



# **Teaching and learning policy**

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## Introduction

This policy outlines what we expect to be taking place in classrooms day in, day out. This policy does not seek to replicate any of the expectations outlined in the Teacher Standards (appendix 1) and assumes that those core tenets are met in every lesson. Rather, this policy outlines how we deliver the curriculum and how it will 'feel' in our school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Regretless Curriculum document and Behaviour and Discipline, Marking and Feedback, Homework and Assessment policies.

## Why and how we teach

As a school, we do not simply believe in meeting the objectives laid out in the national curriculum. Instead, we believe that we are developing children's character and preparing them for the next stage of their development. This includes meeting the objectives in the curriculum, but our school life is not dominated by this. In order to guarantee this character development, we as a school community have written core values for development which underpin all learning. Our belief in the need to develop these values are **why** we teach the way we do.

We also recognise that children are not simply empty vessels but need to be a part of the learning process. We therefore ask our pupils, whenever possible, what they want to learn about. This is not simply to decide what the topic will be, but includes modelling enquiry and how to wonder about something, and encouraging deeper questioning as learning progresses. This requires all our staff to value our children's personal interests and ideas and respecting them as a shared-owner of the classroom. These concepts, coupled with our approach to developing our core values, are **how** we teach.

## Core values

These are the core values we develop in our pupils. Anything which takes place in our school should be developing one or more of these values. If it does not, or it contradicts any of these values, we will not take part in it as a school.

- Respect
- Confidence
- Aspiration
- Honesty
- Independence
- Hard work

Teachers should actively plan to develop these core values through the activities they plan for their children as well as through their classroom ethos, systems and practice. The development of these values is held in the same regard as the meeting of the objectives identified in the Regretless Curriculum

## Planning

Children will initially be exposed to a range of stimuli on a theme before the end of a half term. Children will write questions about the stimuli, which teachers will then take and use to form their topic for the half term. This will include a broad, over-arching question into which all other questions will form one small part. Using the curriculum, teachers will then identify objectives which they will meet through the topic and will map out learning trajectories for the half term showing development to the completion of an objective. These will be context less, allowing the questions raised by pupils as they learn to shape and redirect the topic while the learning against the objectives continues. This trajectory map forms our medium term plan.

Short-term, or daily, planning takes the objectives from the medium term plan and ensures teachers consider the activities to be completed and effective differentiation (including for vulnerable groups such as SEN and Pupil Premium) and activity. This planning is for the teacher and should be in enough depth that they can effectively discharge their duties, ensuring all children are learning. It is not a paperwork exercise and it is not for anyone else.

## Assessment and delivery

Teachers are expected to use their professional judgement about how best to deliver material to pupils. We do not believe in a one-size-fits-all method of teaching and do not demand that, for example, every lesson begins with learning intentions being shared or that Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic activities take place every day. Rather, teachers are held responsible for their own pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge and how this is transposed into teaching. Our teachers are best placed to make these decisions and, as professionals, we trust them to do so.

Teachers are expected to have a deep and robust knowledge of the material they are covering as well as a clear and accurate understanding of where the children are (see Assessment Policy); the skill of teaching effectively is knowing how to take knowledge and break it down or present it in such a way that the knowledge can be passed to the learner. How this is approached can not and will not be dictated by the school leadership as we believe that pedagogical content knowledge is based on too many ever-changing variables such as the prior knowledge of the pupils, the needs of the class as a whole or even the pupils' temperament on that day. It is required, however, that teachers give careful consideration to this prior to the lesson through robust planning and through critical reflection post-lesson. All teachers must be able to explain their delivery choices when required to do so.

### **Learning activities**

As children are engaged with changing the direction of their learning, engagement across the school is high. The learning activities across the school will therefore be varied, as the contexts will vary so widely, and expectations will be very high, as children will be striving to answer their own questions and will want to produce the work. There are some subject specific expectations for how we teach (Appendix 2).

As a school, we expect this learning to be captured by the pupils, however the form of this will vary widely. Most work will be completed in written form in pupils' books, however there will be times when capturing learning through displays, multi-media such as still images, video and voice recordings should be employed. Some of the best learning takes place orally or through physical activity, and where the capture of the actual learning is not possible, we aim to record children's reflections on their learning. For example, following learning delivered entirely through discussion and debate, children could record what their thoughts were at the start of the lesson and how and why these changed throughout the debate. It is expected that the overwhelming majority of lessons will have recorded evidence of some form.

Marking and feedback should be purposeful and should not be done simply to meet a requirement. Full details of expectations will be found in the Marking and Feedback policy.

### **Modelling expectations and controlling the culture**

As members of staff in this school we have a shared ownership of the culture of the school. How we treat each other and the pupils will be reflected in how the children interact and behave. Although our Behaviour and Discipline policy outlines how we manage behaviour and ensure that praise and sanctions are fairly meted out, by controlling how we behave, we control the culture of the school.

Our staff therefore treat all pupils with unconditional personal regard, laying aside personal feelings and history and modelling how people should treat each other. This does not mean ignoring poor behaviour or attitudes; we actively challenge this as it undermines *our* culture. Instead, we deal with these events with care and respect, helping the pupil understand the impact of their actions. There are no excuses for poor choices by pupils, and they will be helped to understand this. In the same way, we as staff have no excuse for not modelling expectations or challenging those who threaten our culture of respect and care no matter whether they are staff, pupil or visitor.

### **Professional development**

All teachers have a right to be developed by the school. This development forms part of the appraisal process in school. However, the school also expects that teachers take responsibility for their own professional development through constant critical reflection on their own practice and pedagogy and through the identification of development needs. The expectation is therefore that all staff will engage in frank and honest dialogue about their development needs as they understand that the school leadership is actively on their side and wants them to be the best they can possibly be.



## PREAMBLE

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

## PART ONE: TEACHING

A teacher must:

### 1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

### 2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

### 3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

### 4 Plan and teach well structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

### 5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

### 6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

### 7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

### 8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

## PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.