



# **TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY**

**Date Issued** May 2017

**Date to be reviewed:** May 2018

## **Aims and Purposes**

Any attempt to raise standards in our school must be focused on the classroom.

Continued and sustained improvement is dependent upon improving the quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis.

Across our school the expectation is that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement.

By adopting a whole school approach to teaching and learning across our school, we aim:

- to provide consistency of teaching and learning.
- to enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible.
- to enable pupils to learn as efficiently as possible.
- to give pupils the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners.
- to provide an inclusive education for all pupils.
- to learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared.

## **Teaching and Learning Principles**

There is no single recipe for improving teaching and learning in our school. However, this policy outlines some of the key elements which are key to raising standards in teaching and learning. It also sets out a broad structure for lessons, based on best practice.

When reading this policy it is important to remember that adopting a broad template for structuring lessons does not preclude:

- Spontaneity
- Creativity
- Imagination
- Individuality

All lessons across our school should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning. New teachers to our school will receive training to ensure they fully understand these elements and to enable them to embed these strategies in their everyday practice.

### **All lessons have clear Learning Objectives:**

- All learning objectives will be skills based and not activity based.
- All learning objectives are written up and shared orally in child friendly language.
- Pupils write the learning objective in their book by the end of Year 2.
- When marking pupils' work, the main focus is on meeting the learning objective.

### **All lessons will have success criteria:**

- All pupils are clear about how they will achieve the learning objective.

- Success criteria is displayed for the pupils to follow during the lesson or generated by the pupils, especially in Upper Key Stage 2.
- Weekly planning includes success criteria for each learning objective.
- Pupils use the success criteria to self-assess their own or their partner's work.
- Pupils are reminded of the success criteria during the lesson – often pupils' work is used to illustrate the success criteria in action.

**All lessons are clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access their learning:**

- All learners are challenged appropriately.
- Planning shows clear differentiation.
- Learning objectives are the same for all pupils. We want all our pupils to access the same learning and it is through the use of materials/apparatus that may differ from child to child.
- Success criteria can also give differentiated steps to success.

**All pupils are actively engaged in their learning:**

- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account pupils' concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods.
- Think/Pair/Share and discussions with a Talk Partner are regular features in all lessons.

**All pupils receive regular and clear feedback which enhances learning:**

- AfL and Effective Marking is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning.
- All pupils are clear about how they need to improve from their wishes or next steps.
- Marking is linked to the learning objective.
- Pupils are given regular time to address issues raised in marking using a green pen.
- Refer to the Effective Feedback and Marking policy for further details.

**Learning is enhanced through the use of ICT:**

ICT is used to enhance learning where ever possible. The use of ICT is highly visible and effective in all teaching and learning contexts across our school and teachers are continually searching for ways to use technology as a learning tool.

**Learning is enhanced through the use of consistent classroom management:**

- Classroom management is designed to minimise the time spent on behaviour management and maximise the time spent on learning.
- Each class teacher will adopt their own behaviour management signals such as clapping, counting down, a phrase that best suits their particular year group.
- Please refer to the Positive Behaviour Management Policy for further details.

**Learning is enhanced through the effective use of additional adults:**

- Additional adults are clearly directed to support learning.
- Learning assistants are fully engaged with pupils during lesson times. They are not photocopying work, sharpening pencils or sticking work in books during learning time.
- They are clear about who they are supporting and why. Planning is shared in advance with learning assistants.

- They sit next to the pupil/pupils they are working with, quietly engaging the pupils, explaining the task or using other resources, e.g. number lines, to facilitate learning.
- They are involved in assessing pupil's understanding, recording observations and feeding assessments to the teacher.

### **A Detailed Guide to our Lesson Structure**

Lessons in our school follow a basic structure made up of:

- **Starter:** recap previous lesson and learning, hook to engage pupils, sharing of learning objective, give learning a purpose and context.
- **Main input:** pupils will receive new knowledge and information.
- **Activity:** pupils will show understanding of their learning
- **Plenary:** learning will be consolidated and evaluated and formulation of next steps.

Precise interpretation of a lesson structure will inevitably be different according to different teaching styles and subject areas. Age, ability, timing of the lesson, subject area and the particular focus for the lesson will all have a significant impact.

Teachers are encouraged to revisit the stages of a lesson structure more than once during the lesson. After a short period of teacher input, pupils may complete a short activity to apply their new knowledge and through the use of mini plenaries. This is an effective way to ensure pupils have a full understanding of their learning.

