



Linslade Lower School

Teaching and Learning Policy

Governor Approval: June 2023
Review Cycle: Triennial

Policy review chronology:

October 2015	No changes	Approved
March 2019	Homework section updated in line with new practice.	Approved
March 2021	Reviewed following curriculum update	Approved
June 2023	No changes	Approved

1.0 Introduction

Learning is a complex process. At Linslade Lower School we believe it should be dynamic, active and enable pupils to learn through collaboration and exploration. Highly effective teaching enables pupils to do this.

We are aware that pupils need the skills and knowledge to be able to adapt in the fast changing world of the twenty-first century. Therefore we have a flexible but rigorous approach to teaching to ensure that we can meet the needs of the pupils in the most effective way.

2.0 Aims

At Linslade Lower School learning is the focus of our school aims.

We:

- encourage everyone to achieve the very best they can
- foster a love of learning and the skills needed to be a learner for life
- develop the whole child
- provide a well-resourced and stimulating learning environment
- use a creative, engaging curriculum as a means to develop enquiring minds
- keep up-to-date and continually develop our skills as professionals.

3.0 Related Policies and Documents

The policies that have particular relevance to this policy are:

- Behaviour
- Curriculum
- Equality
- Special Educational Needs
- Teachers' Standards (2012)

4.0 Policy Organisation

The policy is organised into the following sections:

- Learning Environment
- Assessment for Learning
- Thinking Skills
- Planning
- Organising Learning
- Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Achievement
- Communication and Reporting Progress and Achievement to Parents

- Homework
- Professional Development
- Resource Requirements
- Policy Dissemination
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Policy Review

5.0 Learning Environment

A high-quality learning environment that is orderly, inclusive, stimulating and well resourced enables children to learn effectively. The learning environment includes the classrooms, corridors, hall and outside areas.

Displays are used throughout the school to promote learning, celebrate achievement and provide information. Displays relate to planned learning and should include children's work as well as learning prompts and information. Displays must be changed regularly. Key stage teams take responsibility for display spaces in the hall and corridors. Displays can be moved from the classroom to these areas so that they can be enjoyed and appreciated by a wider audience. Displays must have a title and where appropriate a label to indicate the relationship to the curriculum. Displays should include both computer generated and handwritten labels and titles. Where appropriate children should also write captions and labels for displays. Consideration must be given to the access needs of pupils; the colour and size of fonts and handwriting is important to assist this. Displays should reflect the breadth of ability and achievement and all pupils should see some of their work represented in displays. To ensure pupils can read and identify displays care must be taken not to over clutter the classroom or individual displays.

Teachers are responsible for organising the furniture within the classroom. It must allow safe movement around the room. Exits and entrances must be kept clear. All pupils should have a named drawer /tray and coat-peg for their belongings. All resources should be stored safely and access provided to those that pupils can use independently. Teachers must report any damaged or broken furniture to the Headteacher; unsafe furniture must be removed immediately.

Resources within the classroom should be attractive and fit for purpose. For example, books should be in good condition and any that are not must be removed; pencils should be sharp and of sufficient length; pens should work and scissors should be sharp. This is not an exhaustive list of resources.

It is important for children to have a sense of ownership of the learning environment. Teachers must establish their expectations for use and storage of resources and routines to assist organisation and tidying. All children must participate in keeping the classroom and other areas tidy, organised and safe. Pupils should be told which resources they can access independently. Time should be spent each lesson and at the end of the day to tidy.

Resources like word mats, vocabulary lists and dictionaries should be available where they are needed (on the tables).

Teachers should plan to use the outside as well as the inside space to enhance the pupils' learning experience.

Timetables will be written each year to allocate time in the hall and ICT suite. If no class is timetabled for a session any teacher may request to use the space.

6.0 Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning encompasses a number of strategies that are essential for effective learning. Assessment for learning has been widely researched and, in short, promotes the notion that pupils learn best when they are informed about and involved in their learning. Assessment for learning underpins all of the learning at Linslade Lower School. Assessment for learning strategies are used age-appropriately.

Assessment for learning states that pupils learn best when:

- they are informed what they are learning
 - therefore an explicit 'learning intention' for the lesson / unit of work is shared with the pupils in 'child speak'. It should be written so pupils can see it, older pupils should write it in their book.
- they know how they can be successful
 - therefore success criteria relating to the learning are shared; wherever possible they should be developed with the pupils.
- links are made to a 'bigger picture'
 - therefore pupils are informed why they are doing that particular piece of learning and how it links to previous learning they have done.
- they are given feedback
 - therefore frequent feedback is given, it should relate to the learning intention and success criteria. It may be oral or written. Feedback is given at appropriate points throughout the lesson as well as in summative marking.

Feedback is sometimes given to the whole class and sometimes to individuals. 'Peer review' is also developed and used. This is when pupils read and comment on each other's work.

