

# Ashbury Meadow Primary School

## Teaching and Learning Policy



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This teaching and learning policy supports our culture of high expectations and is based on our understanding that high quality teaching has a long term positive impact on pupils' life chances.

### **Our whole school approach to high quality Teaching and Learning:**

- Our decision-making regarding all aspects of teaching and learning is evidence-informed and based on the findings of cognitive science
  - We believe that effective teaching can transform pupils' knowledge, capabilities and beliefs about learning
  - We prioritise continuing professional development to develop staff expertise in teaching and learning so that they are highly knowledgeable about the most effective teaching strategies that can be applied in a range of contexts
  - We all hold consistently high expectations of our pupils and practice and through mutual challenge and support we ensure that it is of a consistently high quality.
  - We expect each teacher to take a full and determined responsibility for the progress of all of the pupils in their class.
  - We expect each teacher to know who their pupil premium funded and vulnerable pupils are and employ targeted approaches to diminish differences rapidly, closing gaps between other pupils within that year.
  - We expect teachers and teaching assistants to develop an outstanding learning environment, in both classes and intervention areas.
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- We understand that how pupils are grouped may impact on pupil attainment, behaviour and motivation and teachers take care to monitor this
  - We believe that prior knowledge plays an important role in how pupils learn; committing some key facts to their long-term memory is likely to help pupils learn more complex ideas and develop their schemas
  - We understand that where prior knowledge is weak, pupils are more likely to develop misconceptions, particularly if new ideas are introduced too quickly
  - We understand that requiring pupils to retrieve information from memory, and spacing practice so that pupils revisit ideas after a gap, are also likely to strengthen recall

- We understand that worked examples that take pupils through each step of a new process are also likely to support pupils to learn well
- We support teaching to be effective by introducing new material in steps, explicitly linking new ideas to what has been previously studied and learned
- We understand that modeling helps pupils to understand new processes and ideas and that good models make abstract ideas concrete and accessible
- We ensure that guides, scaffolds and worked examples can help pupils apply new ideas but should gradually be removed as pupil expertise increases
- We know that questioning is an essential tool for teachers and that they can be used for many purposes, including to check pupils' prior knowledge, assess understanding and break down problems
- We understand that high-quality classroom discussion can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend their vocabulary
- We understand that explicitly teaching pupils metacognitive strategies linked to subject knowledge, including how to plan, monitor and evaluate, supports independence and academic success
- We understand that practice is an integral part of effective teaching, ensuring pupils have repeated opportunities to practise with appropriate guidance and support increases success
- We believe that children learn best when there is consistency and continuity in our approach.

To ensure our expectations are being met throughout the school we monitor teaching and learning through book analysis, lesson observations, learning walks, data analysis, pupil voice and planning analysis in order to plan for staff development.

We use instructional coaching to develop staff at all career stages and work in collaboration with them to identify precise actions to support individual professional development pathways. We also use group instructional coaching as a mechanism to enable teachers to engage with research and engage in professional dialogue about the most effective teaching strategies and how these can be developed within our context - this results in all teachers' commitment to deliberate practice. We ensure that groups of teachers for instructional teaching are selected according to their career stage, from novice to expert teachers, so that coaches provide appropriate depth and sufficient challenge to support their continuing professional development.

### **The purpose of our teaching and learning: pupil progress**

We teach for progress. This means that we work to ensure that all pupils are improving skills, knowledge and understanding across all lessons and activities, both cognitive and non-cognitive.

We apply the principles of cognitive science to ensure that our pedagogical approach is fit for purpose and ensures that learning involves a lasting change in pupils' capabilities, understanding and long-term memory. We use varied retrieval practice and retention strategies to secure knowledge and skills and apply Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction to ensure high quality teaching. Pupils' readiness to learn is supported by high quality differentiation which is matched to pupil's needs and next steps and ensures inclusive practice.

Regular pupil progress meetings support teachers to ensure that all pupils sustain their progress trajectory across time and to identify pupils who are not on track on their trajectory. For these pupils, barriers to learning are identified so that actions can be planned to remediate this.

The progress of vulnerable groups, especially pupil premium funded and vulnerable pupils are always a key focus to ensure that differences between them and all pupils are diminished.

This policy aims to be clear about our agreed view of how we intend to engage pupils in learning. We want our teachers and teaching assistants to be confident in developing their practice so that all pupils receive high quality learning experiences.

## **Core elements of Teaching and Learning**

### **Subject knowledge**

Pupils learn curriculum content best from teachers who have excellent subject knowledge; this ensures that knowledge and skills are imparted accurately. Excellent pedagogical subject knowledge is equally vital to ensure that content is taught in the most appropriate and effective way for the developmental stage of the pupils. We expect teachers to research and develop their subject knowledge where needed and we support teachers by providing links to professional organisations (such as the Historical Association) so that teachers approach their planning from a well-informed and knowledgeable starting point. In addition, curriculum leaders lead curriculum areas of which they have expert subject knowledge and support staff's subject knowledge and pedagogical subject knowledge development through whole school CPD.

It is also an expectation that teachers are knowledgeable about the subject content of what children have learned previously to ensure that learning is built on what has come before, so that pupils' schemas are developed and appropriate links and connections made to current learning, and that current learning provides the foundations for future learning.

