

## **EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

14.1 Teaching and Learning

14.2 Curriculum

### **14.1 Teaching and learning Policy**

#### **14.1.1 Principles**

We believe in working with young people with a range of abilities, all of our students have an Education and Health Care Plan. To this end our approach is flexible so that we can match the abilities and meet the needs of each of our students.

We encourage young people to appreciate and respect personal and cultural differences among each other and the wider community.

We believe that outdoor education is a vehicle to bring about change within a young person in relation to self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence. This is achieved by:

- encouraging young people to view themselves in a new light;
- enabling young people to gain a realistic understanding of their potential within the context of the activities
- give young people the opportunity to gain nationally recognized awards in the activities, which validates their learning which has taken place.

We believe that young people learn best when they:

- are happy;
- are interested and motivated;
- achieve success and gain approval;
- are given tasks which match their ability;
- clearly understand the task;
- are confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries;
- are challenged and stimulated.

#### **14.1.2 The Learning Environment**

This should be organised to ensure that children have the opportunity to:

- work individually, and in groups

- make decisions;
- work co-operatively;
- solve problems;
- be creative;
- discuss their ideas;
- develop social skills;
- develop independence;
- use initiative;
- receive support;
- achieve recognised awards.

Learning best takes place in an environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating;
- is peaceful and calm;
- is happy and caring;
- is organised;
- is well resourced;
- makes learning accessible;
- is encouraging and appreciative;
- is welcoming;
- provides equal opportunities and promotes diversity;
- provides a working atmosphere.

Young people should be encouraged to develop organisational skills and independence through:

- appropriate tasks;
- confidence building;
- example;
- co-operation;
- provision of suitable opportunities;
- responsibilities.

### **14.1.3 Routines and Rules**

Routines and rules contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be:

- agreed by the young people and clearly understood;
- fair and consistent;
- realistic and positive;

- kept to a minimum but observed;
- daily activities with which the young people are familiar.

All rules should result in the young people knowing the boundaries of behaviour and should be set within the terms of The Behaviour Policy.

#### **14.1.4 Achievement**

All Releasing Potential students have been disengaged from education for significant periods of time. Additionally Releasing Potential students are not often equipped emotionally to cope with baseline skills assessments. It is problematic, therefore, to make detailed judgements of prior learning when they join us. Through close liaison with referring colleagues, through EHCP and other relevant documents, tutors continually assess students' educational and personal development history to ensure that lessons are appropriate to the needs of each young person. Using a range of tools tutors assess students' abilities and in a range of areas, including academic achievement and social emotional development.

Curriculum planning includes strategies to differentiate between the learning abilities and needs of individual students. All Schemes of Work show these plans.

Progress is assessed using a process of continuing review, NGB qualifications, academic qualifications on the NQCF and structured RP awards as appropriate.

Tutors mark written work by acknowledging correct responses and explaining mistakes. Tutors need to arrange time to observe, assess, reflect and review achievements with each young person on a regular basis; through this they can assess and analyse progress to plan effective teaching.

Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an ongoing process in all aspects of RP life, by:

- verbal or written praise by tutors, peers, managers and, where possible, parents;
- displays of work;
- opportunities to perform or share;
- encouraging self esteem;
- the awarding of 'raffle tickets' and certificates;
- sharing success with the community.

## **14.2 CURRICULUM POLICY**

- 14.2.1 Range
- 14.2.2 Cross curricular themes
- 14.2.3 Curriculum planning
- 14.2.4 Key Skills development
- 14.2.5 Additional needs
- 14.2.6 Careers
- 14.2.7 Assessment
- 14.2.8 Social emotional learning
- 14.2.9 Outdoor Education
- 14.2.10 Post-16

### **14.2.1 Range of Curriculum**

#### **Focus and ethos**

The school curriculum at Releasing Potential takes into account the needs of our students. All our students are dis-applied from the National Curriculum and require specialist provision to help them engage with education. The curriculum for Engage, Mentoring and Activation provides learning across a range of diverse areas and aims to give students a well-rounded education where tutors can be flexible in responding to students' needs, interests and motivation. The aim of the curriculum is to balance practical learning with key skills development. Through the range of subjects offered we seek to provide an education that allows the young people to develop linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative skills.