- they understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve
 - this links to feedback. It may be oral or written and includes marking comments. Marking comments must relate to the learning intention and should identify what has been done well and what needs to be done to improve. Pupils are encouraged to self –assess against the success criteria and identify strengths and areas for improvement. Wherever possible pupils must be given the opportunity to reflect on feedback and marking and be encouraged to make small amendments.

(See appendix 1 – feedback guidelines).

- questioning is effective
 - therefore teachers ensure they use a balance of question types. Higher order questioning to enable deep thinking and reflection is used. Pupils' awareness and understanding of the different types of question is developed. Teachers must ensure they give pupils sufficient thinking time before a response is required.

7.0 Thinking Skills

The term thinking skills encompasses a wide range of strategies and meanings. Developing thinking skills enables pupils to understand how they think (meta-cognition) and the dispositions and attitudes required to learn effectively (meta-learning).

At Linslade Lower School effective learning is enabled by a wide range of strategies and tools so that pupils can:

- manage information
- manage themselves
- work with others
- be creative
- think
- solve problems
- make decisions
- be effective learners throughout their lives.

The development of thinking skills is embedded into learning rather than being taught in addition to other learning.

We have identified six essential dispositions for effective learning; these are our 'Super 6 learning powers'. They are taught throughout the school and are linked to our certificates in the weekly celebration assembly. (see appendix 2)

8.0 Planning

Planning takes account of statutory curriculum requirements and the pupils' previous achievements and next steps for learning.

Planning is done at three levels:

- Long-term plans provide an overview and outline how the curriculum is divided between the key stages.
- Medium-term plans cover the curriculum for a half term or a term. They are written and adapted by key stage teams.
- Short-term plans cover a session or unit of work for a week. They are written by class teachers using the medium term plan but adapted to meet the particular needs of the groups of pupils within the class.

Planning must be objective led. The planned activities must be well matched to the objective and the needs of the children. As far as possible, activities should include high levels of pupil participation and enable children to be active not passive learners. Plans should include challenge for pupils of all abilities. The elements of assessment for learning should be reflected in planning and opportunities to develop thinking skills should also be included.

It is the responsibility of each teacher to plan for **all** of the pupils in their class. Teachers should ensure that teaching assistants have enough information about the plans to provide effective support.

Teachers are entitled to planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA); this is normally given on a weekly basis and contributes to the time required for planning.

9.0 Organising Learning

To enable the most effective learning we organise learning in a variety of ways. The choice is based on the needs of the pupils, their age and stage of development and the planned learning. Therefore, for different activities the pupils may work as individuals, pairs or as a whole class. They may be grouped by attainment or by mixed ability.

Some decisions about organising learning, for example grouping for a subject across the key stage, are made at school level by the

Leadership Team in partnership with the teachers. Other decisions, for example grouping for a science lesson, are made at class level by the teacher. Decisions are always based on the needs of the pupils. For learning to be effective it is important to have a flexible approach.

Teaching assistants work under the direction of teachers. Therefore, teachers are responsible for identifying how additional adults will provide support in order to enhance learning. Teachers must ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to work with the teacher regularly.

10.0 Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Achievement

Pupil achievement is continuously assessed:

- each day: assessments are made lesson-by-lesson. The assessments are made using observation and by evaluating what pupils say and produce. These assessments are used to adjust lessons in progress, provide feedback to pupils and plan the next stage of learning. Teachers need to make only those notes and annotations that inform future planning.
- at regular intervals, as significant objectives / units of work are completed, teachers must update the relevant assessment criteria on 'Depth of Learning. This is a web based, recording system on which a cumulative picture of achievement is recorded. Analysis of the information will indicate where there are gaps and identify where adjustment to planning and intervention is needed.
- each term: the progress of each pupil is monitored at a pupil progress meeting. In the Foundation Stage this relates to all of the development matters aspects. In key stage 1 and 2 it relates to reading, writing and maths.
- each year: summative information for all pupils is produced. These are based on all of the evidence that has been collected on 'classroom monitor' over the year. In the Foundation Stage this relates to development matters and the Early Years Profile. In key stage one and two it relates to age related expectations for reading, writing and maths.
- to ensure consistency and accuracy, teacher judgments are moderated both in school and, where possible, between schools. Some statutory assessments are subject to external moderation from time to time (this is a statutory function of the Local Authority).

Pupil progress meetings take place each term for the purposes of monitoring attainment and progress. At this meeting each class teacher meets with the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher to discuss each pupil individually. Progress towards end of year age related

expectations is considered. At this meeting pupils requiring additional support or intervention are identified. For those pupils who appear to be making insufficient progress strategies are put into place to 'close the gap'. The progress of particular groups of pupils is also discussed and evaluated; for example, pupils in receipt of pupil premium. As well as progress in reading, writing and maths the wider needs of each child are also considered; for example social, emotional and behavioural development. Consideration is given to the best strategy for meeting these needs and providing support if necessary.

