



## Teaching and Learning Policy

**Date agreed:** 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025

**Chair of Committee:** Peter Cade

**Date to be reviewed:** 29<sup>th</sup> September 2028 (or as and when required)

## Aims

Our policy is designed to:

- Foster a culture of high expectations and enthusiasm for learning, ensuring students engage and excel.
- Clarify what exceptional Teaching and Learning encompass, providing staff have a clear understanding of their roles within and beyond their curriculum area.
- Highlight the importance of excellent Teaching and Learning and a comprehensive curriculum that is broad in that it covers all aspects of development and balanced in that it weighs up the specific input that it is needed for each learner and most importantly it is meaningful to each young person and their family.
- Equip staff with the necessary knowledge and skills to identify gaps in students' learning and to address this through targeted teaching strategies.
- Place our students at the heart of everything we do.

## Our guiding principles

At Ivy House School we believe that it is imperative that everyone within our community is: **“working together to inspire, nurture and empower”** This vision captures the importance of the multidisciplinary approach from all stakeholders including families, education, social care and health professionals to ensure that we create an offer for our students that is aspirational (**Inspire**), offers holistic and personal development, removing barriers to learning (**Nurture**) and enables students to be as independent as possible so that they are well prepared for life after school, into adulthood and ensuring that no aspiration is beyond reach (**Empower**).

## Ivy House Curriculum

Our learners are at the heart of everything we do. Ivy House School offers a curriculum which is broad in that it covers all aspects of development and balanced in that it weighs up the specific input that it is needed for each learner. Most importantly it is meaningful to each young person and their family.

See Curriculum documents on our website for more detail.

Because of the personalised approach to the curriculum we are able to meet the needs of all our students. All students across the school have Personal Learning Goals (PLGs) with targets based on the outcomes in their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). These are written and reviewed in consultation with parents and other professionals. Some students receive additional funding such as Pupil Premium and the Post-16 Bursary, with the impact of any interventions funded through these monitored to ensure that they support meaningful progress.

Our **Pre-formal Curriculum** is for learners with Profound and Multiple Difficulties (PMLD), working at the very early stages of development within the Engagement Model and the Red and Orange Profile of the Rainbow assessment system (previously between P1 and P4), and at a developmental level of between 0 and 18 months.

Our **Semi-formal Curriculum** is for learners with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), working within the Yellow to Purple Profile of the Rainbow assessment system (previously between P4 and end of KS1 expectations), and at a developmental level of between 18 months and 5 years.

## **Responsibilities**

Teaching and Learning are collective efforts involving the entire school community. Our commitment is to offer a supportive, positive, caring, and safe environment that upholds high standards and values every community member.

### **Teaching Assistants** at Ivy House:

- ❖ Know students well and adapt support to meet their individual learning needs.
- ❖ Support Teaching and Learning with flexibility and resourcefulness.
- ❖ Share student's progress during lessons with the class teacher to support their future planning.
- ❖ Meet the expectations set out in this policy.

### **Teachers** at Ivy House will endeavour to:

- ❖ Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards
- ❖ Follow the expectations as set out in this policy.
- ❖ Update parents/carers on students' progress and attainment through Evidence for Learning (EfL) and bi-yearly parent/carer consultation evenings, input and attend EHCP Annual Review Meetings and share updates regarding progress with a range of internal and external professionals.
- ❖ Keep up-to-date with educational research and issues in the local area and nationally.

### **Curriculum Coordinators** at Ivy House:

- ❖ Help to create a well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum that build knowledge and skills.
- ❖ Sequence lessons in a way that allows students to make good progress.
- ❖ Drive improvement in their curriculum area, working with teachers to identify any challenges.
- ❖ Moderate progress across their subject through a variety of quality assurance tasks such as; learning walks, lesson observations, EfL and planning moderation.

- ❖ Improve on areas identified during moderation.
- ❖ Keep accurate records of quality assurance tasks and update their curriculum development plan.
- ❖ Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources, and good practice.

#### **Senior Leaders** at Ivy House:

- ❖ Have a clear vision for providing quality first, adapted, and inclusive education for all students.
- ❖ Celebrate achievements.
- ❖ Plan and evaluate strategies to secure quality first Teaching and Learning opportunities across the school.
- ❖ Promote team working at all levels.
- ❖ Input and monitor the impact of Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL) opportunities to improve all staff's practice and curriculum knowledge.
- ❖ Address underachievement and intervene promptly.

#### **Students** at Ivy House will:

- ❖ Be encouraged to be curious and ambitious.
- ❖ Be encouraged to expressively communicate and understand others.
- ❖ Maximise independence through deep learning and mastery.
- ❖ Be encouraged to understand rules and the need to follow them, keeping them safe.
- ❖ Be encouraged to make choices/decisions.
- ❖ Develop resilience.
- ❖ Be encouraged to develop their social skills and apply them in the community.
- ❖ Be able to learn to self-regulate to cope with challenge in an appropriate way.
- ❖ Know their sense of worth and have self-confidence.
- ❖ Use their bodies to complete fine and gross motor tasks and activities.
- ❖ Begin to understand the world around them.

