n A logo with purple text

Description automatically generated

A group of children raising their hands in a classroom

Description automatically generatedA child sitting at a desk in a classroom

Description automatically generatedA person and person cooking in a kitchen

Description automatically generated A person and a child sitting at a table

Description automatically generated

**Teaching and Learning Handbook**

**INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Portland School Teaching and Learning Handbook. This handbook exists to clarify different aspects of teaching and learning in order to meet the school’s aims to provide excellent learning opportunities for all of our students.

The handbook outlines the key teaching strategies and consistencies which will allow our teachers to build a repertoire of expertise, confident in the knowledge that these key aspects will be the same as what is happening in other classrooms across the school.

This handbook refers to a variety of helpful videos, articles and podcasts to provide clarity and support for all staff regarding teaching and learning. Many of the articles are from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), which provides the latest in research-based approaches. The aim is to support the continual development of the School’s Improvement Plan’s for teaching and learning.

*Our teaching philosophy is grounded in a holistic approach that empowers each pupil to take an active role in shaping their own learning journey, guided by their unique interests. We are committed to providing meaningful, practical, and real-world learning experiences that foster self-confidence and inspire aspirations for future success. As a dedicated staff team, we are fully invested in addressing the individual needs of every student, helping them grow into well-rounded citizens with equal opportunities for further education, training, and employment.*

**CONTENTS**

* **Our Aims and Expectations… p.4**
* **The Portland Way... p.5**
* **SEND... p.7**
* **Student Equipment... p.9**
* **Feedback and Assessment... p.10**
* **CPD Commitment – Continuing Professional Development... p.11**
* **Homework... p.11**
* **Setting Cover work... p.12**
* **Quality Assurance... p.12**
* **Celebrating Best Practice... p.12**
* **Useful CPD videos, articles and podcasts**

**Our Aims:**

* To establish consistency and best practice in Teaching and Learning across the whole school.
* To ensure teacher development is a collective priority and adequate provision is made to allow staff to work together within the school and in external hubs to improve their curriculum.
* To provide a Quality Assurance process which is supportive, and inquiry based, allowing us to experience learning through the eyes of the student.
* To normalise frequent low-stake lesson visits and sharing of good practice between colleagues.
* To ensure everyone understands and takes responsibility for adapting learning to the needs of all our learners with SEND.

**So That:**

* We provide a personalised learning experience for every child, taking full account of their individual needs, interests and aspirations.
* We develop students who are active and independent learners, who strive to achieve their best both in school and throughout their lives.
* We ensure students are highly literate and numerate, able to apply their skills and knowledge to new and different situation, to achieve well in school and beyond.

**Our Expectations:**

* Teachers and learning support staff will actively reflect on their practice and engage in relevant continuing professional development, evaluating its impact on student outcomes. Our staff are always learning.
* Subject leaders will take responsibility for developing teachers’ knowledge, understanding and skill that are subject and exam board specific and supporting the improvement of general teaching and learning practice, through meetings, quality assurance and other linked activities.
* All Senior Leadership Team members will actively monitor and support the development of teaching and learning in their line management or departments. They will take an active role in the improvement of teaching and learning, through the CPD programme, whole school sessions and through online teaching and learning support videos.

**The Portland Way**

**‘Providing Unconditional Positive Regard for All Learners’**

Providing an education for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, requires a staff team who work consistently and with empathy and understanding. Therefore, our learning structure uses Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs as a basis for ensuring all pupils are given the best possible chance of being ready to learn when they enter each classroom.

Within each classroom and lesson, we have adopted a consistent approach to lesson structure and pedagogy. This is based on Rosenshine’s 10 Principles of Instruction and the EEF ‘Five-a-Day’ Principle. These principles will be apparent within and across all lessons and are well evidenced by research as having a positive impact on Teaching and Learning.

1. **CHECK IN**

Positively **meet and greet** students at the classroom door or on the playground as they get ready to come into your classroom/lesson. Use this opportunity to ensure all students are ready to learn.

Use the **Zones of Regulation** to check in with how all pupils are feeling. Provide this opportunity for pupils to self-regulate or co-regulate with a staff member, as required.

