Castle Hill School

Teaching and Learning Toolkit

At Castle Hill we are proud of our students and the wide variety of skills, interests and learning needs that they bring. To match the unique learning priorities of each student we endeavour to run a highly personalised curriculum. For this to work all staff need a broad repertoire of expertise and techniques to promote the learning and engagement of our learners. Of course, no one knows everything, so, to help highlight possible areas of teaching that can be pursued and to inform the creative process of personalising the curriculum we have collated this document.

Please note, the information in this toolkit is not comprehensive, but we feel it should give an overview of more commonly required aspects of teaching to be considered.
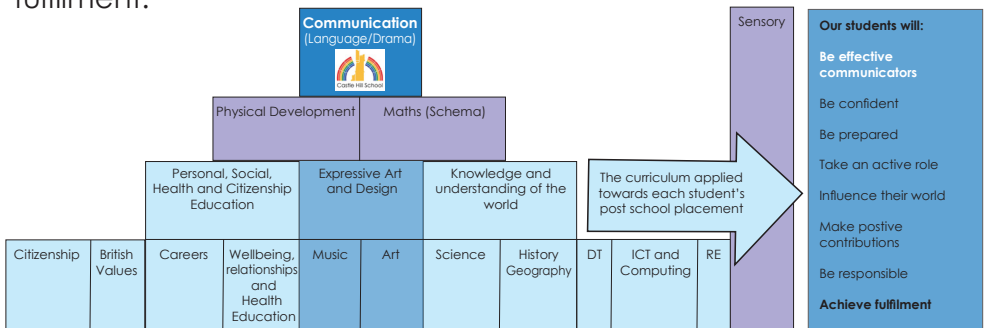
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The Differentiated Curriculum

The fundamental principle behind curriculum design at Castle Hill School is personalisation. This creative curriculum draws upon elements of appropriate programmes of study from a wide variety of sources to ensure learning programmes are bespoke and child-centred. The curriculum provides students with a breadth of enriching learning experiences, as well as giving them the opportunity to pursue areas of personal interest. Linear or horizontal continuity and progression is defined by these programmes of study and by the topic-themed curriculum.

The curriculum is designed to enable all students to be **effective communicators**, giving them confidence and preparing them to take an active role in their community, influence their world, make positive contributions, be responsible and achieve social and emotional fulfilment.

Communication (Language/Drama)

| Physical Development | Maths (Schema) |

| Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education | Expressive Art and Design | Knowledge and understanding of the world |

| Citizenship | British Values | Careers | Wellbeing, relationships and Health Education | Music | Art | Science | History Geography | DT | ICT and Computing | RE |

The curriculum applied towards each student's post school placement

Sensory

Our students will:

Be effective communicators

Be confident

Be prepared

Take an active role

Influence their world

Make positive contributions

Be responsible

Achieve fulfilment

For more information please speak to: Alistair Macdonald

Further Reading/Links

- **https://www.castlehillschool.org.uk/curriculum**

The Learning Environment

From the building itself to classrooms and other working spaces as much thought needs to be given to the physical environment as to lesson planning.

Questions to consider:

- is it safe?
- is it free from clutter, with wheelchairs etc away in the store when not in use?
- are resources clearly labelled and stored appropriately?
- are students' sensory needs being met? (think about over-stimulation, visual impairment needs etc)
- is furniture at a suitable height for the students to access?
- is the classroom warm and welcoming?

For more information please speak to: Kiersti Dickinson

Further Reading/Links

- Learning environment Judgements *(a grid linking aspects of the learning environment to Ofsted judgements)*

Display

At Castle Hill School we display work for a variety of reasons:

- to celebrate and share achievement
- to enhance effective learning
- to create an effective learning environment
- to show the work so that it can be seen to its best effect
- to help to explain the way in which teaching and learning is
- taking place within the subject area or the classroom
- to reflect experiences
- to stimulate a response
- to provide information
- to represent cross curricular activities – each base will ensure curriculum coverage in their display areas
- to record achievement and progress
- to develop an attitude of pride and respect for the surroundings
- to make educational statements about the school curriculum

(extract from Display Policy)

For more information please speak to: Kiersti Dickinson, Sally Metcalfe

Further Reading/Links

- Display policy
- Display guidance
  Learning Environment Judgement Matrix

Intensive Interaction

Intensive Interaction is an approach for teaching communication skills to learners with autism, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties who are still at the early stages of communication. The approach focuses on communication concepts and performances that precede speech development, though it may include learners who have some speech and language development.

