



The Attic Teaching and Learning Policy

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| Date of policy | November 2017 |
| Date Presented to Management Committee | January 2018 |
| Date Ratified by Management Committee | January 2018 |
| Date of Review | January 2019 |

The Attic

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1. Key Learning Principles

We believe that:

- There is no known ceiling to achievement – intelligence can be developed.
- Each student must know what to do in order to improve and how to do it - high expectations on their own are not enough.
- Each student has the right to be successful and the ability to achieve.
- Students should be taught how to learn and how to reflect and improve on their learning.
- Learning objectives and outcomes are shared and reviewed.
- Clear, structured lessons promote learning.
- All staff must create and maintain a purposeful learning environment.
- Achievement should be recognised and rewarded.
- Underachievement must be challenged, not processed.
- All teaching styles are valued as long as they support students' learning and progression.
- No opportunities are missed to teach literacy and numeracy skills across all subject areas.

2. Growth Mindset

Learning and teaching are interactive. It is important that we teach students how to learn, in order to become independent learners and develop skills for life-long learning.

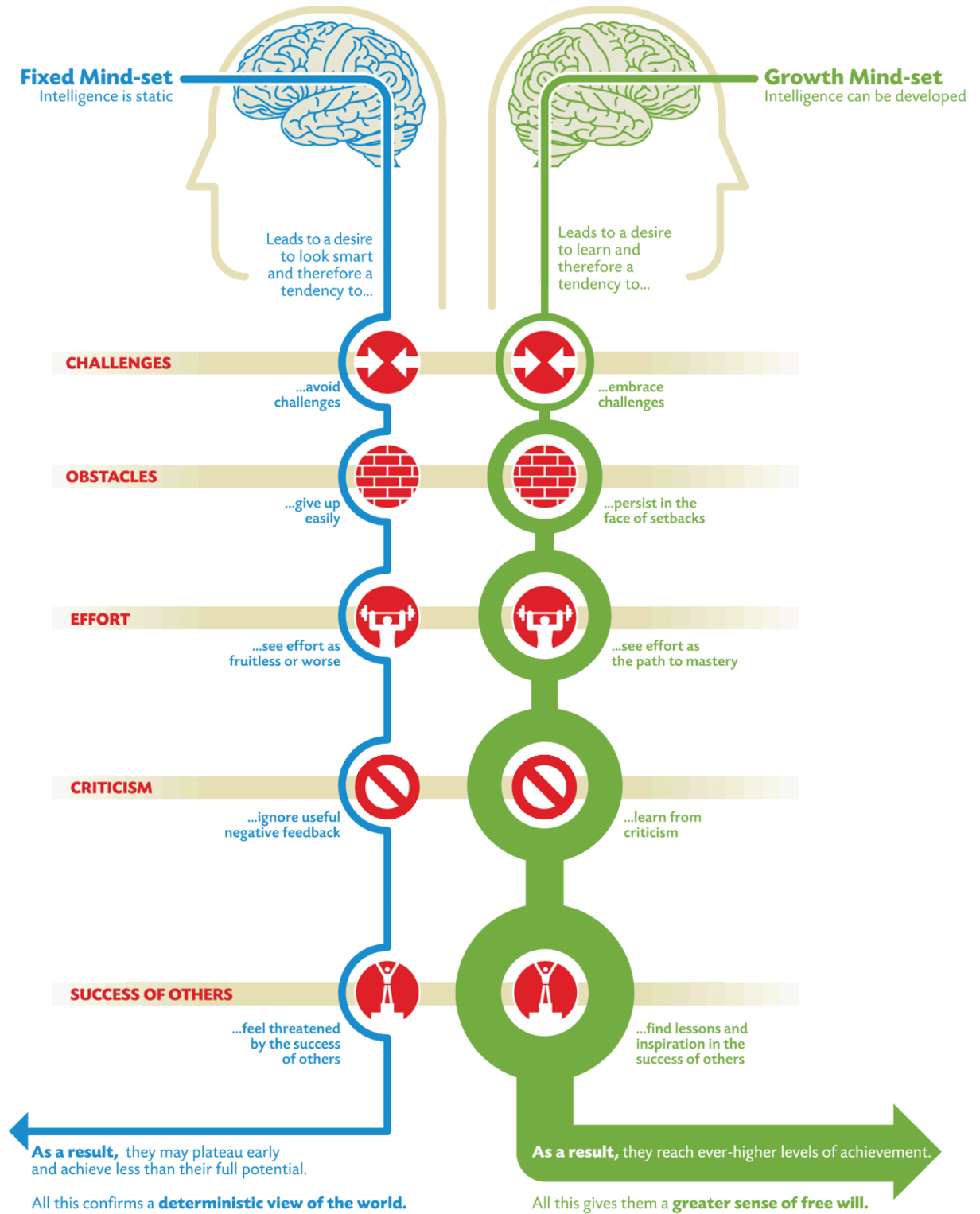
Growth Mindset provides the platform upon which staff at the The Attic PRU can enable students to how to learn. It centres on the belief that:

Students who are more confident of their own learning abilities, learn faster and learn better. They concentrate more, think harder and find learning more enjoyable. They do better in their tests and external examinations. And they are easier and more satisfying to teach.

