Teaching and Learning

At YDA we aim to provide an ethos which is conducive to learning; where every pupil is valued as an individual and the curriculum is board balanced and relevant. The wide diversity of pupil needs impacts upon the teaching, learning and classroom management thus the resources both physical and human are deployed to best meet the needs of the pupils.

Due to the students complex and multiple needs there can be both progression and regression of skills, knowledge and understanding in both the short and long term. It provides an overview of the school community's collective understanding of what enables effective learning and teaching to take place. While being very broad in scope it is important that it is read in conjunction with other important school policies.

At YDA we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both children and adults learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. It is our aim to ensure that all tasks and activities that the children are involved in are safe. We believe in giving praise for effort and achievement, and, by so doing we develop and build a positive attitude towards the school and learning in general.

It is the school's aim to be an attractive learning environment; the displays are changed at least once a term, to ensure that they reflect the topics being taught. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning. Aims To maximise personal potential and promote personal achievement. Education should also enable pupils to make sense of the world and to operate more effectively within it so they become more contributing and valued members of society.

Our student's physical, educational and emotional needs will be catered for after thorough communication with parents across all disciplines. Students will be positively motivated. All achievements will be accepted and valued to maintain self-esteem. Students will be respected as individuals. All Students will have a planned educational programme, which ensures continuity and progression. Students progress will be regularly reviewed and assessed and the information used as a basis for future planning.

Staff and students will be encouraged to actively counter all forms of discrimination. To make full use of all the skills, experience and expertise that all our staff bring to the school.

We strive to provide a well structured, stimulating teaching and learning situation we, however, need to remain adaptable to change e.g. staff absences, unpredictable behaviour etc. Staff strive to be sensitive to these anomalies and work toward providing the "best" learning opportunities within these constraints.

• To promote independence
• To provide individualised plans for each and every student
• To provide educational opportunities that meet individual and group needs
• To meet the individual needs of the students, recognising the age, range of intelligence and learning preferences, and to use active and agreed approaches

• To provide a happy environment that promotes learning
• To share good practice
• To deliver the Equals curriculum at an appropriate level for every pupil Teaching will show:
• Careful planning in short, medium and long term.
• Clear learning intentions for individuals and class groups – ensuring all staff within the class are informed of these.
• Achievable but challenging IEP's.
• High expectations of student achievement.
• The use of a variety of approaches and range of teaching styles, e.g. exploratory, didactic, whole group etc.
• Consistent record keeping and assessment and use of this in future planning.
• Positive behaviour management strategies.
• Good classroom organisation which is suitable to the needs of the student and the lesson objectives, allows all students to participate and allows for good pace and rigour.
• Flexibility of approach to enable problem solving and risk taking whilst remaining safe.
• Resources are varied and have been well selected to advance students learning.
• Resources and approaches that are multi-cultural and multi-sensory and age appropriate.
• Good classroom management e.g. safe and useful routines high expectations of student behaviour and showing a good understanding of what they are doing.
• .Opportunities for independent learning.

Learning will show:
• Opportunities for sensory development
• Opportunities for communication development
• Opportunities for motor skills development
• Opportunities for life skills development
• Opportunities for ICT
• Opportunities for social skills
• Students who are motivated, confident, respected and valued.
• Students efforts and achievements are recognised and praised.
•Students understanding of the learning intention and the purpose of the activity.
• Variety of learning styles e.g. problem solving, exploration etc.
• Positive relationships between different groups of students and staff.
• Elements of collaborative learning and interactive activities.
• Respect for each other and each others property.
• Opportunities for personal development, taking responsibility and reflecting on their own and other behaviour / feelings / experiences.
• Evidence of attainment and achievement showing what the students know, understand and can do.
• Acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding.
• Individual and group achievement celebrated via praise and acknowledgement in the classroom and the whole school.
• Enjoyment and fun.
• Appropriate use of specialised equipment.
• Input from a multi professional team and parents /carers.