Early communication skills developed through Intensive Interaction include:

- enjoying being with another person
- developing the ability to attend to that person
- concentration and attention span
- learning to do sequences of activity with the other person
- taking turns in exchanges of behaviour
- sharing personal space
- using and understanding eye contact
- using and understanding facial expression
- using and understanding physical contact
- using and understanding non-verbal communication
- using vocalisations with meaning (for some, speech development)
- learning to regulate and control arousal levels

Intensive Interaction will often be the main form of communication between an adult and a student and it may be the route through which other areas of learning can be delivered and accessed.

Further Reading/Links

- Phoebe Caldwell training DVDs *(See Greg Firth for copies)*
- Phoebe Caldwell books
- Intensive interaction materials on the server at: **T:\Specialist Status\Intensive Interaction**
- Intensive interaction website: **http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk**
- Castle Hill Policy on Use of Touch
- Videos of intensive interaction at Castle Hill are available on the server at: **T:\Intensive Interaction Evidence**

Sensory Regulation

Many of our students, especially including those with ASD have difficulty in processing sensory information. This may manifest itself in the student seeking sensory stimulation due to an over or under response to sensory stimuli, they may have difficulties processing motor information that leads to poor motor skills, or they might have postural control problems or lack of attentiveness.

In order to support the students in the development of their sensory processing skills, or to help them to maintain a state of calm attentiveness for other areas of learning, a variety of physical "Sensory Regulation" activities may be provided.

Whilst it should be acknowledged that, in order to generate a personalised programme of Sensory Regulation activities, advice may be sought from a specialist Occupational Therapist (OT), it is good practice to explore a range of sensory activities and to closely observe their effect on a practical level. These activities can be seen as part of gross and fine motor control development work.

Possible activities may include:

Gross Motor Skills

Using Weight

- carrying heavy objects
- wearing a weighted vest, weighted hat, or weighted shorts (check with O.T first)
- wearing wrist or ankle weights
- using a weighted lap pad or weighted blanket
- swimming with or without swim weights

Pushing or pulling objects and activities

- cart/trolley
- tug of war rope
- vacuum cleaner
- mop/sweep floor with a mop, broom and dustpan for kids
- raking leaves, grass clippings etc. using wheelbarrow pushing/pulling self or others on a scooter board
- Thera-Band
- "push of war" between partners (with ball, have to cross over line)
- riding bicycles / scooters

Jumping and bouncing on/with items

- rebound therapy
- soft play
- into bean bag chairs
- on a therapy ball
- rocking toys
- bouncing and balancing
- "teetering" to provide vestibular challenge

Fine Motor Skills

Working at vertical surfaces (at/above eye level)

- erasing, colouring on chalkboard
- painting/drawing on adjustable floor easel
- washing windows
- paint with water on side of house

Resistive tools or toys

- spray bottles
- use curvy cut scissors to cut putty, play-doh, thick paper or cardboard
- Play Doh Factory presses and moulds
- use rolling pins to flatten cookie dough/play-doh
- colour/draw with crayon on textured surface or rubbing plates
- bingo/dot markers
- paper punches
- spray nozzle on garden hose

For more information please speak to: Alistair Macdonald

Further Reading/Links

- Sensory regulation activities document:
  available on request
- **http://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk**
- referral of pupil to Sensory Integration Occupational Therapist

Positive Behaviour Management

Castle Hill School aims to create a calm, positive and safe learning environment. We aim to achieve this by being:

- rewarding
- accessible
- consistent
- adaptive
- nurturing
- patient
- happy

We encourage good behaviour through positive relationships and promoting respect for self and others.

The Behaviour Policy at Castle Hill School is based upon positive behaviour principles. Positive behaviour principles are supported by The Bill Rodgers 9 step approach to behaviour management (Bill Rodgers Behaviour Management: A Whole-school Approach 1995, Scholastic) and Team Teach (**http://www.teamteach.co.uk/ introduction_Aims.html**). The Castle Hill Behaviour Policy combines shared values from both schemes.

For clarity and simplicity of communication, there is one school rule:

"We always listen to each other"

We always listen to each other

This is through

Class rules should be discussed between staff and students and agreed. Class rules should reflect the school's positive behaviour ethos. This will, for example, be evident in the choice of language in the rules, so that instead of a rule such as "no hitting" we would have "we use kind hands". All other forms of communication regarding behaviour should likewise emphasise positive/desired behaviours.