#### **Parents and carers** of students at Ivy House will:

- ❖ Value learning and encourage their child as a learner in all aspects.
- ❖ Support good attendance.
- ❖ Participate in discussions about their child's progress and attainment during EHCP annual reviews and parents' evenings.
- ❖ Communicate with the school to share information promptly.
- ❖ Support their child to achieve their goals.

#### **Academy council** at Ivy House are:

- ❖ Committed to providing a broad, balanced, and accessible curriculum that is relevant to the age-appropriate needs and aspirations of learners' and their families.
- ❖ Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to Teaching and Learning.

- ❖ Monitor the impact of Teaching and Learning strategies on student's progress.
- ❖ Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

## Planning

***Planning is a process not a product. It has one purpose; to enable high quality delivery which enables students to learn.***

All teachers are clear and precise about the knowledge they want students to learn in every lesson.

The questions teachers need to ask when planning a lesson are:

- Where are the students starting from?
- What prior knowledge do the students have?
- Where do you want them to get to?
- What do you want them to know?
- How will you know when they are there?
- How can you best help them get there?
- Where does this fit into the subjects overall curriculum?
- When will the students retrieve the key learning of a lesson in future lessons?
- How will you address misconceptions or forgotten learning?

Ensuring clarity around the key learning objectives for each lesson is crucial for teachers, teaching assistants, and students alike. This shared understanding facilitates a focused and cohesive learning experience.

To aid in the preparation of individual lessons, comprehensive schemes of work are readily available. These resources are intended to serve as a foundational guide for lesson planning, offering structured support to teachers in their instructional design.

Should teachers seek further assistance, Curriculum Coordinators are available to provide tailored support to meet specific needs.

For streamlined access and organisation, all lesson plans are methodically archived on the school's Microsoft Teams site. This is structured to allow easy navigation: Teachers can locate planning documents by navigating to the "Whole School Documents" section, then selecting "Planning," followed by the appropriate year, half term, and class folder. This system ensures that all planning materials are accessible and well-organised, supporting the delivery of high-quality Teaching and Learning experiences.

## Teaching

*"Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better."* This insight from Professor Dylan Wiliam highlights our belief that continuous growth is essential in the field of education. Particularly for students with severe learning difficulties, who experience the world and learn in ways distinct from their neurotypical peers (Peter Imray, 2018), a tailored pedagogical approach is crucial. Our cohort of students is diverse, with needs that span a broad spectrum and vary significantly across our school community.

As educators, our mission is to identify and implement the very best interventions and teaching strategies for each student. This requires us to engage in the latest research and collaborate with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) community but also, and perhaps most importantly, to deepen our understanding of each student. At our school we take great pride in our commitment to truly knowing our students, which we consider fundamental to our educational approach.

At the heart of our approach is the recognition that learning and development across all areas are underpinned by our understanding of engagement - the way each individual engages with other people, activities, their environment and any stimuli. We seek to nurture life-long learners who, rather than just being recipients of support, are motivated, inquisitive and active participants in their unique curriculum.

## Active Learning Ingredients

During lesson observations and learning walks, evaluative evidence will be gathered using the framework of the ten 'Learning Active Ingredients'. Each ingredient will be assessed on a scale from 1 to 5, with clearly defined descriptors provided for each level of performance. The form used to record this information is accessible via a QR code link, which directs users to a Microsoft Form for completion.

For example, the descriptors for high engagement are 1= widespread disengagement, 2= low engagement, 3= mixed engagement, 4= mostly engaged and 5= All students highly engaged throughout.

This method highlights both the strengths and areas for development within a teacher's practice. The term "Active Ingredients" represents a set of 10 pedagogical principles that are informed by evidence and have been shown to enhance Teaching and Learning effectiveness over time. These principles were developed collaboratively with stakeholders at Ivy House School. It's important to note that not all these ingredients may be visible within a single lesson. Instead, they are more broadly reflective of a practitioner's overall approach to teaching.



# ACTIVE LEARNING INGREDIENTS



## **Fun, Memorable Moments**

Highly engaging and memorable deep learning

## **Clear structure to each lesson or activity**

Clear structure, learning reflected

## **High engagement**

All students highly engaged throughout

## **Know the why**

Clear connections made to prior learning and all students have appropriate scaffolding

## **Appropriate activities**

Activities suitable for all students

## **Assessment & Celebration**

Frequent, specific feedback and success celebrated

## **Challenge & Ambition**

High expectations and stretch for all

## **Environment**

Inclusive, supportive and inspiring environment

## **Pace**

Correct pace for all students, maximisation of learning time for all

## **Communication**

All students communication methods used, appropriate spoken language and resources

Learning Active Ingredients refers to 10 evidence informed pedagogical principles that improve Teaching and Learning over time. These have been created with stakeholders at Ivy House School. Not all ingredients will be evident in a lesson, however in a practitioners approach to Teaching.

## Working in Partnership

At Ivy House School, we pride ourselves on our collaborative approach, working in close partnership with a diverse array of professionals, including Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Teachers specialising in Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment, among others. We actively seek their expert advice and adhere to personalised programmes tailored to our students.