The Values that Underpin Learning:
• Students learn best in a positive affirming environment that allows each student to experience success
• All students can learn with varying levels of support
• All students have a right to learn
• The student's learning should always be central
• A student's learning experience should be enjoyable

• Learning for both student and adults should be valued

• Mutual respect for everyone should be encouraged and celebrated The Autonomous Learner Where possible and where appropriate the school aims to develop skills, attitudes and abilities associated with autonomous learning.

We aim to encourage students to: -

• Develop self-awareness

• Explore / understand their learning environment

• Communicate

• Develop independence

• Work independently

• Work with others

• Want to learn

• Be curious

• Develop an understanding of the needs of others

• Have good self-esteem and self-worth Learning Environment for staff, students and parents

The school aims, through partnership with parents, staff, students and other agencies to facilitate the following:

 • A high level of awareness of the importance of self-esteem, and of promoting self determination

• A happy, secure and relaxed environment

• A stimulating environment

• An understanding and commitment by everyone within the school community to take responsibility in ensuring that the Young Dancers Academy is an effective learning and teaching environment

• A commitment to learning

• A commitment to staff development

• Access to resources and up-to-date information

• A readiness to learn new skills to meet new challenges

• Learning together Leadership and Management Structures for Effective Learning and Teaching

• It is the fundamental objective of school leadership to support effective learning and teaching at the Young Dancers Academy.

• The school operates a traditional line management structure for the general maintenance of the school and to ensure effective communication.

• A collective leadership approach is promoted within the school that values the contribution and insight of each individual to school development.

• Where appropriate areas for development are pursued on a team basis, in consultation with the wider staff, and drawing on the strengths, interests and abilities of staff.

Agreed Teaching Approaches qt the Young Dancers Academy takes an eclectic and varied approach to meeting the needs of individual students. Approaches are taken based on the identified needs of students through the different professional judgements; for this to successfully occur good teamwork is essential. Approaches and interventions are assessed on their suitability for each students; however, a range of approaches and emphases are commonly used in school; these may include the following:-

• Age appropriate curricula

• Topic-based and cross-curricular

• Child-centred

• One to one, paired, small group and whole class teaching

Resources and Classroom Organisation Resources and classroom organisation are intended to facilitate the following:-

• Age appropriate curriculum, resources and environment

• Age appropriate communication, resources and environment

• The provision of an imaginative, challenging and stimulating educational experience
• Being appropriate to individuals' needs
• Creating an environment that reflects the learning and teaching aims of the school
• Promoting good classroom organization, which facilitates the teaching strategies outlined
• Provides choices.
• Positively uses the many professional who are employed and or visit the school to promote learning monitoring and evaluation.

The school values critical reflection as the main means of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning. It has developed a range of tools both formal and informal to facilitate this, which include: -
• School Improvement Plan;
• Staff reviews;
• Staff Assessment;
• Questionnaires;
• Parental meetings;
• Lesson Plans
• Annual / Progress Review Meetings
• Written reports;
• Annual report to parents;
• Teachers' meetings;
• Whole school meetings;
• Multi-disciplinary meetings;
• Senior Management meetings;

Monitoring Teaching and learning will be monitored on a termly basis by:-
Senior Management and curriculum leaders and therapy collecting and sampling planning and evaluation documentation. Work sampling termly classroom observations and peer observations. Monitoring is about enabling all staff to be clear about what constitutes good practice and sharing this good practice through the school.

Community Partnerships
The school has and continues to develop a range of links and partnerships, with the central aim being to increase learning and teaching throughout the school; with this aim interaction with the following different agencies is individually tailored:-
• The Royal Ballet School
• English National Ballet School
• Central School of ballet
• Sixth form academic colleges

We are aware of the need to regularly review the school's teaching and learning so that we can take account of the current needs of the students, new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

Policy written by	Kerry Williams – Executive Director
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