

Teaching to support a recovery curriculum September 2020.

This document is written based on advice and research from www.evidenceforlearning.net, www.offschool.org.uk, The Chartered College and The Education Endowment Fund (EEF)

This document sits alongside our Curriculum Plan for September document which identifies the rationale and aims of our curriculum and our curriculum content priorities.

The priority aims of the curriculum in the autumn term are to identify and address gaps in learning, particularly in reading, literacy and numeracy and to ensure that students receive support to develop or maintain positive mental and physical wellbeing.

We know that many of our children have found lockdown extremely challenging; social interaction has been limited, many students have had reduced access to the modelling of high-level communication and many students have reduced levels of physical activity. As a result, for some there has been a negative impact on both their mental and physical health and our curriculum needs to recognise this and support all of our children in developing healthy lifestyles.

Daily routines have disappeared or changed over lockdown and many children will no longer be used to maintaining extended periods of focus and concentration.

Many of our students will have experienced loss; loss of friendship groups, loss of social interaction, loss of freedom and others, and from losses may come anxiety, trauma and bereavement.

Anxiety is often present for many of our children and on top of their own anxiety they will have witnessed significant amounts of adult anxiety which has been easy to absorb. This anxiety is likely to have reduced the perceived importance of academic learning. Having been told, in order to stay safe they need to avoid contact with others, returning to school and social contact will raise the anxiety levels of many of our children.

“Anxiety is a cruel companion. It eats away at the positive mental health of the child, and can cause a deterioration in their overall well-being. The anxious child is not a learning child. Mood swings may prevail; they can become irrational and illogical. There can be a loss of sleep; the cumulative tiredness can diminish the child’s coping mechanisms.” www.evidenceforlearning.net

Teaching is based on relationships and we know that the relationships at KnowleDGE enable students to access the curriculum and to learn. As advised by evidenceforlearning, we are basing our teaching and curriculum on 5 Levers, as a systematic, relationships-based approach to reigniting the flame of learning in each child:

Lever 1: Relationships – we can’t expect our students to return joyfully, and many of the relationships that were thriving, may need to be invested in and restored. We need to plan for this to happen, not assume that it will. Reach out to greet them, use the relationships we build to cushion the discomfort of returning.

Lever 2: Community – we must recognise that curriculum will have been based in the community for a long period of time. We need to listen to what has happened in this time, understand the needs of our community and engage them in the transitioning of learning back into school.

Level 3: Transparent Curriculum – all of our students will feel like they have lost time in learning and we must show them how we are addressing these gaps, consulting and co-constructing with our students to heal this sense of loss.

Level 4: Metacognition – in different environments, students will have been learning in different ways. It is vital that we make the skills for learning in a school environment explicit to our students to reskill and rebuild their confidence as learners.

Level 5: Space – to be, to rediscover self, and to find their voice on learning in this issue. It is only natural that we all work at an incredible pace to make sure this group of learners are not disadvantaged against their peers, providing opportunity and exploration alongside the intensity of our expectations.

How this will work at KnowleDGE.

Level 1: Relationships

Taking into consideration the safety procedures put into place, children will need time in which they can re-establish their friendships and the positive relationships with staff. Regular circle time will allow for thoughtful discussion surrounding the value of friendship. Shared activities, like games and play will bring the pupils back together into teams and discussions and conversations, both group and 1:1 will help to reestablish relationships with teachers and LFs.

For suggestions of activities to support relationship building see the folder on Teams.

Level 2: Community

Communication between school and home has been maintained through phone calls, Zoom calls and emails. We should continue to communicate with parents and carers and share the learning that has been done. Work produced during lockdown will be collated and displayed in school and we will engage with each child about the learning and the experiences that they have done since lockdown.

Level 3: Transparent curriculum

Pupils can only re-engage in learning once they feel safe, secure and happy. This transition will be different for every pupil and must initially be pupil-led. Academic learning will be kept to short bursts interspersed with other activities that are planned and coordinated. It is likely that an hour long 'lesson' will consist of 3 to 4 short learning activities of 5 to 10 minutes each and a number of planned creative, relationship building, fun activities.

Child-led projects and story-based learning will aim to re-engage the pupils with their learning.

As we are able to baseline assess our children and we begin identifying gaps in learning, we will plan for individual support and interventions in a holistic and sensitive manner. Again, each individual learner's healing process will vary but either way, we will reassure both pupils and parents/carers that we are there to support them through this journey.

Level 4: Metacognition

Pupils may have lost confidence to contribute as active learners in the classroom. Gaps in their knowledge will also impact on their self-esteem as learners. Be open and discuss what has happened, how this may impact on them as learners and how we will get back on track.

A visual timetable will be used to create structure to the day, and will include both formal learning activities and planned breaks from learning, so that the whole day is structured. It will be vital to refer to the visual timetable throughout the day to reassure pupils of where they are now and where they will be heading. This might look differently across classes, hubs and pupil to pupil. Now and next boards and task planners can be used alongside the visual timetable in order to make the structure of lessons explicit.

There will be elements of the timetable that will be consistent each day, like exercise, mindfulness and circle time which will be paramount in developing and nurturing the well-being of our pupils. In time, learning will happen incidentally and formal learning sessions will be longer as children begin to gain understanding and feel secure in their routines again.

There may be a need to re-establish appropriate learning behaviours. Encouraging children to be self-reflective of their own behaviours whilst ensuring that they are provided with the conditions for learning, such as ensuring pupils can access the curriculum, engage with lesson content and participate in their learning, will support this.

Lever 5 – Space

It is important that opportunities for conversation are built into the day. Children will be given space to explore their feelings and seek out help to manage them. Self-regulation strategies will differ from pupil to pupil but we must consider and empathise with the challenges that our pupils have experienced and continue to be faced with. School needs to be a safe and happy place before learning can begin.

Summary of classroom expectations for September

- A planned week with English, reading, maths and WOW lessons as well as time for option work in KS4 and KS5, science work in KS3 and KS4 and a range of creative and outdoor learning.
- Individual lessons to be planned with academic learning in short bursts interspersed by planned activities
- Visual timetables, task planners and now and next boards giving clarity and structure to the day and lesson
- A gradual increase of formal learning time as appropriate
- A focus on activities that support mental and physical wellbeing and support the re-development of strong relationships
- Work completed during lockdown to be collected, displayed and celebrated
- Baselineing to happen when possible and intervention to be planned and delivered

For resources to support this plan see the folder on teams and the website

<https://offschool.org.uk/teacher-zone/recovery-curriculum/resource-menu/>