To ensure we provide comprehensive support to our students we have invested in two sensory occupational therapists. These specialists are instrumental in devising and administering sensory diets and sensory integration strategies that cater to the individual needs of our students.

To ensure the effective implementation of these varied approaches, we are dedicated to the continuous professional development of our staff. This is achieved through a combination of in-person training sessions and self-paced online courses. Our aim is to equip our team with the specialist knowledge necessary to enhance the educational experience and wellbeing of every student at Ivy House School.

## Assessment

Assessment is a central part of the Teaching and Learning process. It is an important feature of the school's planning arrangements and the monitoring of the progression of individual learners. It is our moral purpose to do all we can to secure our vision that every child should be equally able to secure outstanding outcomes and reach their full potential.

Details of assessment systems can be found in Assessment, Recording and Reporting policy.



In order to gain as broad a picture of the way our pupils learn as possible, we use **Evidence for Learning** to collect and collate clear information about individual pupils. Staff must be certain that the pupils are credited for what they can do by themselves and not what we interpret as being their true intent. For many of our pupils, their progress will not be able to be charted in a linear way but, they will show the developments in a more lateral sense and may show breadth and depth of learning. Once evidence is collected it is mapped against a range of criteria, including:



- ❖ The Engagement Model
- ❖ Rainbow Profile
- ❖ EHCP targets
- ❖ Personal Learning Goals (PLG)
- ❖ Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement -RARPA (14-19 department only)
- ❖ Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress – MAPP (14-19 department only)

### **How do we assess learning?**

The principle of assessment is to check and identify what a child understands and what they need to learn next.

- ❖ We assess learning on a daily basis and lesson by lesson.
- ❖ Progress is checked on a termly basis by the teacher and a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- ❖ Individual targets are set for the end of each year and end of each Key Stage.
- ❖ Every child will receive a written report during the year surrounding their progress, as well as having a Personal Learning Goals (PLGs) created each term.
- ❖ The PLG will link to the 'Longer Term Outcomes' identified on the Education, Health & Care Plan.
- ❖ There are 2 Parent/Family and Teacher Meetings scheduled throughout the year to discuss each child's progress.

### **Learning environment**

Every aspect of our learning environment is planned to encompass both indoor and outdoor spaces, as appropriate. This strategic planning is aimed at maximising opportunities for a diverse array of practical activities. Such activities are carefully designed to foster the development of relevant knowledge, skills, and understanding. The ambiance of the classroom itself plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience, serving as the foundational backdrop against which student learning unfolds. It is our belief that a well-considered and dynamic learning environment is crucial in engaging students and enhancing their educational journey.

### **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education**

At Ivy House School, through individualised programmes of support linked to their EHCP and personalised learning, we intend to provide students with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills related to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. This is achieved through personalised learning throughout your child's day as well as through specific thematic topics throughout the year.

More details can be found in the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education policy and curriculum document.

## **Cultural Capital**

At Ivy House School, we are committed to fostering an environment where Cultural Capital is embedded in all that we do.

Cultural Capital is defined as “the essential knowledge that children need to be educated citizens” (Ofsted EY Inspection Handbook 2019, p31). Cultural Capital is the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success.

## **British Values and Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural (SMSC)**

At Ivy House School, we want to ensure that all students become valuable and fully rounded members of society who are included in all areas and understand the importance of treating others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background. We have adapted the values Equality, Respect to others, Co-operation, Responsibility, Compassion, Democracy and Right & Wrong to make them more accessible for our students. We promote: Believe in yourself, show you know right and wrong, contribute to your community, accept other people's beliefs, and respect those who keep us safe.

We are explicit in promoting our fundamental belief that Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural learning is at the heart of everything we do in school. This is not taught as a separate subject, as it involves every part of life and learning at Ivy House. We provide opportunities for students to explore their own culture and have a clear understanding and appreciation of a wide range of cultural influences that have shaped modern Britain. We encourage students to be respectful of different faiths and beliefs. Our students are polite, caring and sociable with the confidence to learn and live alongside others.

## **Theme days**

Theme days are thoughtfully organised as whole-school events, with a core aim of fostering inclusivity within our school community. These special days serve as enriching learning experiences, allowing students to immerse themselves in British Values, discover global wonders, and gain a deeper comprehension of the world. Additionally, theme days present valuable opportunities for students to collaborate across different age groups and classes, engage in activities by raising funds for various charities, and reflect on their role within the broader community.

To ensure these enriching experiences are an integral part of our educational offering, theme days, along with whole-school Social, Moral, Spiritual, and Cultural (SMSC) events, are strategically incorporated into our annual school calendar. This careful planning ensures that our students benefit from a well-

rounded education that extends beyond traditional classroom learning, promoting a sense of unity and global awareness among our pupils.

***This Teaching and Learning Policy stands as a foundation document, designed to foster a nurturing, inclusive, and effective educational atmosphere for every student. Its purpose is to guide our practices and strategies, ensuring that we provide an environment conducive to learning and growth for all members of our school community.***