The structure to a lesson is not always sequential. Review, for example, is not confined to the end of the lessons. Good teachers integrate review into the entire lesson, and are aware that success criteria can only be met if it is referred to and repeated throughout the lesson.

**Teaching and Learning are not the same thing.** Encountering information is not the same as understanding it. While the stages are inextricably linked, they are separate processes. This must be reflected in the lesson.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning.

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Specific Areas
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

Teachers use a range of teaching strategies including: child initiated play, adult directed activities whole class teaching sessions. Teachers are also responsible for setting up a rich and stimulating learning environment that encourage independent play and investigation.

There are 3 stages of planning that are the responsibility of the teacher.

1. Long term planning: These plans show curriculum coverage over all areas of learning and the topics within which they are covered.
2. Medium term plans: These cover a half term period and cover the objectives taught and the ongoing experiences which will be available in the classrooms.
3. Short term plans: These show on a daily/ weekly basis how learning objectives will be taught. They show how staff deployment and how a balance of teaching strategies is being delivered. The needs of specific groups or individuals are highlighted on these plans.

All adults are to make informal observations of children at work and play to contribute towards children's profiles. These can be in the form of short written observations, long narrative videos and photographs which are stored either in children's Special Books or their online Profile (2Simple).

### **Phase One – Overview**

Although this is **relatively short** in duration it includes a number of key features. The emphasis on this phase is;

#### **Creating an appropriate working atmosphere**

Pupils will not learn if they are not in an appropriate state to learn. We use a range of metacognition strategies to establish a climate conducive to learning including:

- Creating a classroom environment that is stimulating, reassuring and organised,
- Being fully prepared for lessons,
- Ensuring resources are prepared and on tables in advance of lessons,
- Other adults to sensitively engage with pupils who are not 'ready to learn'.
- Greeting pupils with a smile!

#### **Linking the lesson to prior learning**

- Linking the lesson to prior knowledge, e.g. reviewing previous lesson;
- Think about the three most important things you learnt in the last lesson – now tell your partner.
- In two minutes, I am going to ask you what you learnt last lesson. You may talk to your partner if you wish.
- Today's lesson is about the water cycle. Jot down on your whiteboards what you already know. Work in pairs.

#### **Providing an overview**

- The brain is more likely to absorb details when it can place them within a wider context. This is often referred to as 'providing the big picture first'.
- For example, placing mathematics in the context its effect on everyday lives, explaining how persuasion is used all around us and where puddles go to are all examples of linking learning with real experience.

#### **Sharing learning objectives with pupils**

Pupils must know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson. For learning objectives to be shared effectively, teachers must:

- Move away from saying ‘Today we are doing’... and instead say ‘By the end of today’s lesson you will all know/be able to/understand...’.
- Make learning objectives skill-specific
- Use child-friendly language – there is little point in sharing learning objectives if pupils don’t understand what you mean.
- Refer to them at the start of the lesson and frequently during the lesson.



### **Triggering the brain**

The brain will tend to notice things if has been primed to look for them. Beginning a lesson by saying;

*‘Today when I am reading I want you to listen out for some really powerful adjectives that you can use in your own writing later on ’*

or

*‘For homework tonight, I am going to be asking you to write down the functions of the different parts of a plant – you will find out what they are in today’s lesson ’*

### **Phase Two – Receiving New Information**

The emphasis in this phase is:

#### **Providing pupils with new information or skills.**

**This is the teaching phase.** Although we want all pupils to understand the information as they encounter it, the emphasis during phase two is on providing the new information. New information is delivered in many ways:

- Teacher input
- Audio-visual aids – e.g. video clips , sounds, pictures
- Diagrams, pictures etc.
- ICT – Internet
- Demonstration
- Modelling
- Books

The quality of the input during this phase will have an important bearing upon the extent to which pupils understand information. While high-quality teacher input does not guarantee understanding, it does make it significantly more likely.

We use a number of techniques in our school to ensure that the quality of input in phase two is kept high.

#### **Periods of exposition are short**

Pupils have limited concentration spans. A widely used and useful rule of thumb is that concentration spans will be about two minutes in excess of a chronological age. Periods of teacher input are therefore kept short.

### **More than one ‘beginning’ is created**

Pupils tend to remember more from the beginning of an experience.

When exposition is chunked into 10-15 minute slots, a number of ‘beginnings’ are created in the lesson.

Make the new start obvious. Use phrases such as, ‘Now we are moving on to ...’ or ‘The next activity we are going to be doing ...’ ‘I want you to move back to the carpet for the next part of our lesson.’

### **The input phase needs to be punctuated with questions**

Although phase two is principally about Teacher Input and delivering new information, it should be punctuated by regular questioning.