1. **ENGAGE**

A “**Can Do Challenge**” often seen as our ‘Blue to you’ should be ready for pupils to begin independently or with the support of a staff member. These prepare the students for learning and often ask pupils to recall and retrieve previous learning. They may also recap an area for development following the reflection of previous learning. Examples of a “Can Do Challenge” include, mind-mapping, quiz, labelling activity.

“I Do” – Share the learning with students. Explicitly tell pupils what the learning objective or enquiry question is and how these fits into their sequence of learning. Teach the new learning, along with explanations of key vocabulary or terms and use live modelling to show pupils what you mean.

1. **PRACTICE**

“**We Do** – using small groups and seating plans driven by data and the SEMH needs of pupils, provide an opportunity for guided practice.

1. **Apply**

“**You Do**” – Give pupils to opportunity to independently use what they have learned. Share the expected outcomes with them, provide each pupil with the scaffold they need to be successful and as a teacher address any misconception. Ensure the tasks provide appropriate challenge for each learner and their individual needs.

1. **Feedback**

Effective **Assessment for Learning** (AFL) strategies and learning checks must be used within all lessons. Continual verbal feedback and live marking is essential throughout the lessons, this aids the teacher in picking up misconceptions quickly, but also provides a much-needed self-esteem boost for our SEMH pupils and encourages them to keep learning. At the end of the lesson, staff and pupils should be clear as to whether they have met the learning objective.

Throughout the lesson, use positive and consistent “Language for Learning”, referring to, Zones of Regulation and our School Values (the Portland 5) when appropriate. Give out reward points fairly and consistently and use Relational Practice strategies - Praise in Public, Reprimand in Private – be Curious not Furious.

Trent Vale

At Trent Vale, the teaching and learning approach reflects the school’s ethos and priorities which is seen through the implementation of our carousel model. Each zone within the carousel typically lasts around ten minutes and provides a clear framework for progression. The Check In phase exemplifies the importance of positive relationships and emotional readiness, with staff meeting and greeting pupils and utilising the Zones of Regulation to support self-regulation and co-regulation. The Engage stage reflects the emphasis on recall and independence through the use of a “Can Do Challenge,” enabling pupils to consolidate prior learning or revisit identified areas for development. This is followed by the “I Do” phase, in which staff set out the learning objective or enquiry question, make explicit links to the wider sequence of learning, introduce and explain key vocabulary, and use live modelling to demonstrate expectations. During Practice, the “We Do” stage highlights the role of guided learning, structured through small group work and seating plans informed by both data and the SEMH needs of pupils. The Apply or “You Do” stage provides structured opportunities for pupils to demonstrate independence, with appropriate scaffolds and challenge enabling all learners to succeed while misconceptions are addressed. The model is underpinned throughout by Feedback, where continual verbal responses, live marking, and Assessment for Learning strategies ensure misconceptions are addressed promptly, progress is celebrated, and pupils are clear about the extent to which the learning objective has been met.



**CONSISTENCY IS KEY**

Consistency and coherence at a whole-school level are paramount

**SEND**

*‘High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the starting point in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and SEN support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.’* ***SEND Code of Practice (2015)***

Every teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all students in their class, even where students access support from support assistants or specialist staff. High quality teaching which is adapted to meet the needs of the majority of students is the first response to support students with SEND.

All pupils at Portland School have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for Social, Emotional and Mental Health. Some pupils also have a secondary area of need in, Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction or Physical and Sensory.

An EHCP is a legal document which identifies:

* the student’s special educational needs
* the additional or specialist provision (support, therapy etc) required to meet their needs
* the outcomes (capabilities, achievements) the provision should help them to achieve
* the placement (school or college) they should attend.

Key documents accessed and stored on SOLAR:

* Full EHCP’s, alongside the most recent Annual Review paperwork and a condensed ‘Snapshot’.
* Behaviour Profiles, outline specific behaviour responses pupils display and also highlight any high-risk behaviours.

**Key documents accessed and stored on TEAMS:**

* Pupil Profiles, which offer personalised information about each student and strategies to support their learning.
* Pupil outcomes, the progress they are making towards achieving their end of key stage EHCP outcomes.