Releasing Potential takes a holistic approach to teaching and learning. We aim to address the basic moral, spiritual and domestic needs of our students, whilst recognising that not all our students are 'ready to learn'. There is a focus on encouraging students to make healthy decisions for themselves through student-led and tutor-guided activities. Releasing Potential believes firmly in a reflective practice model and this is incorporated into the curriculum to improve practical skills and knowledge and to recognise the development of emotional intelligence and resilience.

Teaching may not always take place in a formal classroom setting. This may be adjusted to suit the students' motivation and reduce anxiety, which will in turn create opportunities for positive outcomes.

Core subjects are English, Maths, Outdoor Education, Food Studies and Personal Social Development (PSD).

Additional subjects in Years 7-11 are CDT, PE, Art, Project Work and Enrichment.

We are registered with the Northern College of Further Education (NCFE) to deliver National Vocational Qualifications up to Level 2. Additionally we are accredited to deliver and assess a range of National Governing Body (NGB) awards in outdoor activities, as well as Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze, Silver and Gold. All our students have the opportunity to achieve these qualifications.

Formal English assessment is broken down into 3 skills areas:

- Speaking, listening and communication
- Writing
- Reading

These areas give students a balance of literacy skills to help them progress to further education, training or work. Other areas include:

- Grammar
- Spelling
- Presentation
- Handwriting
- Creative writing

Students work to their own level within the class, ensuring that progress on an individual basis and any gaps in learning can be addressed by the tutor.

## **Maths**

Maths teaching and learning is embedded across all subjects in the curriculum, in both theoretical and practical senses. Students on full time provision will access 2 dedicated maths lessons per week. The first of these will be paper-based and focus on theory, the second will aim to put theory into practice using practical activities. This helps to create context for students and to create deeper understanding.

Formal Maths assessment is broken down into 3 skill areas:

- Representing
- Analysing
- Interpreting

All functional skills in Maths are covered at each level according to the student's abilities.

Other areas include:

- Notation and lay out
- Presentation
- Break down of steps
- Terminology
- Using a calculator
- Estimating – checking procedures
- Multiplication tables

### Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education is a key element in the ethos of Releasing Potential which enables students to connect with the natural environment, respect the planet, be healthy and active, build confidence and self-esteem through taking managed risk, learning practical and leadership skills.

Formal assessment in Outdoor Education takes place through the Level 1 qualification accredited by NCFE. Students are also able to achieve National governing Body awards in various activities, for example sailing, canoeing and kayaking, climbing.

### 14.2.2 Cross curricular themes

Releasing Potential recognises its responsibility to promote an understanding in its students of British values, namely: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of people of all faiths and none. This essential element of student learning is addressed through a range of curricular and non-curricular activities, both formally as part of PSD delivery, and through additional trips, visits and activities; these include: prison visits, council chamber visits, participation in local events such as Remembrance Day services, mock elections and debates to coincide with General/By/Local elections, talks by Police and magistrates.

Students are encouraged to explore the rights and responsibilities involved in being a member of a family, of Releasing Potential, the wider community, the UK and the world at large. This occurs through all aspects of the curriculum, including PSD, English and Enrichment; a range of delivery strategies are used including formal debate, role play and workshops. Display boards are visible around both sites on which information about news current events is shown; this encourages discussion and debate. Students and staff take part in a range of charitable activities throughout the year, including Comic Relief, Children in Need, Save the Children Christmas Jumper event.

Within all aspects of the school day we seek to address the personal, health and social needs of our students. This is done through formalised lessons as part of the PSD curriculum, and through responding to students' conversations during lessons and breaks.

Releasing Potential has a high standard of conduct when working with young people, with a focus on taking responsibility for one's own actions. Staff are expected to model the mantra 'clean, decent and honest' in their conversations and actions in the workplace. The same is expected of our students. This applies across the curriculum and provides many opportunities for spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

Where there are opportunities, the curriculum will reflect the cultural diversity of the UK, particularly through the PSD, Art and Food Studies curricula. Citizenship Leads co-ordinate events and activities and advise on delivery strategies.

Staff work hard to challenge students to use appropriate and respectful language when talking about people and practices different from their own. When appropriate staff may arrange a visit from or to a particular place or people to challenge the prejudices students may have; for example a visit to the local mosque, or a visit from local police officers.

### **14.2.3 Curriculum Planning**

We have long-term plans for all core subjects delivered on each Engage and one to one programme. Each core subject has a work booklet to support teaching. The Lead Tutor will use these to select a programme that meets the needs of the young people in their group, taking into account their age, aptitude, previous experience and other additional needs.