Therefore, it is important that our teachers aim to build students' learning skills in the four key areas of:

- Resilience – The emotional aspects of learning
- Resourcefulness – The cognitive aspects of learning
- Reflectiveness – The strategic aspects of learning
- Collaborative – The value learning together / with others'

GROWTH MINDSET



A working party will meet twice termly in order to discover the specific techniques that give students what they need to be successful in their learning. The group will discuss various strategies to help students to learn how to learn:

- supportive discussions with students about the processes/skills involved in learning;
- visual and verbal explanation of topic/task e.g: by teacher, by LSA's, between students, by students to whole group, and students to the teacher;
- teaching students to value the learning process, and the art of making mistakes, rather than fixating purely upon the end outcome;
- understanding, reading and thinking time;
- scaffolding (writing frames, sentence starters);
- modelling (sharing students' work, working through examples, guided writing, sharing planning and demonstrations);
- holding narrative therapeutic discussions, in order to give students the confidence to apply successful techniques that they have used to learn in the past, to new learning experiences;
- developing effective learning and study skills (e.g. revision techniques, recording notes, summarising) and sharing of good practice (i.e. student to student, student to teacher and teacher to student);
- formative feedback (oral and written) and continual target setting on how to improve by teacher and/or student;
- praising and commenting upon effort as well as attainment;
- regular reflection and improvement of learning, and regular reviews of progress toward set targets.

3. Learning Objectives

If students are to take responsibility for their own learning, they need to know what they are expected to learn and how they can achieve it. Providing objectives allows students to engage with the process of learning.

- i. Teachers must make the learning objectives and outcomes explicit to all students. This will usually happen at the beginning of the lesson but could happen at other stages in the lesson. This can be done in a variety of ways:
 - written or projected onto the board
 - orally
 - written by students in their books
 - printed on handouts
- ii. Teachers must make it clear to students how they will be supported to achieve the learning objective and outcomes. This could be done by:
 - explaining the purpose of the lesson and why it is worth learning;
 - showing what learning activities the students will be doing in the lesson e.g. through a visual timetable or visual schedule, indicating how long each activity will take, and ticking off once complete;
 - explaining verbally or representing visually how the task relates to the learning objective;
- iii. Learning objectives and outcomes must be revisited throughout and at the end of the lesson. This can be done in a variety of ways:
 - students review their learning against the lesson objectives;
 - teacher/LSA checks for understanding through using differentiated questioning;
 - students record 2 key points (individually or in pairs);
 - teacher recaps.
- iv. Longer term objectives across a topic, unit or series of lessons should be made clear and reviewed. This can be done through:
 - learning logs;
 - concept tick sheets (what I know, what I have learned);
 - debates;
 - ongoing mind maps;
 - topic overview.

4. The Structure of Lessons

Clearly structured lessons promote learning.

- i. Lessons must have a clear start. This could include starter activities such as brainstorming or demonstrations or a review/recap of previous learning, or specific learning of key vocabulary that is needed to access the lesson.
- ii. Lessons must have a clear finish which will usually include a review of learning objectives (see above) but may, also, include questioning to correct misapprehensions and a preview of the next lesson.
- iii. Longer term objectives can also be reviewed in this section of the lesson making reference to final assessment outcome.

5. Individualised Learning Activities

Students learn in different ways. Recognising this and planning for it provides stimulus and is inclusive.

- i. A range of teacher/student-led and student-centred activities should be used.
- ii. Teachers use a range and variety of teaching strategies to take account of learning needs of all students.
- iii. Appropriate visual support should be provided for learning activities, especially when supporting students with language and communication difficulties.
- iv. Students have the opportunity to work in a variety of ways, such as individually, in pairs, small groups, whole class situations, and have the pre teaching required to understand how to work effectively in the different situations.
- v. Differentiation is a powerful tool for student learning in the classroom and at home. This takes many forms and can include:
 - differentiation by outcome
 - differentiation by task
 - differentiation by question
 - developing and adapting resources to both support and extend students taking into account all students' needs
 - the use of student groupings

6. The Teaching of Literacy, Mathematics, and ICT across the Curriculum

Developing and reinforcing young peoples' literacy, mathematics, and ICT skills is the responsibility of all across the curriculum.