Ask regular closed questions during the input. This will keep pupils alert and provide instant feedback as to whether they have heard correctly and have understood – although at a shallow level.

Asking too many open questions during an explanation can easily take a lesson off on inappropriate tangents. It also allows an individual to take the lesson off in a direction that causes other pupils to lose their train of thought.

Ask open questions before and/or after an input. Posing an open question at the start of an explanation will prime the brain to notice detail and begin to form an answer, even at a subconscious level, during the input.

Asking an open question at the end of an input takes the learning into phase three and is designed to develop and assess deeper understanding.

### **The input phase is punctuated with activity (model whatever you want the pupils to do).**

Punctuate the input of new information (phase two) with activities designed to help pupils make sense of it (phase three). This kind of integrated, alternating pattern of ‘phase two, phase three, phase two, phase three’ can often be more effective than an extended period of explanation.

For example, a teacher might be modelling how to write complex sentences. She might ask the pupils to work with a partner to write one together on a mini whiteboard before continuing with review and further instruction.

*New information is presented in several different ways (VAK)*

The fact that people prefer to receive information in different ways demands that information is transmitted in more than one way during phase two. A verbal explanation may well be clear, concise and of high quality. However, two thirds of the class may be working outside of their preferred style or have English as an additional language and struggle to grasp what is being said.

*We aim to make learning multi-sensory so that pupils have opportunities to learn from seeing, hearing and doing.*



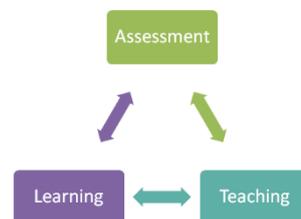
### **Phase Three – processing the information**

The emphasis in Phase Three is:

- developing understanding
- demonstrating understanding
- assessing understanding

*This is the Key Phase*

The extent to which pupils will understand information depends on four factors:



### ***Quality of interactions***

It is adults who help pupils make sense of information. The frequency and nature of interactions between teacher and pupils is highly significant. We develop understanding by:

- Using open ended questions.
- Providing wait time - pupils need time to think through their answers before replying.
- Providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as ‘In two minutes I am going to ask you....’
- Allowing pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups. Pupils then respond with ‘We think that...’
- Ensuring pupils fully understand the question by asking them to say it back or rephrase it.
- Extending and deepening understanding by asking follow-up questions such as ‘What made you think that?’

- Asking pupils to identify three possible answers and then select the best one (so they don't always give you the first answer that pops into their head).
- Scaffolding thinking and answering – for example: 'in 2 minutes I am going to ask you X, but before I do, I'd like you to think about (or talk about) A. Now I'd like you to think about B. Now can you respond to my original question?'

### **Guided Group Work**

Within each lesson, the teacher will be focusing on a particular group of pupils, as identified in the weekly planning. The groups will vary according to need, but over the course of a half term, all pupils will have been part of frequent guided group work directed by the class teacher.

- The purpose of guided group work:
- Stretches the pupils; work selected needs to be challenging (at their level)
- Addresses known barriers or gaps in a group's or an individual's learning
- Gives the teacher a daily opportunity to refine the assessment of a group of pupils in the class
- Gives pupils the opportunity to ask questions specific to their need
- Give the pupils plenty of scaffolded practice on challenging skills

The materials needed for Guided Group work should be specifically prepared, as they are often unique to their needs.

### **Talking and interaction**

At our school we believe that talking and interaction are central to learning. All lessons include planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions and extend thinking. We use a range of Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies.

### **Phase Four – Review**

The emphasis in this phase is:

- Reviewing what has been learned.
- Reflecting on how and why it has been learned.

Review is a key to memory and certainly not confined to the end of the lesson. Good teachers weave review throughout the entire lesson and are constantly referring pupils back to the success criteria of the lesson, and reinforcing prior learning.

Reviewing material is a highly significant part of the learning process, not least because large amounts of information can be forgotten very quickly.