For each topic on the long-term plans there are medium term plans setting out an overview of themes and topics. Individual subject tutors are able to organise their short term planning in their own way, however it is expected that after delivery of each medium term plan, provision will be reviewed and improved for future use. A curriculum review is held by the management team during the summer term where curriculum elements can be updated so as to remain current, in line with best practice and relevant to student learning.

### **14.2.4 Key Skills Development**

The focus of our key skills curriculum is to provide the young people with the skills they will need for life, with a particular focus on communication and numerical skills. The young people will present with a range of abilities and confidence levels, we focus on overcoming barriers to reading, writing, speaking and listening and maths by focusing on small manageable tasks provided with a high level of support.

The young people are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills throughout their time in the school, through conversations over break times and lunch times as much as within formalised class discussions and debates. The staff will model a range of ways of speaking in different contexts and pick up on inappropriate ways that the young people may express themselves.

#### **14.2.5 Additional Needs**

The curriculum that is delivered seeks to be flexible to meet the individual needs and interests of the young people within any group. By working with small groups of only 3 or 4, each young person will get the support that they need to complete the work to an appropriate standard. It is important that poor literacy skills are not a barrier to learning in other subjects such as outdoor education or CDT.

#### **14.2.6 Careers Advice and Development**

We seek to develop the young people's understanding of their future career options in a number of ways, these include:

- Looking through college prospectuses
- Visits to local colleges
- Support with making college applications and attending interviews
- Interview practice
- Advice from specialist careers advisor (*Find it Out Service* in West Sussex, *Hampshire Careers and Employability Service* in Hampshire)
- Online careers options packages (*e4s*)
- Releasing Potential Enterprises which allows students to participate in all aspects of running a small scale business
- Visits to a range of work places
- Talks by visiting experts in various career areas
- Work placements and work experience

In Year 11 students take part in work experience tasters; in Years 12-13 students take part in work placements which can lead to paid employment.

#### **14.2.7 Releasing Potential Pupil Assessment procedures**

Releasing Potential (RP) believes in improving academic outcomes for young people. Expectations of young people are high in terms of attendance, behaviour and achievement, and



all students are encouraged to explore and fulfil their potential. We understand the national benchmark for PRU attendance to be 83% with a 15% threshold for persistent absentees. We aim for all students to raise this to 95% attendance and 7.5% persistent absenteeism. We use a clear Attendance Policy, which includes systematic monitoring and review of absenteeism; working closely with parents to convey the importance of good attendance and its links with achievement; and strategies to support and integrate students to full inclusion.

We are also aware that Ofsted Subsidiary Guidance published in January 2014, requires inspectors evaluating past attainment and progress to take account of the school's own assessment data. Ofsted also insists on inspectors considering the core objectives of the school's work. To this end, we believe it essential that RP assess and record attainment and progress in terms which are meaningful across the range of student needs and abilities, and of subject areas delivered.

There are a number of ways in which students' progress is monitored at Releasing Potential. It is important to highlight that progress is individual to each and every student and we believe that not all progress is recognised through academic achievement or through data.

## **Attendance**

All student attendance is monitored to record improvements made in this area. Promotion of attendance is high profile throughout RP, on the understanding that regular, consistent, punctual attendance is a key factor to positive learning and engagement.

## **S.H.A.P.E**

Our behaviour monitoring system, SHAPE, measures student's behaviour from years 7-13.

SHAPE stands for the following:

**S** - Safe

**H** - Healthy

**A** - Achieve

**P** - Positive

**E** - Enterprise

The system works so that after each lesson, students and tutors reflect on the student's work, attitude and behaviour, and the choices they made during the session. If students have

achieved all of the SHAPE guidelines, then they achieve SHAPE, if not, then they do not achieve SHAPE for that lesson, but have the opportunity to achieve it in the next.

Students also choose a target for the day, which is normally linked to the goals set during Target Setting (see below).

These scores are recorded on a weekly basis for monitoring.

### **Target Setting**

At the start of each term, students are invited along with a parent/carer to attend a Target Setting appointment, where the tutor along with the student and parent/carer are able to reflect on the previous term and how targets were or were not achieved, and discuss what new targets should be set for the coming term. These targets are based around Emotional Intelligence as well as Academic goals. It is also an opportunity for students work to be shared with parents/carers and any questions to be answered about the term ahead.