Behaviour Forms

Form 1: to record (and track) behaviours including violent behaviours. These should be handed into Sally Metcalfe (FLOSO) at the end of the week.

Form 4: Behaviour Support Plan which describes behaviours, triggers, functions, ways of avoiding behaviours and agreed action to take.

Serious Incident book: for serious incidents and for when physical restraint has been used. The Serious Incident book is kept in the office.

Events folder: for recording events that could have been dangerous or that, in the future may cause incident. Describe the event and action to be taken to avoid the risk in the future. The Events folder is kept in the office.

Injury form: to be completed when a member of staff has been injured or hurt in an incident. These forms are kept in the office and, when completed, are sent off to the Local Authority.

If staff would benefit from additional support or advice regarding the behaviour of a student they can make a referral to the Behaviour Working Party. Posters are around school giving more information.

For more information please speak to: Tracey Donegan

Further Reading/Links

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Positive Care and Control Policy
- Reasonable Physical Intervention Policy
- "9 Point Action Plan" available on the server at:
  T:\Policies Castle Hill\Behaviour\behaviour resources

Total communication describes the strategy of using a wide range of communication forms and tools to build a learner's communication understanding and skills.

At Castle Hill this may include:

- verbal communication
- use of communication aids
- PECS
- Makaton
- Intensive interaction
- Music therapy
- objects of reference including environmental tactile cues
- use of switches
- symbols and photographs
- use of text
- learning through play
- Moon script (a simplified, pre-Braille tactile text system)
- On-body signs

Strategies should be pre-planned and regularly evaluated, drawing on Castle Hill Staff and other professionals where appropriate. Every lesson should provide opportunities for practising and developing communication skills.

Use of Spoken Language

As educators our primary mode of communication will naturally tend towards spoken language. Use of language should be a deliberate and planned strategy for developing learning and communication opportunities. The choice and range of language should be tailored for the receptive language skills of the students. Too much talk, including "chat" between staff can cause over-stimulation, confusion or "zoning-out".

The tone, timbre and dynamics of spoken language should also be pre-planned. For example, the use of a very quiet voice may help to calm or to "draw in" listeners. Pauses in speech may encourage participation or anticipation. Loud, over-expressive language may promote engagement.

It is useful to follow the "Four S" guide:

Stress (exaggerate, emphasise key words)

Say less (reduce language so students are not overwhelmed with unnecessary information)

Show (reinforce with visual, tactile and auditory cues)

Go Slow (allow time for students to process the information and respond)

For more information please speak to: **Jayne Askew**

Further Reading/Links

- Objects of reference policy
- Castle Hill English Policy
- The Hanen Centre – support and training on early language intervention for children with language delays: **http://www.hanen.org/Home.aspx**

Age Appropriateness

As students make progress up the school the learning experience should, where possible, reflect their maturing interests and skills. However, the principal concern should always be to provide learning opportunities and resources that are engaging to the individual and their cognitive and other learning needs. We should be mindful that, in our professional desire to eliminate resources and techniques that seem, to us, babyish, we should not remove opportunities for motivation, engagement and reassurance.

There should also be care taken in the use of language with students. The purpose of language is to convey meaning, therefore the primary consideration in choosing which words to use should be "will/does the student understand this?" Any adaptation of language to make it appear more "age appropriate" should only be carried out if it does not jeopardise the successful conveyance of meaning.

One blog on the subject describes the desired target to be "Age respectful":

- Age respectful means that when something is our choice we choose items, activities and interactions that are respectful of the age of our student in our setting…While at the same time we allow choices made by the individuals themselves to reflect their tastes and interests.

- Age respectful means we offer and teach how to do new activities and use new materials while never judging the student for choosing to return to old activities or materials.

- Age respectful provides multiple meaningful opportunities to expand exposure to new ideas, activities and experiences because we like what we know. We do this not to replace "age inappropriate" choices but to augment and expand our students' horizons.

Consequently, as students move higher up the school we should be providing them with new learning experiences selected to be engaging as well as appropriate to their chronological age. For example, at Castle Hill, the curriculum in upper school introduces and includes aspects of Work Related Learning and Life Skills.

