussed learning. We often use resources in the classroom to make learning practical as this is often a more engaging way of learning for our students. We seek to make available a wide range of resources and tools to maximise student access to the curriculum.

Classroom organisation

Students are taught in small classes and are sensitively supported (which may sometimes mean working in even smaller groups) to ensure that the pace and lesson content is appropriately challenging. If students need significant support, this is typically delivered by the SENCo outside the class or by a HLTA/TA. Our grouping remains flexible in order that we can respond to changing needs, with timetable alterations often occurring half termly.

The length of our lessons is 45mins, with some practical subjects utilising a double lesson, broken up into appropriate sections to ensure the students remain focused and responsive.

Planning (see appendix B)

The lesson content delivered at The Henslow School is based on the guidance in the National Curriculum but with the flexibility to respond to our unique cohort and their learning gaps. This may mean that certain subjects such as Food Technology have a focus on independence as many of our looked after students will need to budget, shop and cook for themselves soon after leaving school. Teachers are mindful of the cross curricular links between subjects and make efforts to link knowledge and skills to help students build their understanding in a holistic way, developing their cultural capital. The school also tries to ensure that all adults role model and explore metacognition in order to develop the skills for learning and to ensure all individuals reach their learning potential.

Teacher's planning varies across the subjects and age range with many following a prescribed syllabus with the aim of completing a qualification. Teachers also use a variety of resources such as exam board planning tools and subject specific association schemes of work. These form the core of teacher planning but are then adapted day to day to meet the needs of our students in that lesson. Our vulnerable cohort need teachers to remain flexible and this may mean abandoning the planned lesson to respond to a specific need or for example to engage a student who is struggling with their mental health.

Linking our curriculum to careers

We are committed to raising our student's future aspirations and increasing their knowledge of what skills they will need for particular careers is an important part of this. Linking our subject curriculum to future careers helps our student to make links between subjects and how the skills and knowledge they acquire can be applied in the future. Where appropriate, our teachers explicitly plan carers links into sets of lessons.

Our bespoke approach to teaching

- Teachers start with what they want the student to learn and carefully select the resources to support the learning journey, rather than activities or resources dictating the learning
- We then establish what the students know already so it can feed into the lesson design. Where appropriate we may use a mind map to establish what is already known but also to focus on what they would like to find out. This joint, shared approach is used to help the student's engagement.
- All lessons have a clear learning objective (LO), which is shared with the student and re-visited throughout the lesson. It may be appropriate to share the overview of a new unit of work first, rather than asking students to copy a learning objective verbatim. Learning objectives focus on what the student needs to think about and learn rather than the activity they will be doing.
- Teachers share the bigger picture so that the student can start to make connections and understand how skills and knowledge are built up over time
- Links are made to previous learning and the majority of lessons are designed with a 'hook' to capture the child's interest and foster engagement

- Teachers are able to expertly craft the lesson structure that fits best with what they are teaching e.g. it might be appropriate to start with a game or quiz to help engagement before sharing the objective for the lesson
- Lessons are carefully designed to use carefully selected incremental steps to build on what has been taught before
- Different learning styles are routinely planned for (and teachers are careful not to allow their own preferred learning style to dominate). Students are encouraged to engage with all approaches but also begin to identify their preferred methods.
- Teachers regularly model and verbalise their thinking and writing, so that students can see and understand the process, which in turn helps to develop the student's own understanding of metacognition
- Students are often shown what a successful outcome looks like
- Students are encouraged to actively participate in setting their own targets and goals
- Teachers use formative and summative assessment information well to inform their planning
- Teachers check the student's understanding systematically and effectively in lessons and misconceptions are viewed as learning opportunities and a chance for further explanation and consolidation
- Peer and self-assessment are used regularly by teachers
- Providing timely feedback (written or oral) and where possible doing this with the student at the time
- Teachers routinely provide opportunities for the student to be an 'expert' and to be able to explain what they have learnt to their peers
- Teachers have a commitment to develop the student's metacognition skills, in order to build on the skills needed to create resilient learners, whom can be more successful when faced with challenge

Student Learning Journals

Student work should be recorded not for the sake of it, but to aid learning and at a later date revision. Student learning journals provide a format that allows a whole range of information to be captured, this might be photos initially. Students should be helped to develop their own style of note taking and recording which meets their metacognitive needs as they begin to understand how they learn best. High expectations of presentation are encouraged in all books/folders.

Student targets

Students are encouraged to play an active role in their various meetings which may include Looked After Child reviews, Personal Education Plan Meetings and Annual Reviews of EHCP's. The school is careful to ensure that students do not end up with a myriad of targets in different places and this is achieved by linking PEP meeting targets to a student's EHCP outcomes. Students are encouraged to have ownership for tracking and monitoring their own learning.

Vocabulary (see the school's reading policy and Appendix C)

Extending and reinforcing student's everyday vocabulary, as well as their subject specific vocabulary, is a key part of our teaching and learning approach. All teachers will spend time focussing on new vocabulary as part of each taught topic, making use of a variety of methods to help students commit these to memory and developing personalised tools that work for each individual.

Reading is a core thread within our curriculum and we encourage all students to be readers of as broad a range of books as they are willing to consider. Our after lunch literacy session acts as a transition from social time to lessons but is also an important space for encouraging students to develop and improve their vocabulary and understanding through embracing literacy activities in their broadest sense.