### **Evidencing**

All work students completed, including reflective journals and record workbooks are part of the evidence of their own work and learning during subjects such as Outdoor Education, PE, CDT and Project Work. Journals and Personal Records are a way for staff to monitor any changes in the student's awareness of self, self-esteem, ability to recognise achievement, positive and negative attitudes. With the aim to make students more self-reflective and understand their own actions, achievements, ability to enjoy and socialise. This evidence is a record of student's progress and achievements across subject areas.

### **Student Progress Report**

These reports are completed at the end of each term as a summary of the student's progress during the last term. They are part of an open conversation with students where they have a chance to reflect on their own progress in areas including:

- Attendance
- Attitude
- Social skills
- Achievements
- How targets have been met
- Aims for the future
- Student's reflection

These reports are sent to parents/carers or other professionals with a keen interest in the young person. They provide an overview of the progress that is being made and are written with the input of a number of staff who may work with the student.

### **Levelling**

Students are levelled based on the work they produce during the year. At the end of each term, students for years 11 and 13 complete practice papers for English and Maths in preparation for formal assessments. Completed work is marked on a regular basis against the criteria for English and Maths, these levels are recorded throughout the year and used as a measurement of pupil progression on our database system.

### **Daily Logs**

Each day, a daily log is completed by the tutor or supporting staff on each student. These logs record the SHAPE for the day, any progress which has been made in work or behaviour, as well as recognising any further support which is needed for the student. Changes in behaviour is also recorded and can be monitored through these daily logs by all staff that work with the young person.

### **Qualifications**

Students are given the opportunity to achieve a number of formal qualifications during their time at Releasing Potential. By achieving these formal qualifications is a clear indicator that students are on track to succeed onto the next stage.

NCFE (Northern College of Further Education)

NCFE Functional Skills Qualification in English (Entry Level 1-3, Level 1-2)

NCFE Functional Skills Qualification in Maths (Entry Level 1-3, Level 1-2)

NCFE Award in Personal Development in the Outdoor Industry (Level 1)

NCFE Award in Personal Social Development (Level 1)

NCFE Award in Creative Craft – Cookery/Construction (Level 1)

NCFE Award in Exercise Studies (Level 1)

Duke of Edinburgh Award - Bronze

## **Awards and Certificates**

Releasing Potential recognise achievement throughout many areas of the curriculum and students are able to gain RP Awards and Certificates. This helps to recognise progress and skills accomplished by students in many areas.

Examples of a few are:

- Sports day - Participation
- RP Climbing Award (Level 1-3)
- RP Mountain Biking Award (Level 1-3)
- RP Outdoor Cooking Award
- RP Forest School Award for Shelter Building

### **14.2.8 Social Emotional Learning**

At Releasing Potential (RP), given the difficulties of our students, there is an emphasis on achieving outcomes in terms of social and emotional learning.

Baseline assessments are made in relation to SEAL through the Outcomes Star system, which helps the student to recognize her/his own strengths and improvement areas. This produces a visual representation of the current situation as they see it. The assessment is repeated termly and allows students, staff, parents and referrers to measure and record distance travelled over time.

Additionally our SHAPE system is fully embedded in all aspects of curricular and non-curricular learning. SHAPE scores are recorded daily, weekly and half termly. They are analysed informally by staff and individual students after every session in order to recognize achievements. The data is recorded on the web-based portal and evaluated formally on a half termly basis and reported in writing to parents and referrers.

### **14.2.9 Outdoor Education**

Outdoor Ed is a key component in RP provision across all years.

- At KS3 students work towards a range of introductory level National Governing Body (NGB) qualifications. Assessments are made by staff
- At KS4 students undertake the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award, and more advanced NGBs where appropriate.
- At KS5 students undertake the DofE Silver Award as appropriate.

### **14.2.10 Releasing Potential Post-16 Traineeships**

Releasing Potential offers a small post-16 provision for students who are emotionally vulnerable and find it difficult to engage in a larger or more mainstream setting.

RP Post-16 runs as a 1 or 2-year programme. Students' programmes are based around work placements which are set in Releasing Potential businesses, such as Emsworth Outboards and the Coastal Rowing Hub, or in external organisations, arranged by RP or independently. In the case of independently organised placements, parents/carers need to authorise their child's participation; RP staff will make checks on the suitability of external placements and will visit students on site.