- i. The teaching of reading, writing, and communication skills is fundamental to all aspects of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. There is a wide-range of evidence that shows that being literate increases opportunities for students in all aspects of life, and helps to lay the foundations for lifelong learning. We ensure that no opportunities are missed to teach literacy skills are missed by:
 - providing time in the school day for students read recreationally, with weekly and termly rewards for dedication towards reading;
 - offering guided reading opportunities in which staff use a wide-range of techniques to help students read confidently aloud;
 - utilising reading tasks wherever possible in lessons;
 - capitalising on any opportunities to teach spelling, punctuation, and grammar across the curriculum;
 - focusing upon writing focuses each term within each curriculum area, for example writing to analyse, writing to persuade, writing to describe, and writing to analyse;
 - conforming to a mutually agreed school literacy marking code when given written feedback to students, using orange pen to differentiate from other feedback; providing students with opportunities to reflect upon and respond to marking for literacy.

- ii. Mathematics provides essential analytic, problem-solving and decision-making skills, including financial awareness. For this reason, it is essential that all staff miss no opportunities to link mathematics to learning across the curriculum.

- iii. In a world of ever more advanced technology, and increasing communication platforms, it is essential that students leave school with the ICT skills needed to share information and communicate effectively. For this reason, it is essential that all staff miss no opportunities to link ICT to learning across the curriculum.

7. Recognition and Reward

Student achievement must be celebrated. This can be done in a number of ways:

- through the reward system
- highlighting an individual's or group's success
- post cards of commendation to parents/carers/students
- displaying students' work
- through celebration of students achievement at assemblies
- through presentation of certificates at achievement assemblies
- positive phone calls home
- a clear marking policy which acknowledges success and includes a target for improvement (eg. a 'what went well and next steps' approach)

8. Challenging Underachievement

All students are capable of achievement and underachievement. Identifying and challenging underachievement is the responsibility of all classroom based staff. High expectations are not enough on their own; action is needed to ensure they are met.

- i. Identification; all staff must familiarise themselves with relevant data, (such as pupil progress data, baseline assessment data, prior attainment data and attendance data), as it becomes available and use this to inform expectations and monitor and record progress.
- ii. Challenge Teachers must take responsibility for the following:
 - Schemes of learning and assessment tasks are appropriate, accessible, rigorous and sufficiently challenging. Schemes of learning and assessment tasks are reviewed and amended as appropriate to meet differing individual needs;
 - tasks are differentiated and there is flexibility in teaching to support maximum engagement;
 - students have an input in their learning within a SOW or key stage eg. where appropriate, students can make choices about what they would like to study or make suggestions about what they would like to do;
 - students are involved in discussion about their learning in order to establish reasons for any underachievement. Targets, and strategies to achieve targets, are negotiated and agreed, and must be reviewed. Progress is recognised and reviewed regularly
 - use of appropriate rewards when individual achievement or behaviour is realised or improved;
 - use of appropriate sanctions when work or behaviour fails to meet an acceptable standard;
 - setting regular, short term, achievable, meaningful targets and learning goals;

9. The Learning Environment

The way in which staff manage the classroom has a significant effect on students' learning and behaviour. Students learn, develop and progress in a structured and stimulating environment.

- There needs to be a purposeful learning environment in all classrooms, including up to date displays kept in good order and well maintained and tidy classrooms.
- Punctuality and regular attendance is essential.
- Students enter and leave the classroom in an orderly way at the instruction of the staff.
- The seating of students is very important and is at the direction of the teacher. Strategic seating challenges underachievement and promotes learning. Teachers have a seating plan for every class and this is continually reviewed and assessed.
- All resources, including electronic resources, are prepared in advance and equipment checked before each lesson.

10. Assessment, Feedback, and Marking for Learning

Day to day assessment must be formative, used to inform learning and to monitor the progress of learners.

Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies are used to encourage all students to learn how to learn and become independent learners.

Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies underpin our assessment practice. The effective assessment and marking of work are fundamental to successful learning and teaching. All assessment information should be used formatively, whether verbal or written comments. The aim of formative comments is to give students clear guidance about how to improve their work and how they have been successful.