**Targets**

Each class/form teacher are responsible for setting half termly ‘small step’ targets for pupils linked to their EHCP outcomes. SEMH targets are then evaluated on a daily basis and minutes earned toward ‘Golden/Reward Time’ on a Friday afternoon. These targets should be on display and pupils should be clear as to how well they are achieving these. In Secondary these are displayed within the front cover of the exercise book which the targets relate to.

Small step targets for other areas of need, such as C&L, C&I or S&P, should be considered during planning of lessons and interventions.

When presenting small step targets to pupils, they should be accessible and in child-friendly language.

**Zones of Regulation**

As a school for pupils with SEMH, we provide extensive learning opportunities for pupils on recognition and regulation of emotions, as well as understanding of social norms and development of social skills.

Zones of Regulation Expectations:

1. Every class engages with Zones of Regulation daily, with ongoing use throughout the lessons. There is a medium term plan, book and resources available for all staff.
2. At primary and Key Stage 3, where pupils spend the day with a core teacher, a Zones of Regulation ‘Chill out’ session is completed twice per day. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon.
3. At Key Stage 4, where teachers move between classes, a Zones of Regulation ‘Chill out’ session is completed once in the morning and then mini check ins are completed at the beginning of every lesson.
4. All staff use the language of Zones of Regulation and check in with pupils are required across the day.

**Student Equipment**

Whilst some students do bring their own equipment to school, most Portland School pupils, require support with this in each class. Pupils with SEMH needs, often find it difficult to organise themselves and ensure they are ready for learning, so it is our job as a school to support them with this. Pupils in each lesson should be provided with the required equipment. Dependent on age and stage, this may be within a personal pencil case or tub, or within class storage. This should include:

* Pencils
* Black or blue pen
* Ruler
* Eraser
* Sharpener
* Highlighter
* Glue stick
* Colouring pencils / pens
* Other subject specific items

**Exercise Books:**

When not working practically or where work is directly uploaded on to SOLAR, pupils will work in exercise books or folders.

Outer covers of exercise books should be clearly labelled with:

* student’s full name
* subject
* class name & year group
* teacher name

There should be no graffiti on the outer cover.

Presentation inside the book, should represent the high aspirations and attitudes to learning, held by staff and students.

**Feedback, Assessment and Marking**

At Portland SEMH School we recognise the importance of marking and feedback as part of the learning and wellbeing journey for all pupils. Feedback is most effective when it is consistent, meaningful and tailored to the individual needs of each child. Our approach ensures that feedback supports emotional regulation, builds confidence, and helps pupils to recognise and celebrate their progress.

Teachers and support staff use their professional judgement to adapt marking and feedback in line with pupils’ social, emotional and learning needs. All pupils are entitled to regular, constructive feedback on their work that is accessible, encouraging, and supports both academic and personal development.

### **Aims**

We provide feedback to:

* Show that we value their efforts and achievements, and encourage them to take pride in their work.
* Build self-esteem, resilience and aspirations through positive reinforcement, praise and encouragement.
* Give a clear picture of progress in both learning and personal development.
* Provide specific information about how far they have met their learning challenge and/or individual targets.
* Encourage self-reflection, helping pupils to recognise strengths and areas for growth in a supportive way.
* Share clear expectations and celebrate steps towards them.
* Identify gaps in understanding or barriers to learning and inform targeted support or interventions.
* Contribute to both summative and formative assessment, supporting individualised progress tracking.
* Inform future planning so that lessons are responsive to pupil needs.

### **Principles of Marking and Feedback**

* The school has a consistent but flexible approach to marking and feedback, adapted to meet the needs of each learner.
* Marking and feedback should be positive, respectful and motivating, recognising effort as well as outcome.
* Feedback should relate directly to the learning challenge and the pupil’s personalised targets.
* Feedback must be clear, accessible and meaningful to the pupil, with time given for them to process and respond.
* Marking and feedback should encourage self-reflection, supporting pupils to take ownership of their progress.
* Oral and immediate feedback is often the most effective for pupils with SEMH needs and is prioritised whenever possible.
* Written comments should be clear, legible, and supportive, and may be supported by symbols or visuals if appropriate.
* Feedback may be given by teachers, teaching assistants, through peer review, or in group discussions.
* Feedback can be used to identify specific difficulties or barriers, which then inform targeted support.
* Where common errors are identified across a group, these should inform future teaching rather than individual criticism.
* Marking is usually carried out as live feedback during the lesson, or before the next lesson in that subject wherever possible.