Homework

Used effectively, homework can provide invaluable opportunities for student to develop their skills, knowledge and independence. Our teachers typically use homework to provide additional opportunities for accessing information, to consolidate key skills or to develop independence. Homework is never just set as a matter of routine and we are mindful that some of our student, due to their past experiences with school, may find homework causes unnecessary stress or is a trigger for an emotional outburst. Our bespoke approach to designing lessons is also used with homework to ensure that it is personalised and not detrimental to a child's school experience. As students move into KS4 they will be encouraged to carry out the appropriate amount of personal study in relation to the courses they are studying.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We have a relentless drive for excellence, with the student's learning at the heart of what we do. Regular self-evaluation enables us to identify and share good practice and this is used in an open and collaborative way to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

To monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, our head and deputy head teachers carry out lesson observations and learning walks. The frequency of lesson observations is differentiated as necessary in order to provide the most effective support, but all staff have at least one formal observation per academic year. A particular focus if required, will be agreed before any observation and the criteria for observation will be based on carefully developed overviews, saved and available within Nautilus. We encourage peer observations because we know that this less formal, supportive method is effective for the sharing of good practice. All staff are encouraged to approach the head or deputy head to request timetable changes in order to facilitate this.

Training

Regular and relevant training is essential for staff to plan and deliver high quality lessons and to ensure they keep up to date with current research and educational thinking. Training can be delivered as a whole school (when there is a shared focus which is highlighted on the school's' development plan) or specifically matched to an individual's personal objectives, which would have been identified during the performance management cycle. Training is viewed very much as a shared responsibility between the individual and the leadership team.

All staff are responsible for logging their own training and ensuring that their training record is up to date. These are stored centrally on the school's computer system, although currently progressing across to new reflexions' HR system Bamboo.

Appendix A - Classroom must-haves

- Subject specific displays relating to taught topics
- Celebration of student work
- Assessment information relating to qualifications
- Effort grade chart
- Information that helps to scaffold learning e.g. a 100 square in maths
- Where appropriate, a tutor board
- Careers poster for that subject
- LGBTQ+ poster of successful individuals

NB: We are mindful when putting up displays to think about their purpose, are they supporting learning or celebrating a student's successes? For many of our students, a classroom that is too overstimulating with colour and too many 'busy' displays can be distracting, rather than a calm, safe space.

Appendix B

Our agreed, consistent approach to lessons:

- 'Hook'/initial engagement focus
- Assessment for learning throughout
- Learning Objective(s) shared
- Metacognition focus
- Key vocabulary
- Resource consideration
- Differentiation
- Use of additional adults
- Links to student's individual targets/ use of student SEND strategies
- Extension activity if needed – not 'more of the same' but consolidation and more in-depth learning

Appendix C

Ideas for sharing key vocabulary with students

We regularly use different strategies to introduce and commit vocabulary to the student's long term memory. Our varied approach helps to maintain the student's engagement and appeals to different learning styles. Vocabulary is never just presented as list with no interaction or connection to what is being taught otherwise, it becomes merely wallpaper.

- Key vocabulary can be 'lifted off the plan and displayed around the board and constantly referred to by the adults and students throughout the lesson. These words can be removed at the end of the lesson and students asked to use their memory skills to recall their position and definition
- Definitions recorded, so the students have to recall the new word
- Display key vocabulary on a different board to the main board permanently through the lesson
- Construct the key vocabulary for the lesson with the student by giving the L.O. and the first/last letters of key words
- Play hangman for key vocabulary at the beginning, end or as a strategy to re-focus student in the middle of the lesson
- Student to make vocabulary posters at key points during a topic or group of lessons
- Share the LO and ask the student to guess the key vocabulary on your plan (useful for finding out what they know already or highlighting any misconceptions that may need to be addressed throughout the lesson)
- Hide key vocabulary on stick-its in their books and encourage the student to hunt for the words and then explain its meaning (can differentiate effectively with this)
- Select a student to keep a tally chart of how many times a word is used throughout the lesson
- If key vocabulary is on display at the start of the lesson take it down mid-way through and give each word to a particular student. Warn them that they are going to do a Pictionary clue for the word at the end of the lesson.
- Go through key vocabulary at the start of the lesson and then wipe it off. Either at the end or part way through the lesson give a clue/definition to a key word and student write on their whiteboards
- Key vocabulary shared at the start of the lesson (on separate strips of paper) and then a child is chosen to be the 'keeper of the words – who can remember what the words were at the end of the lesson?
- Student to write the key vocabulary in their books under the learning objective (not all the time!) and ask them to pick the trickiest word for them and write a definition. This can be re-visited at the end of the lesson to check progress/retained knowledge and assessment tool.
- Student to illustrate key words for a display
- Vocabulary displayed in shapes to consolidate the meaning e.g. the word perimeter displayed so it makes the outside edge of a rectangle, or circumference written in a circle shape
- Provide 'placemats' or 'illustrated vocabulary lists' to support writing
- Knowledge organisers which include vocabulary for the topic
- Student always corrected in a sensitive way if they use the wrong vocabulary or grammar. The correct version is repeated back to them in context by adults. A useful format for this is, "I just want to make sure I understand what you mean. Do you mean...(insert correct word and wait for the student's response)
- Blu-tack key words around the room – forcing the student to visually 'search' for them, whilst sitting.
- Appoint a vocab champion so when the key vocab is mentioned by the teacher, the champion honks a horn (can get annoying if used too frequently!)
- Decide together on the three key words for the lesson and when these are mentioned, the students make a particular movement associated with the word (which they decide together first).
- Vocabulary incorporated into weekly spellings
- Adults making a point to include the key vocabulary whenever possible throughout the day

<i>Last Reviewed</i>	<i>August 2025</i>
<i>Next Review Due</i>	<i>August 2027</i>
<i>Reviewed by</i>	<i>Head Teacher</i>