- i. Formative comments inform students about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their learning. Students will receive formative comments as well as summative assessment.
- ii. Opportunities are given for students to act upon the guidance. This could be done in a variety of ways, for example:
 - a starter or a plenary activity;
 - students set their own targets by themselves, with the help of peers/teacher;
 - discussion with the student;
 - a peer assessment activity;
 - peer teaching;
 - levelled assessment rubrics;
 - re-drafting learning attempts;
 - students keep guidelines on how to approach a particular question;
- iii. A formative comment should:
 - be concise and accessible for students
 - highlight achievement indicating areas that they have been successful in, indicating how improvement can be achieved, giving one or two specific targets
 - encourage and support the individual needs of students in a constructive way
 - encourage students to take ownership of their learning
- iv. The marking of students' written learning should also be formative. This enables students to know where they are in their learning, and what they need to do progress further. We believe

that 'Marking for Learning' is the most effective type of formative marking. Marking for Learning means:

- For each piece of written learning that students attempt, they receive a 'what went well' comment (www) in green pen, and an 'next steps' comment (ns) in purple pen. These should be related to the assessment criteria of the subject, and comply with the rules for formative comments stated above.
- Students are given an opportunity to reflect and respond to these comments at least once every 2 weeks. Examples of ways in which these responses could be evidenced include: 'Tasks for Further Progression', written dialogue with the teacher to show new learning, re-drafts, or written reflection activities.

11. Progress Tracking and Reporting to Parents

There are five 'data capture' points throughout the year at which teachers give a snapshot of the progress that the students have made in their learning within each subject. These data points are at the end of each half term.

As a reflection of the national curriculum changes, we are currently in a transitional phase implementing a new progress tracker.

Subsequent to each data capture, all teachers take part in department-based meetings to identify students that are making below expected progress, or highlight any other students who are not reaching their full potential. Curriculum Leaders then meet with their teams, to plan effective interventions in order to promote progress. These strategies should be disseminated to all.

12. Inclusion

In line with THE ATTIC's Single Equalities Policy, every student is entitled to a positive meaningful learning experience.

Every teacher and all support staff have a responsibility to meet the educational needs of all students. Every teacher and all support staff are responsible for promoting, where relevant, Literacy, Numeracy, SMSC, Growth Mindset, Life Skills and ICT to enhance learning and teaching.

Every student has the right to receive the highest quality education. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that all their educational needs are met.

Ensuring inclusion involves:

- knowing and understanding the needs of every student and how to meet those needs
- setting and explaining suitable differentiated learning challenges
- responding to students' diverse learning needs
- working to overcome potential barriers to learning
 - setting parameters that ensure students feel safe and valued in their environment whether in a pastoral or academic sense, inside or outside the classroom
- good tracking and communication of progress and well timed, precise intervention when progress is not satisfactory
- sharing new information and seeking professional development as, or when, new challenges arise

13. Teaching and Learning Variance at Attic@Dragonfly -

Some variation in the Attic Teaching & Learning Policy has to be made to accommodate the special circumstances surrounding the education unit at Dragonfly.

At Dragonfly pupils are first and foremost in-patients in a CAHMs Tier 4 Mental Health Unit and as such their education, although of importance, is secondary to their well-being and recovery.

When at full capacity twelve pupils can attend education and they are generally KS4 and 5. Health permitting pupils attend the education unit five days a week for ten sessions.

At KS5 pupils follow their college course and do work that has been supplied for them. This work is then returned to the relevant teachers for marking and feedback. Teaching staff at Dragonfly, unless a specialist in a particular subject, assist pupils by suggesting research, reading through draught work and problem solving where possible.

At KS4, again pupils follow their GCSE/Award courses from school with work provided that is then returned for marking and feedback from the relevant teachers – Teaching staff at Dragonfly will help to facilitate their work.

For KS5 and KS4 pupils without an achieved/predicted grade 4 or above in English/Maths will follow the Twelve Step Skills programme in GCSE English/Maths to prepare for their GCSE/Award exams. The marking of this is in line with the Attic Teaching and Learning Policy.

Assessment and feedback for KS4 pupils on the Twelve Step Skills programmes is completed during and at the end of each step with formative assessments on arrival and again when leaving the unit; this is in line with Attic policy but amended to suit Dragonfly pupils.

Given the unique environment at Dragonfly pupils may only be in-patients for matter of a few weeks or several months. Therefore, tracking progress and reporting to parents will have to be judged on each individual case and will only apply to those pupils on the Twelve Step programmes, Pupils with dual registration where work is set and marked by their school will have their own tracking and parent/carer reports. However, Dragonfly will provide school/college and parent/carers with a discharge educational report, to reflect the work pupils have achieved and to suggest targets for moving forward.

To ensure Dragonfly pupils in all key stages are able to access the work they have been sent and that it is being completed, returned and marked, each pupil has a Log and Review booklet. Every Monday work for the week ahead is set out and then reviewed on a Friday. This is completed with a member of staff. Close contact between the unit and the school ensures continuity of learning to assist in the transition from the unit back to school.