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**The Peaceful Pony CIC**

**Teaching and Learning Policy and Procedure**

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**Approval Date: 1/11/2024 (Senior Managers of TPP)**

**Last Review 1/11/2024**

**Next Review 01/11/2025**

**Rationale**

*“High-quality teaching and learning is the most important factor in improving attainment outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.”*

*Education Endowment Foundation (2022)*

This policyis a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for ensuring children and young people are at the centre of their own learning. It will ensure also high-quality support from qualified staff and staff with lived experience.

Our teaching and learning policy will ensure all staff working and children and young people attending our setting have full awareness of our learning goals, achievements and shared standards of good practice. This policy will also provide a framework for our provision, which secures a coherent and continuous education for our children’s individual needs and promotes quality support, equality and inclusion.

Teaching and Learning are the core functions within education. Providing an effect approach to learning and support in our alternative setting will ensure high quality experiences to our children and young people, in a stimulating and supportive environment which will support children achieve good outcomes. The ability to establish and maintain good relationships is central to effective teaching - **‘*learning and experiencing together*’** – so that we provide the best quality education for children and young people attending TPP.

**Vision**

**\*Learning and experiencing together”.**

Each child that accesses support within The Peaceful Pony Specialist Alternative Education and The Peaceful Pony Therapy Centre (TPP) is and always should be treated as a unique person with their own strengths and struggles. Children are at the heart of everything we do. Our ethos is that, for children to feel safe and learn, they require autonomy and guidance to thrive. There should be no right nor wrong, we all take time and different paths to learning and thriving. The role of adults working with children in our setting to ensure safety but also support choice so these key needs can be met. This will also mean that for children to thrive and be safe, an assessment of their wellbeing and risk should form part of a therapeutic support plan, as well as implementation of their needs including an EHCP.

A main driver of TPP, will always be to ensure we provide earlier based intervention and evidence-based provision support based around **“The Sudbury Model”,** whilst also providing a diverse but systematically planned curriculum which is individual to each person’s chosen learning goals and social and culture needs.

To ensure our vision becomes our children’s lived experiences we have developed (and continue to develop) a choice-based learning curriculum where children gain knowledge and skills which can be shared and developed as a collective group. This will ensure children and young people are also to revisit and teach their learning to others, so over time skills become fully embedded, whilst also learning independence, self-belief and determination.

We believe that children should be encouraged to learn in a variety of ways, that they should learn together and be given the opportunity for their voices to be heard and be actively involved in deciding what they need to do next to make further progress.

Teaching and learning at TPP reflects our children’s unique lived experience within their diverse local area and beyond. Our approaches are rooted in the effective use of evidence-based research and our provision-based practice experiences.

**Facilitated learning and experiences.**

 At TPP, we will always ensure we see each child and young person as unique and hear their voice to ensure a child is given th3 opportunity to r4each their full potential. One of the ways we do this is by ensuring that all our children receive Quality First facilitated learning and experiences from our staff. This means that our staff who may be teachers, tutors, Therapists, support workers; uses high quality, inclusive methods and strategies that help all children to overcome barriers to their learning and provides opportunities for challenge and curiosity.

We have a ‘tiered’ approach to planning for the development of effective facilitated learning so that there is a logical and well-sequenced plan to support and sustain the highest quality:

1. Core instruction
2. Core instruction and additional targeted instruction
3. Core instruction, additional targeted instruction and intensive intervention.

Professional development is focused on the development of the skills necessary for all teaching/ therapeutic and support staff to deliver high quality facilitated learning and experiences.