Good feedback or annotation of children’s work should:

* Be positive, motivating and constructive;
* Be at the child’s level of comprehension;
* Not penalise children’s attempts to expand their vocabulary;
* If written, handwriting that is legible and a ‘model for the child’
* Be frequent and regular enough for targets and pupils’/students’ responses to be chronological and meaningful
* Provide information for the teacher on the success of the teaching;
* Relate mostly to the Learning Question of the work set, i.e. science should be marked mainly for the science content, not the punctuation, for example, though literacy and numeracy as key skills need to be supported
* Positively affect the child’s progress;
* Teachers may not always feel it is appropriate to use stickers, and may wish to use peer and self-assessment aswell / instead (however this needs to be evidenced). Self-assessment needs to be done at the end of a unit of work in order that pupils can reflect on what they have learnt and can identify their next step.
* Clear frameworks will be used to guide and support peer and self-assessment

Using the principals of formative assessment then we should be constantly checking where pupils are on their learning journey, picking up misconceptions and correcting them and using all of this evidence to plan and adapt our future teaching.

### **Presentation**

* Portland SEMH School has a whole-school approach to presentation that promotes pride in work while recognising individual needs.
* Pupils are encouraged to present work to the best of their ability, with expectations adapted according to age, ability and SEMH needs.
* Visual prompts and classroom reminders are used to support consistency in presentation.
* Staff celebrate progress in presentation, recognising small steps as significant achievements.

Below is a list of feedback methods which staff could use to ensure that student receive regular feedback to support them in making progress.

**Low stakes testing**

Students complete low stakes testing in the classroom or online, through quizzes or multiple-choice questions. Teachers evaluate the picture presented through this format and identify the next steps in learning and any interventions required. Throughout the school this is delivered through an 80:20 model, 80% of the content from the low stakes test is from learning acquired during the unit of study, and 20% being from prior learning.

**Self and Peer Assessment**

Students should have the opportunity to self-assess or peer-assess work in each lesson. This allows them to:

* Engage with the success criteria for their learning
* Be able to identify their own strengths and areas for development
* Be able to employ metacognitive approaches to improve

**Blue to You Time**

Following feedback, students should be regularly given time to act upon it. This should be complete in a blue pen and be clearly labelled.

Teacher should monitor the completion of the work to ensure it takes place and use this when planning for next steps of learning.

**CPD Commitment – Continuing Professional Development**

Portland School is committed to promoting, supporting and providing continued professional development for staff to meet our key aim of providing an excellent education for all our SEMH students. We are developing a programme that aims to fulfil the DfE Standards for Professional Development.

**The DfE Standards:**

1. **Professional Development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.**
2. **Professional Development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.**
3. **Professional Development should include collaboration and expert challenge.**
4. **Professional Development programmes should be sustained over time.**
5. **Professional Development must be prioritised by school leadership.**

Teachers have a responsibility to reflect on their practice, enhance and update their professional knowledge and skill. This is to ensure that consistently high standards of teaching and learning are maintained, and national Teacher Standards are met. Portland School’s CPD programme will provide opportunities for staff to participate in a variety of activities in order to support the individual professional needs of staff and build whole school capacity. These CPD activities include strategies such as sharing best practice, presentations by current staff and outside trainers, peer observation, professional discussions, coaching and mentoring.

Teaching and Learning CPD across the year will be centralised around the five areas of The Portland Way.

**Homework**

At Portland School, homework is not a compulsory aspect of learning, as we appreciate the strained relationship many of our pupils and their families have had with education in the past.

Teachers will make available, access to online reading, phonics/grammar and maths games to support the development of these fundamental skills, families can access these as needed.

However, we are aware that as a pupil’s SEMH needs are being consistently met or as our pupils move toward their formal qualifications in Key Stage 4, some pupils and families would like homework to support accelerated learning. A request for this, should be made through the class/form teacher.