Students who are able to progress onto further education or training, work placements or apprentices after year 1, will do so. Those who need further support will remain for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year where further training and time is given to preparing students for an appropriate next destination.

#### **Focus and Ethos**

The aim for students who participate on our Sixth Form programme is to gain an understanding of career opportunities, working life, and independent living. Through practical knowledge and experience, students are empowered to be independent young people who can access further education/training, apprenticeships and even work by the end of the course. This gives students the confidence to believe in themselves, recognise their strengths, enabling them to develop further and contribute positively to society.

#### **Programmes**

Each student works to their own programme which is suited to their needs and motivations. The main focus is to get students 'work ready' and support their pathway into further education, an apprenticeship or work.

Students' individual timetables consist of 3 core areas: English, Maths and Work Experience. All other subjects are catered specifically to the group or young person to enable their progression towards achieving their focus. Examples of subject areas students are able to access are listed in 'Other Subjects' below.

Even though students have personal timetables, they are encouraged to interact and work with their peers to build positive working relationships where possible. Team work is an important element to student's personal development; learning to work with others using effective communication skills is good preparation for work experience and placements.

## **Core Subjects**

### **English**

This core skill is continued throughout Sixth Form as it is for the rest of the school (please see Curriculum for years 7-11). The focus is on functional skills and working on filling the gaps of knowledge.

English is based around work related topics and independent living themes which may include:

- CV writing
- Letter writing
- Job applications
- Administration and formal correspondence
- Communication

### **Maths**

This core skill is continued throughout Sixth Form as it is for the rest of the school (please see Curriculum for years 7-11). The focus is on functional skills and working on filling the gaps of knowledge.

Maths is based around work related topics and independent living themes which may include:

- Calculating tax
- Wage slips
- Household bills
- Budgeting
- Time management

### **Work Experience and Placement**

Preparing students to be work ready is an essential part of the Sixth Form programme. Students have opportunities for workplace visits, supported work experience and work placements. This gives the students practical experience of working life and the routes that could be available to them. During work experience and placements students are monitored by a supervisor and feedback is discussed with the Sixth Form tutor. This gives students the chance to reflect and monitor their own progress during the process. Work experience and placements may lead to further employment.

Understanding the nature of our students, all work experience and placements are selected very carefully, and are primarily small business models which can be flexible to accommodate the needs of the young people.

Releasing Potential have several in-house opportunities and enterprises in which students are able to gain practical work experience. These include:

- RP Printing Business
- Marine Engineering
- Introduction to Farming and animal care
- Forest School/Outdoor Education Assistant
- Maintenance Assistant

## **Other Subjects**

### **Work Skills**

Practical working skills which are used within work experience areas are practiced in Work Skills and include, but are not limited to:

- Administration
- Advertising
- Maintenance
- IT and communications
- Networking
- Time Management
- Budgeting

### **Life Skills**

To build confidence in students and develop their independent living skills. Life Skills helps students to be self-sufficient and self-reliant, in preparation for helping around the home and when they move out of home to live independently.

This topic area creates awareness for responsibility for self and includes:

- Cooking
- Personal Finance
- Cleaning
- Housing
- Personal Hygiene
- Personal Safety
- Sex Education
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- Personal Health including Mental Health
- Driving (written) test

## **Outdoor Education**

Outdoor Education for Sixth Form focuses on the following main areas:

- Leadership and Team work
- Respect
- Confidence
- Personal Development
- Independence

Formal qualifications and In-house awards available to gain during Sixth Form (if not already achieved) are:

- NCFE Award in Personal Development in the Outdoor Industry
- RYA Sailing level 1 & 2
- RYA Powerboat Level 1 & 2
- BCU Kayaking and Canoeing Level 1 & 2
- Duke of Edinburgh Bronze/Silver
- NNAS Navigation Award – Adult level
- RP Climbing Award
- RP Mountain Biking Award
- RP Outdoor Cooking Award
- First Aid

Residential and expeditions are also available to all 6<sup>th</sup> formers.

## **Workshop**

Students have the opportunity to learn and practice skills on-site where experience can be gained within a fully functioning workshop. As students build in confidence, these skills can be taken into further work experience placements.

## **Sports Studies**

Sports studies is an option which can be taught during Sixth Form, where students learn about the sports industry and the working of the sporting world including disabled sport, international sports, sports injury, and more. These topics help to prepare students who may wish to pathway onto Sports or Fitness related courses.

RP in-house awards are given for each topic completed.