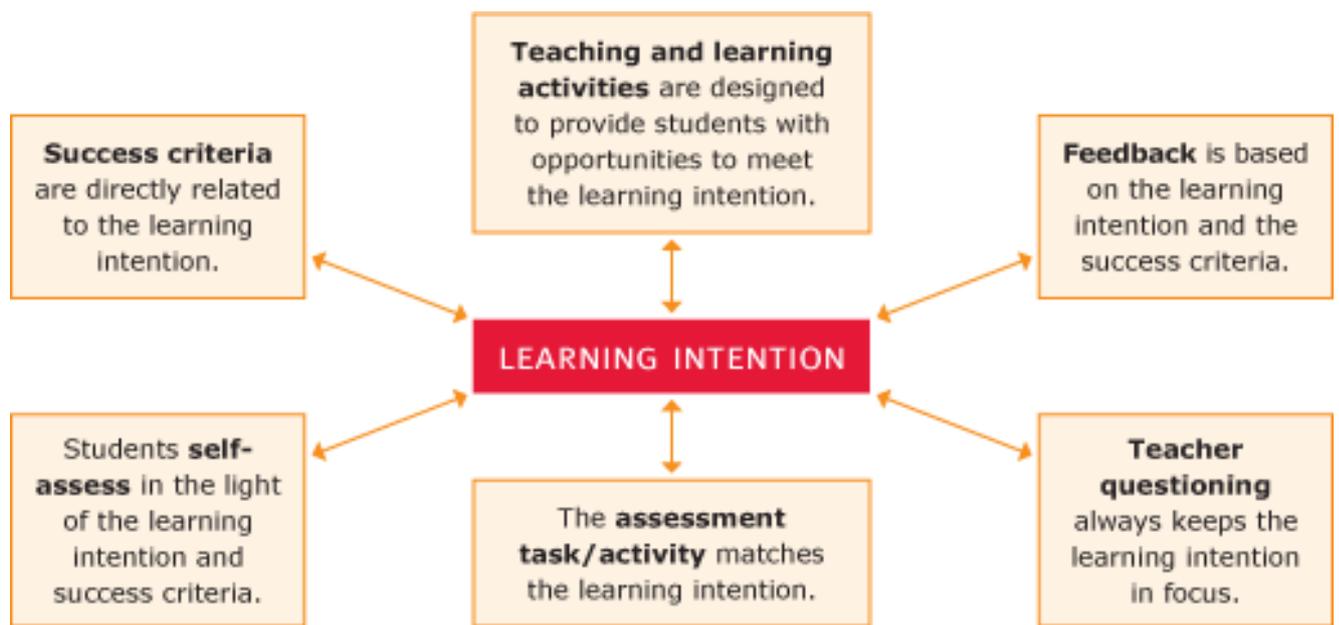
### **Pupils are actively involved**

When teachers summarise what has been learned, the effect on pupils' memories is relatively insignificant. However, when the pupils themselves identify what they have learned as the lesson draws to a close, their memories will be given a significant boost.

*Always refer back to the learning objectives and the success criteria*

Encourage pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what has helped them to learn.  
Use prompts like:

- What did you do today that you found most helpful when you were learning?
- What did you do today that you found less helpful?
- If you had to do the task again, how would you do it?
- If you had to give one piece of advice to someone tackling the same task tomorrow, what would it be?



## Classroom Environments

The surroundings in which pupils learn can greatly influence their academic performance and well-being in our schools. The better our school looks, the more it inspires the people inside it a well-cared for classroom and school can make pupils feel that what they achieve and how they themselves are perceived is important.

In our school, we aim to ensure that all classrooms, group learning areas and whole school areas, are spaces that everyone can use to learn and be proud of.

In our school, we believe that classrooms should be bright, well organised learning spaces. Pupils need to know how to access resources and respect the classroom environment. Different teachers have different likes/dislikes about how to organise their classrooms. However, to ensure a sense of security and consistency across the schools, the points below need to be taken on board in all classes.

- Class rules/code of conduct is on display in all classes. The Stay on Green pocket chart is clearly visible and each class has a time out space.
- Welcome Walls that have a class learning theme and all the members of the class displayed.

- Classrooms are tidy, labelled and organised. Pupils take responsibility for ensuring their classroom is a pleasant and safe place to learn.
- Pupils are taught to respect equipment and resources.
- Basic equipment (pens/pencils/rulers...) is out on tables at all times – pupils do not have to waste time getting rulers/pencils from trays etc. In KS2 reading and spelling books should be on the table at all times.
- All trays are clearly labelled – word processed/not hand written.
- Groupings, e.g. Maths, Foundation, Writing etc are on display in the class.
- Displays are a learning resource – they are not just a reflection of previous learning. All displays are labelled and changed regularly.

This document was approved and adopted by the governing body

Date 18.05.2017

Name of Chair of Governors: George Lopez

Signature of Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'George Lopez', written over a light blue grid background.

**Please see additional policies for guidance**

- Effective Feedback and Marking Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Mathematics
- Science
- Calculation
- Religious Education
- Physical Education
- English
- PSHE
- SRE
- Humanities
- Computing