For more information please speak to: Alistair Macdonald

Further Reading/Links

- Secondary/Sixth Form curriculum plans
- Work Related Learning policy
  Curriculum Statement

Schema

A schema is a learning behaviour that a student will choose to carry out, often repeatedly. It is through schema that students make sense of their world through play, exploration and repeated schematic play patterns. Schema behaviours help students to integrate their existing knowledge, understanding and experiences into new situations.

Broadly speaking these repeating behaviours form the precursors to learning. Generally however, at Castle Hill School we particularly value their significance as the early stages of mathematical understanding.

Many different schemas exist but we focus on the most common:

- **Trajectory** - dropping, climbing up, jumping off
- **Rotation** - spinning, being swung
- **Enclosing** - borders
- **Enveloping** - covering self and objects
- **Transporting** – self/objects from one place to another
- **Connecting** - joining and disconnecting
- **Positioning** - lining up, grouping
- **Orientation** - self or objects in different places and positions

For more information please speak to: Steve Perren

Further Reading/Links

- Presentations and resources for use of schemas:
  T:\Curriculum\Curriculum Leader Files\Mathematics\Subject Development\Evidence of new initiatives

- Activity ideas for working with schemas:
  https://www.dorsetforyou.com/schemas

Multi Sensory Impairment (MSI)

Children with MSI (multi-sensory impairment) have impairments of both hearing and vision, ("deaf-blind"). A very small number of children with MSI are totally blind and deaf, but most have some useful vision and/or hearing. Many children also face other challenges, such as medical conditions or learning and physical disabilities. Multi-sensory impairment is a very rare disability, particularly in children. There are an estimated 4,200 children with MSI in the United Kingdom (about 3 in every 10,000 children). A huge range of conditions can cause multi-sensory impairment. There is no single main cause. For some children, the cause of MSI is not known but, increasingly, diagnosis of the conditions that can cause it is improving.

At Castle Hill we support the learning and development of students with MSI through specialist curriculum and staffing.

The MSI curriculum is based on guidance from the MSI Unit of Victoria School in Birmingham and the Barrs Court assessment process.

The phases of the MSI Curriculum are:

- social relationships & emotional development
- communication
- conceptual development
- sensory responses
- understanding time and place
- orientation, movement & mobility
- ownership of learning
- responses to routines and changes

Students with MSI will work with objects of reference and the calendar system of objects to assist them in their understanding of events, places and people. They may also benefit from "on-body signing" to support this.

Further Reading/Links

- MSI Phase Overview: **T:\Curriculum\MSI.PMLD**
- on body signing
- objects of reference/touch cues
- Sense, charity for supporting deaf blind people: **https://www.sense.org.uk/**
- ideas and suggestions for use of resonance board: **http://www.deafblindresources.org/article/resonanceboards.html**
- information about Lilli Nielsen's Little Room: **http://members.aol.com/LSWebDesgn/LNroom.html**
- websites related to work with MSI pupils: **http://webeye.ophth.uiowa.edu/dept/websites/blindness.htm**

The Engagement Model

Pupils working below Pre-Key Stage One are now assessed using the Engagement Model. Part of the process for these pupils is to create an Engagement Profile. This profile is used to detail what engagement looks like for individual pupils under the Engagement Model areas of: initiation, persistence exploration, anticipation and realisation. The profiles support teachers in evidencing engagement in the curriculum.

Engagement Profiles are updated on a termly basis to evidence how pupils' engagement develops overtime. They also provide important information to support pupils transition when moving to a new class.

For more information please speak to: Alison Ley

Further Reading/Links

- **https://www.sendgateway.org.uk/blog/ tsc-engagement-model**
- **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ the-engagement-model**

Preparing for Transition

All aspects of our curriculum across school, but particularly in the Sixth Form Department have the clear intention of preparing our students to be as independent as possible in their adult lives, to contribute to and participate positively in their communities.

Students prepare for regular internal transitions through the application of daily routines. In preparing for a move to a different class, some students will have a personalised transition plan. All students benefit from transition weeks when they move to their new classes in the two weeks before the summer holidays.

The curriculum pathways that students work through in the Sixth Form are designed to prepare them for future destinations as well as developing their overall independence skills. The school has a highly personalised Careers and Work-Related Learning programme which is planned for in the Secondary and Sixth Form curriculums and is tracked through the nationally recognised framework of "Gatsby Benchmarks".

For more information please speak to: Alistair Macdonald, Pippa Hinchliffe, Victoria Lee

Further Reading/Links

- Gatsby Benchmarks **https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance**
- Gatsby Benchmarks at Castle Hill School document