These skills are embedded, revisited and adapted where necessary, and include:

* developing an enabling environment including our rooms being well organised and accessible with labelled resources to promote independence
* ensuring that ‘*lesson design’* has a clear structure where children are made aware of the learning objective
* staff planning together in phases to ensure continuity of experience for the children and workload reduction for the staff
* learning which is sequenced in small steps supported by the use of concrete and pictorial resources building towards abstract concepts
* exploring of new language – often with the aid of visuals and displays
* children are asked to demonstrate and recall core knowledge in a variety of ways, e.g. drama, mind-mapping, drawing, digital literacy
* children are taught different strategies to remember important information and are encouraged to use the ways that work for them e.g. highlighting, steps to success, mnemonics, etc.
* making explicit links to prior and future learning to make connections across the curriculum - including future careers
* children work in flexible groups - mixed, pairs and individually and show their understanding in different ways
* children’s’ effort and achievement in their work is celebrated using a range of age appropriate strategies including ‘Merit Certificates’, verbal and written praise etc.
* staff ensure that learning is enjoyable (and therefore memorable) and that children are excited about what they are doing
* every Staff member appropriately trained and aware of individual needs and risks of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
* use appropriate strategies such as ‘scaffolding’ and encouraging home language to support children with EAL
* staff carefully track each child’s progress to ensure that they are able to achieve their full potential
* staff meet regularly with parents and carers to discuss their children’s progress and keep them up to date with what their children are learning
* Metacognitive and self-regulation strategies are used to support learners to think about their own learning more explicitly, using specific strategies for planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning.
* Staff will plan activities and experiences based on children’s interests and fascinations, ensuring the motivation to explore and learn is high.
* SEN support plans, one-page profiles and provision planning detail the strengths and needs of children with SEND. Clear, specific and measurable targets are set to ensure appropriate progress.

**Facilitated learning and experiences- from Children and Young Persons perspectives**

The children and young people attending our setting have told us that their favourite learning experiences have been:

* Being hands on
* When adults listen
* Different sensory experiences
* Are fun
* Can be challenging but support provided
* Making connections and sharing learning with friends
* Meeting adults with special jobs/ visiting us to share their learning and life experiences
* learn interesting facts that we didn’t know before
* move about and work together
* do some something new
* learn new skills
* use technology
* learn new ways of doing things
* learn from people we think are experts
* create and make things
* are given responsibility for our own learning
* try something new for the first time

The children’s and young person’s views are the whole basis of our democratic learning space and subjects.

**The Self directed learning model**

It can be evidenced by the Sudbury model that self-directed learning with support can be for some children the most effective learning strategy. Learning is motivated by a genuine interest if far more effective for learners who require autonomy and low demand. Our learners attending TPP will self-determine their own learning choices which will be supported and evidenced by AQA unit awards. Each learning experience a child will encounter, will be at their own rate, choice of activities, goals and self-assessment process guided by AQA units. There is no compulsory timetable or curriculum. Each child attending our setting will set their own pace of learning without a concept of pressure of “falling behind”.

**Age Mixing**

Children attending TPP, can be aged from 5-25 years (with consideration of risk and safeguarding). In our experience, we have found there is a vast amount of learning benefits that can be had for all children where they are free to interact with others of different ages at their own choice. Many older young people may have the experience to reconnect with their inner child, whilst younger children may also benefit from having others as role models.Age mixing encourages all children to learn compassion and develop empathy. There will be many occasions for children to share their broad range of learning experiences, as well as help others gain new skills, and learn from a diverse group of individuals at different stages in their life.

**Time**

Within our setting, children and young people have the time they need for their interests and pursuits.  They have time to play, time to socialise, time to think, time to just be. Most importantly they have the time to develop the skill of ‘learning’. Allowing children to navigate their own ‘time’ without pressure, allows a space to problem-solve, decipher, practice and engage with the world around them and the skills they want to focus on. It will allow a child to develop deeper thinking, free thought practice a skill or knowledge at their own pace. Along with the Sudbury model, TPP believe that if a person knows ‘how to effectively learn’ then they can go on to achieve all they wish to achieve. Our setting gives children the time to discover what they need to know to become lifelong learners.

**Clubs**

At TPP, we are currently exploring working shared interests which can form clubs; examples of these are “Pony Club”, “Chess club”, “Roblox club’ and “Robot club”. These clubs will be supported by an adult but will be run and organised by learners wishing to join or initiate a group/club. This is just one way in which reasoning, analytical, organisational and collaboration skills are acquired and honed within our setting.