Homework provided should enable students to:

* Consolidate and extend learning covered in lessons
* Revise, over-learn and complete assessments of prior learning
* Prepare for new learning activities
* Develop research skills
* Have an opportunity for independent work
* Show progress and understanding
* Enhance independent skills e.g. planning, time management, self-discipline and revision

**Setting Cover work**

* To ensure pupils continue to access their learning, all teachers are expected to set cover work in the event of an absence. This should where possible, still be in line with the medium-term plans, and provide the appropriate resources and guidance for another staff member or supply teacher to pick up. This work should be added to the staff shared area on Teams: Curriculum > Cover Learning > Term > Week

**Quality Assurance**

* Subject Leaders are accountable to their line manager for monitoring the work of their area(s) of responsibility and providing objective evidence for quality assurance purposes.
* Subject Leaders will undertake and facilitate learning conversations, reviews of students’ work and teachers’ marking and feedback by sampling sets of books from each teacher as required by the QA cycle. Evidence from this monitoring should be available to support school self-review and evaluation.
* Subject Leaders will undertake a review of the outcomes of progress monitoring for each year group. This review should be used to plan and implement interventions with teachers and/or pupils.
* Subject Leaders have a role in identifying inconsistencies in practice between different groups of pupils within their subjects.

We have an annual Quality Assurance Calendar to support this process. The Headteacher with responsibility for Quality of Education, alongside the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Teaching and Learning, will oversee this calendar and its implementation. Bespoke support will run throughout the year to support individuals as and when necessary.

**Celebrating Best Practice**

At Portland School, we are striving to develop a positive ethos, where staff best practice is shared and celebrated, and we want to recognise staff for their efforts. We also aim for staff to model their best practice to others to support and develop a consistent staff team.

Each week staff will nominate other members of the team showing the Portland Values, nominated staff will then be awarded the “headteachers award” by members of SLT either through a celebratory end of day briefing or throughout the school day.

**Useful CPD videos, articles and podcasts**

**Appendices**

1. Rosenshine’s 10 Principles of Instruction: [Principles of Instruction](https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/HOW2_Poster_Principles_of_Instruction.pdf)
2. EEF ‘Five-a-Day’ Principle: [EEF blog: The Five-a-day approach: How the EEF can support | EEF,](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-the-five-a-day-approach-how-the-eef-can-support) [5-a-Day Principle Scaffolding.pdf](https://shaweducationtrust.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/PortlandSchool/Shared%20Documents/Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Folder/1.%20Key%20Documents/5-a-Day%20Principle%20Scaffolding.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=02g7WG)
3. Good Learning Checklist: [Good Learning Checklist (GLC).pdf](https://shaweducationtrust.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/PortlandSchool/Shared%20Documents/Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Folder/1.%20Key%20Documents/Good%20Learning%20Checklist%20(GLC).pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=7xU8cN)
4. Positive Environment Checklist: [Positive Learning Environment Checklist (PLEC).pdf](https://shaweducationtrust.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/PortlandSchool/Shared%20Documents/Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Folder/1.%20Key%20Documents/Positive%20Learning%20Environment%20Checklist%20(PLEC).pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=Wfce2k)
5. Portland Structure of the Day: [Routines and Structures Expectations.pdf](https://shaweducationtrust.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/PortlandSchool/Shared%20Documents/Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Folder/1.%20Key%20Documents/Routines%20and%20Structures%20Expectations.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=p2qzZb)
6. Portland Chill Out Routine
7. Assess, Plan, Do, Review template
8. Observation of Learning Guidelines: [Observation of learning Guidance.pdf](https://shaweducationtrust.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/PortlandSchool/Shared%20Documents/Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Folder/1.%20Key%20Documents/Observation%20of%20learning%20Guidance.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=pNZAN7)
9. EEF - Voices from the classroom: Beyond the Quiz – Feedback and retrieval practice: [Voices from the classroom: Beyond the Quiz - Feedback and… | EEF](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/voices-from-the-classroom-beyond-the-quiz-feedback-and-retrieval-practice?fbclid=IwY2xjawGWpMdleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHS35vpILA-WYAzFIUTTsWtpJQmfnsE-IeKwd9s6M8Xgw0XYpJvmky1ubWg_aem_R5j_oPDykGj6dJTecpCy8w&sfnsn=scwspmo)