

Teaching & Learning Policy

The Hospital School at Great Ormond Street & UCLH		
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Approving Committee		
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The Aims of The Hospital School

The aim of the Children's Hospital School is to minimise as far as possible the interruption and disruption to the child's schooling by continuing education as normally as the child's medical circumstances permit. We aim to provide for all our pupils an enriching and enjoyable experience, which is suited to their age and individual needs and which helps prevent anxiety about school.

We aim to make education an integral part of the overall treatment of the child, and the school an essential component of the service of each hospital.

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- provide consistency between settings in order for pupils to continue academic progress whilst not attending their Home School, Nursery
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people – both peers and adults;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens;
- enable children to take a pride in their work and the work of others;

Effective Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that suit them best. We take into account these different forms of intelligence when planning teaching and learning styles. We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways.

These include (where appropriate):

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- visits to places of educational interest;
creative activities;
- watching media, responding to musical and recorded material;
designing and making things;
- participation in physical activity;
- guest visitors and performers;

Effective Teaching

Achievement, Continuity & Enjoyment

Although we do not have a statutory responsibility to follow the National Curriculum, as a Hospital School, where appropriate, skills and objectives are taken from the National Curriculum, including the EYFS statutory Guidance where all seven areas of learning shape our teaching. We actively seek information from the pupil's Home School to guide our planning and target setting. Where the child has not yet started nursery or school we talk with parents/carers as the people that know their children best.

When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum so that they can reach the highest level of personal achievement. In addition, for Nursery and Reception children the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' – i.e. playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically, underpin all our teaching.

On meeting a child, teachers make an initial assessment and use home school assessment data (where available) to inform next steps. When working with a child, teachers make ongoing assessments of their progress and use this information in their planning. Our prime focus is to develop the knowledge and skills of all our children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability.

When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs), obtained from their home school. Teachers modify learning and teaching as appropriate for children with disabilities.

We value each child as a unique individual. Teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender, gender identity, religion and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

In the absence of Home School work we use the schoolroom curriculum to guide our teaching. The Schoolroom Curriculum sets out the aims and objectives and details what is to be taught at each Key Stage throughout the year.

In Nursery and Reception, teachers work from the EYFS curriculum to create medium term plans in the Activity Centre and personalise teaching as far as possible. There is a balance between adult and child initiated tasks starting from the child's interests with staff engaging in sustained shared thinking with the children.

(In years one to eleven,) Teachers keep ongoing records to plan for future teaching to ensure that each child is working *(at the correct level.)* to achieve their potential. This helps us to monitor the children's progress throughout their admission. We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives that are shared with the children and where relevant, their families.

We endeavour to deploy staff appropriately to best meet the needs of each child. All of our long stay pupils have a key teacher. Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish positive working relationships with the children. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in activities. If a child displays challenging behavior staff work alongside one another, ward staff, the child & their carers to jointly devise strategies which promote the best learning opportunities for all.

We praise children for their efforts and by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children perform are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we complete a risk assessment to ensure safety. We inform parents (and medical staff if necessary) and obtain their permission before the visit takes place.

We deploy Teaching Assistants as effectively as possible. They work with individual children on the ward or support individuals / small groups in the schoolroom. They are involved in the planning and assessing of children's work.

We strive to make sure our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. Where appropriate on the wards children will display their own work and learning in their own rooms. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high quality work by the children.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all. This process is linked with the OFSTED criteria for teaching and learning in order to provide a clear picture of the quality and consistency of practice across school.

When improving and evaluating teaching and learning in school, we agreed to:

- Model lessons and good practice between peers
- Observe lessons using our own agreed hospital school criteria
- Sample and benchmark pupils' work to judge progress and celebrate success
- Share case studies in supportive 'Professional Dialogue' meetings
- Discuss work with pupils
- Share targets and outcomes with the pupils and their carers

Role of the Head Teacher and Governing Body

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.
- ensure that the premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.
- monitor teaching strategies bearing in mind NHS health and safety regulations.
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil progress and attainment where health allows.
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies support and promote good quality teaching.

Supporting the role of the Parents/Guardians

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- involving parents in target setting.
- sending a report to parents on discharge after at least 20 teaching sessions, in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate possible next steps. For Nursery and Reception children – we also use ‘Tapestry’ an online journal of observations on learning which are shared with families throughout their stay and form part of the pupil’s report on discharge
- Providing help with transitions and reintegration to home schools or tuition services.
- Providing regular opportunities for parents to talk 1:1 with teachers either on wards or in schoolroom