**Support with developing communication skills, emotional expression and self self-regulation**

The development of communication skills and opportunities to express ones self will help children and young people understand social norms but also their place in the world. This will also support children in understanding different forms of communication, written, verbal, body language, their expression of them.

One key aspect of a child’s language development is the growth of their vocabulary – the words they understand and the words they use to communicate. There is a strong relationship between vocabulary and comprehension, where a broad vocabulary (knowing lots of words) and a deep vocabulary (knowing those words well) correlates with better understanding. Different ‘tiers’ of vocabulary can be explored and help form learning and supporting of others on all levels.

When children write, a wider vocabulary gives children a rich palette with which to express their ideas, choosing a word to communicate with elegance and precision. Some children for whatever reason may not feel able to communicate through writing. TPP staff will support their choices and encourage different ways to express their voice and language skills.

Children and young people will be supported through the day with understanding of them ‘self’ ‘identity’ ‘perceptions’ ‘self-expression’ and ‘emotions. This will be supported by Therapists and support workers, working with peers and exploration through different subjects. Different strategies surrounding communication will support the skills to understand how to reregulate emotions.

**Aims of our Teaching and Learning Approach**

In our strong commitment to effective and varied teaching and learning strategies, also our flexible approach to learning, we aim for children to:

* develop a responsible and independent attitude towards their work and towards their roles in society.
* engage in learning in a positive way and to approach challenging tasks with confidence and enjoyment.
* reach their full potential in terms of academic achievement and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)
* develop self-awareness, communication and behaviour awareness skills and high levels of personal responsibility.
* be tolerant, sensitive and understanding, showing respect for the rights, views and property of others.

 **Principle to supporting our aims**

In order to fulfil these aims for our learners, at TPP we believe everyone is equal and should have the ability to be involved in our provision in any capacity. TPP will adhere to the following principles:

* using time and resources effectively
* developing a well ordered and high-quality learning environment
* promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of provision life
* working collaboratively with all who attend and work at TPP
* planning for, and presenting children with, a range of choices to support their adaptive learning and needs.
* Children who have English as an additional language and SEND are supported by TPP staff who may be bi-lingual/ ways to communicate. Staff will also have regular CPD opportunities revolving in equality and diversity and SEND approaches.

**Staff at TPP support these general principles by:**

* establishing an environment which has access to choice, resources and options for shared learning.
* Recognition and support with self-refection and growth during learning
* Supporting exploration of depths of discussion
* Helping support learners with facilitating a plan to achieve learning but also support individual needs with a dynamic approach.
* supporting the acquisition of new knowledge is progressive and continuous, building on prior knowledge.
* maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of children’s interests, learning styles and AQA’s.
* ensuring that learners who are learning English as an additional language, have their home language and background valued and recognised.
* using strategies to support ALL learners including those with English as an additional language.
* displaying and celebrating the work of children and young people effectively, using quality materials and with their permission.
* maintaining well-ordered and tidy spaces to learn in.
* ensuring strategies, deployment of resources and work space organisation supports children irrespective of background and promotes inclusion.
* working collaboratively with other staff, with a shared philosophy and clearly defined goals
* developing their own expertise and showing flexibility within their working patterns
* being good role models through conduct and dress

**Children support these general principles by:**

* attending our provision on the days they can.
* Exploring behaviour support and self-regulation with adult support
* Refection of growth in self and others.
* Role modelling
* Ensuring responsibility for actions and choices
* taking responsibility for their own learning.

**Parents support these general principles by:**

* Supporting children attend our provision as agreed.
* Communicating information, making suggestion, being a part of their child’s journey.
* providing support for behaviour awareness and support with staff
* working with their child's Keyworker/Therapists
* being realistic about their children's presenting needs.
* giving support with learning that make take place out of our provision.
* ensuring early contact with TPP to discuss matters which may affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour.
* attending Parent Consultation to discuss their children's progress.
* allowing their children to take an increasing responsibility as they progress through our provision.
* responding to letters and permissions in a timely manner