### **Planning**

Lesson planning is based on systematic and accurate assessment of pupils' prior learning so that pupils' next steps and progress are effectively planned for. Effective planning ensures that pupils make progress by filling in gaps or moving pupils on and time is not wasted on learning knowledge and skills pupils already have. Planning involves choosing, designing and adapting tasks that will challenge all pupils, whatever the level at which they are working. Core subject policies specify the planning process and expectations. Planning of subjects in the wider curriculum include planning for composite end points including planning for constituent parts to ensure effective sequencing. We plan to ensure that basic skills are applied and consolidated across the wider curriculum and that learning outside the classroom forms an integral part of the planning.

### **Effective teaching practice**

Our teaching practice is based on a valid and research based understanding of the principles of teaching through an engagement with cognitive science and a wide range of educational research. We use research to inform the development of our staff to ensure teaching is of the highest quality. In particular, we have based our practice on Barak Rosenshine's 'Principles of Instruction'.

These principles are:

1. Daily review
2. Present new material using small steps
3. Ask questions
4. Provide models
5. Guide student practice
6. Check for student understanding
7. Obtain a high success rate
8. Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks
9. Independent practice
10. Weekly and monthly review

## **Differentiation**

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and enable their readiness to learn and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- content;
- task;
- relevance;
- resources;
- extension;
- autonomy;
- outcome;
- teacher/adult support.

Differentiated tasks will be detailed in weekly planning in core subjects and medium-term planning in subjects in the wider curriculum.

Pupils on our Special Educational Needs provision map receive quality first teaching and differentiated tasks to meet their specific needs which enable them to be ready to learn and receive suitable challenge for them to progress.

Teachers set group targets in English and Mathematics. This is in addition to the formative assessment targets the teachers communicate to the children on a weekly or daily basis where appropriate.

## **Interventions**

Our choice of interventions is supported by an evaluation of evidence informed interventions and a judgement of their impact on pupil progress, whilst ensuring they best fit the context of our pupils.

We plan interventions that will support pupils and will enable them to make rapid targeted progress and break down their barriers to learning. These are determined by our accurate knowledge of pupils' previous learning and by our high expectations of their progress. Pupils' progress is monitored through pupil progress meetings, so that we can ensure mobility through groups to prevent stagnation. We know the impact that we expect these interventions to have and we evaluate them with regard to the difference they have made to pupils' learning. Not all interventions are academic, pastoral interventions support pupils and their families to ensure they are confident and positive in their attitude towards learning and life skills.

## **Homework**

Evidence from research, including Hattie and the EEF shows the positive impact of homework, especially when used for practice and preparation. We believe it helps them to consolidate and prepare for school learning as well as helping to involve families. Our homework policy outlines the arrangements that we make to plan regular and appropriate homework at each stage of our school. We evaluate the effectiveness of our homework by the impact that it is having on pupils' learning. We use IT to encourage pupils to engage with learning outside of school.

## **Assessment for Learning**

We use a range of techniques to systematically check our pupils' understanding throughout each stage of the lesson. We anticipate the most likely areas of misunderstanding and pre-empt this at the planning stage. It is an expectation that teachers adapt their teaching to address any unexpected misconceptions or difficulties. Daily marking and feedback sheets capture this information and include feedforward notes to adapt subsequent lessons as appropriate. In order to make learners more responsible for their own progress we use both self and peer assessment to evaluate the impact of learning against the success criteria for that lesson. We formally assess pupils to monitor progress and enable leaders to analyse the progress and attainment of different cohorts, in particular pupil premium, and individuals, so that planning and interventions can be tailored to their needs.

## **Marking and feedback**

Staff have collaborated to develop a marking and feedback policy. We have expectations regarding our approach to marking: its frequency; content and depth. (See marking and feedback policy).

We give ongoing oral feedback to individuals and to groups of pupils throughout lessons. Our feedback is focused on what a child has done well and also what they need to do to improve. It is sharply focused on the learning and aptitudes that we want to improve.

The purpose of all our feedback, in marking, in target-setting and orally, is to give pupils precise and motivating information about how well they are doing and what they should do next to improve, as well as modelled examples of how to do that.

## **Outcomes: basic skills, classroom climate, pupil attitudes**

### **Basic skills**

We recognise the centrality to learning of the core basic skills. We have organised our teaching programmes for reading, writing, communication and maths so that there are clear lines of progression; consistent teaching approaches; high expectations of pupils at every stage and a rigorous assessment of pupils' learning and progress to enable the development of mastery in their learning.

We design our whole curriculum to afford every opportunity for pupils to apply and so consolidate these core basic skills. Our expectations of their cross-curricular work are as high as those we hold in subject-specific lessons. We ensure our theme books reflect the basic skills learnt in core lessons and give pupils an opportunity to celebrate other skills and aptitudes developed within school. We value our school grounds, locality and the city of Manchester for the wealth of opportunities to support learning from outside of the classroom and ensure that trips and visitors are used to ensure the curriculum and learning opportunities are enriched and that pupils learn about and develop pride in the place and region in which they live. Through this we also aim to develop pupils' cultural capital.

### **Classroom climate and pupils' attitudes**

All learning spaces are an environment where everyone feels welcome, safe, and able to learn from their mistakes. Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes and positive unbiased relationships are crucial to developing positive learning environments. As a rights respecting school we foster effective relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

We expect pupils to be active participants in their learning and we structure routines and rewards to support them. We want our pupils to show commitment to their learning and we use language that promotes challenge, aspiration and high expectations of pupils. Within the school environment staff actively work to influence pupil's resilience and beliefs about their ability to succeed, by ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to experience meaningful success.