



Valley College

COMMUNICATION, READING AND WRITING (LITERACY & ENGLISH) POLICY

Intent

Valley College is committed to maintaining high practical and academic standards and has high expectations of the learners. In the context of a generic special college, Valley College caters for a wide range of ability levels, it is essential that learners have access to Adult Literacy as part of the delivery of a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Our curriculum must be able to teach explicitly the knowledge and skills required to facilitate meaningful participation in society with as much independence as possible.

At Valley College we identify Communication, Reading and Writing as the most important skills for all of our learners. We deliver these skills through our individual target teaching and a variety of teaching styles and approaches are used in sessions appropriate to the functional topics being taught and the particular needs of the learners.

Subject Aims

- To develop effective Communication, Reading and Writing skills in all learners, developing their individual potential to the full.
- To foster an enjoyment of literature and language through exposure to a range of multi-modal and functional texts.
- To develop initiative and ability to work both independently and in co-operation with others across the curriculum.
- To offer appropriate subject material and teaching experiences, taking into account current research.

Implementation

At Valley College a Golden Thread runs through the Adult Literacy curriculum from a learners EHCP, reviews, Life Skill Plans and across the curriculum model.

At Valley College the Curriculum Model consists of the Formal Curriculum, Developmental Curriculum and Additional Curriculum. Curriculum design is individualised and therefore the weighting of this will depend on the learner and their needs.

Individual targets are identified in accordance with our Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy. These are taught specifically through Adult Literacy Sessions with targets taken from the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum. One hour a week is dedicated to Functional Literacy sessions but Communication, Reading and Writing Skills are embedded within all subjects taught.

However, it is at the discretion of the lecturer to identify the priorities for the learners in their class.

Learners work towards accreditation with NOCN. The curriculum and accreditation also covers Communication, Reading and Writing.

Functional Skills are taught by all lecturers. For those who it is deemed appropriate Functional Skills Tests are completed in the summer term. These tests are externally accredited.

Implementation of Communication

Objectives

- To teach active listening and understanding of language.
- To teach expression and choice making skills.
- To teach social communication skills.

Throughout the college all lecturers are aware that communication is an essential skill which is an integral element of all subjects and activities. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to provide opportunities to develop and generalise individual learner's communication skills. In addition staff should model appropriate language and grammar whilst modifying their speech to suit the needs of the learner. It is our priority to teach functional communication skills to all learners.

Learners are made aware of language to reflect purpose and audience. They are encouraged to; perform, present, chat, imitate, discuss, debate and share information.

Valley College encourages multi-modal approaches to communication and offers a total communication environment.

Resources

At Valley College all lecturers are trained in specialist speaking and listening strategies.

Job coaches are also trained in many of these strategies and training is offered to advocates.

The following resources are used throughout the college:

Makaton
Derbyshire Language Scheme
Intensive Interaction and Jabadao
Narrative Therapy
Tac Pac
Sherborne
Sensory Stories
Picture Exchange Communication (PECS)
Alternative and Augmentive Communication (AAC) including iPads and VOCAs
Communicate in Print
Objects of Reference and Objects of Focus
Emotional Support Packages
Small Steps to Success

Implementation of Reading

Objectives

- To read, share and access books and functional literature.
- To teach a variety of reading strategies including synthetic visual and kinaesthetic methods.
- To teach functional reading skills including e-literature.

Throughout Valley College all lecturers are aware that reading is an essential skill which is an integral element of all subjects and activities. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to provide opportunities to develop and generalise individual learner's reading skills. The college is committed to provide a literacy rich environment to allow learners every opportunity to generalise their reading skills for example learners read signs in the environment.

For learners that are unable to read a variety of strategies are used for e.g the use of colourful semantics enables learners to link symbols and explain what is happening in functional pictures.

Valley College learners may have access to a local public library.

Implementation of Writing

Objectives

- To develop systematic fine motor skills.
- To develop grammar, vocabulary and punctuation.
- To develop compositional skills and encourage the enjoyment of writing.
- To develop functional writing skills including email and text messaging.

Throughout college all lecturers are aware that writing is an essential skill which is an integral element of all subjects and activities. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to provide opportunities to develop and generalise individual learner's writing skills.

Learners will be encouraged to compose texts using word processing packages, mobile phones, emails, social networking sites etc.

Room Organisation/Teaching and Learning Styles

Learners at Valley College receive one session of Adult Literacy per week. Learners are put into groups dependant of the lecturer with differentiated targets.

Lecturers plan activities that are multi-sensory in their approach, giving learners opportunities to access the session in their preferred learning style and minimising the limitation of any particular sense a learner may have.

- Visual – e.g. pictures, photos, signs, models;
- Auditory – e.g. discussion, sound-effects, videos;
- Kinaesthetic – e.g. practical, hands-on experience.

All differentiated targets and activities are found in the individual learner Life Skills Plan and enables the lecturer to differentiate sessions in accordance to the relevant target for that learner.

Session Outline

Sessions follow a three-part structure: the introduction sets the expected learning outcome of the session. This is age appropriate, motivating, engaging and related to familiar experiences and interests of the learners.

The main activity offers the opportunity to develop their skills through activities which are:

- Differentiated to match the conceptual and practical demands to learner ability.
- Consider the physical needs of the learner and are adapted appropriately.
- Ensure it is possible to reach a satisfactory endpoint in the time available.

The plenary enables the learners to collectively address misconceptions, share their work and progress towards the session objectives

Assessment

Learners are assessed using the targets outlines in the Adult Literacy Curriculum on a termly basis in line with the college's assessment policy. This information is used to identify a top, middle and bottom learner from each group for target setting. This then informs session objectives and ensures that they are SMART. Lecturers use observations of each learner to ensure learners can progress towards achieving their target. At the end of the half term, assessments are carried out against the Life Skills Planners by the lecturer based on observations and evidence of work. This information is used formatively to identify future targets.

Monitoring

Termly evaluations are completed by the lecturer along with samples of learner's work. Internal moderation of literacy work across college takes place yearly by the subject lead and lecturers who teach the subject to ensure that marking and work set is consistent.

Impact

- The impact of these sessions should develop the learner's literacy skills in a functional situation. This will support their development in the future and prepare them for adulthood.
- The content of our curriculum is delivered and repeated to ensure skills and knowledge are retained. Throughout college, these skills are re-addressed at later stages and prior knowledge is built upon.
- Lecturers informally assess through continuous assessment, questioning, peer and self-feedback and dialogue within the classroom environment. Lecturers may also have dialogue with subject leaders, SLT or directors.
- Lecturers formally assess using the Adult Literacy Curriculum and also formally assess the progression of skills within EHCP targets.
- At Valley College the impact of the intent and the implementation is monitored and key responsibility is given to a range of staff, from the job coaches, lecturers, subject leaders, senior leaders and directors: they all play a part in ensuring that accurate assessment takes place to enable a learner to access the next stage of their educational journey.

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