In addition to monitoring how effectively the pupils are progressing in their learning the pupil progress meetings provide an opportunity to evaluate how effectively the teachers are meeting the needs of the pupils and achieving the best possible outcomes.

There are statutory assessments in the foundation stage (year R) and at the end of key stage 1. These are administered and reported in line with the appropriate regulations. The outcomes are analysed and reported to Governors.

The summative results from the end of the year are collated and analysed. The analysis forms the basis of future school improvement. Information is shared with Governors in the Autumn Term.

11.0 Communicating and Reporting Progress and Achievement to Parents

Learning review meetings are held in the Autumn and Spring terms. At these meetings parents can discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. Next steps for learning are shared with parents as are ideas for supporting learning at home.

If parents have concerns about their child's learning or progress they may request a meeting with the teacher at any time. Likewise, if a teacher has concerns they will ask to meet with the parents to discuss the concerns.

Each Summer Term an annual report is sent home for each pupil. An opportunity to discuss it with the teacher is provided. The report covers all of the subjects and a general comment. In reading, writing and maths progress towards end of year expectations is stated. For all pupils an attendance report is provided.

12.0 Homework

When setting expectations for homework we are mindful that people have very different opinions about the value of homework and that

children and their families have busy lives outside of school. The amount of homework and estimate of time to do it therefore has to be reasonable. We are also mindful that children work hard in school each day and need time to relax; many also participate in beneficial sporting and leisure pursuits. Therefore we send home a weekly bulletin that explains what the children have learnt in English and maths and suggests some further learning activities that families may choose to do.

We believe that homework enables parents to participate and further understand the learning their child is doing and can help to consolidate the learning they have done in school.

Homework includes:

- Daily reading practice, this is for all children who have a home reading book. We suggest 10 minutes for reception and key stage 1 and 15 minutes for key stage 2.
- Phonics practice; this is weekly for pupils in reception and may be used in year 1
- Word work: spellings and vocabulary in key stage 1 and 2
- Maths: skills practice, including access to an online times table app
- Individual homework to support intervention strategies

In addition to the weekly bulletin parents are given a curriculum newsletter each term that outlines the topic learning.

13.0 Professional Development

Professional development meetings for teachers are held each week. They focus on teaching and learning and are linked to school improvement and the cycle of the school year.

There are five professional development days (training days) in each academic year. They are attended by all staff and focus on school priorities.

Individual staff also attend a range of training and development courses from other providers. These may focus on a school or individual priority.

Coaching and mentoring are also used from time to time to develop specific skills.

14.0 Resource Requirements

High quality, plentiful and up-to-date resources are required for learning to be effective.

Each year the school staff are asked to specify the resource requirements for their key stage and from this priorities for the budget are established. In addition, the resource requirements for new initiatives are specified in the Improvement Plan so that the budget can be agreed.

School staff are responsible for ensuring resources are used correctly and carefully. Pupils are taught to respect resources.

15.0 Policy Dissemination

This policy will be provided to staff as part of their induction when they start work at school.

At the beginning of each school year staff will be reminded of the content of the policy.

The policy will be available on the school website.

16.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is ongoing.

A wide range of monitoring activities takes place; for example, lesson observations, work scrutiny, learning walks and pupil interviews.

Monitoring is both formal and informal and is carried out by senior leaders and /or subject leaders. A timetable of formal monitoring activities is produced each year.

Monitoring and evaluating outcomes are reported to the Governing Body and form the basis of the school self-evaluation report for Ofsted. Each academic year some of the monitoring activities are benchmarked by the school improvement partner and sometimes other consultants.

17.0 Policy Review

This policy is reviewed triennially.

Appendix 1.

Guidelines for feedback (including marking).

Feedback can be oral or written. The purpose of feedback is to inform children what has been done well and what more can be done to improve. In setting out guidelines we are mindful that feedback should be timely, useful and age appropriate. We are aware that feedback has the greatest impact when it is given at the point of learning.

Feedback:

- must be age appropriate. This means that young children will receive verbal feedback. As children get older and can read more the amount and complexity of written feedback will increase;
- should relate to the learning intention and success criteria;
- should be given at appropriate points in the lesson as well as summatively;
- should make it clear what has been done well and what needs to be done to improve further; it should use the imperative (do this);
- written feedback should be proportionate and focus on the most important aspects. It is not possible or desirable to comment on every aspect of every piece of work;
- should include spelling corrections for those words that the child should be expected to know (i.e words they have been taught previously). In key stage 2 words that have been taught but are consistently spelt incorrectly should be included with homework;
- where there is written feedback children **must** be given time to 'reflect and correct';
- the minimum requirement for detailed written marking is once per week in maths and once per unit of work in writing;
- some work will not be marked, instead teachers will acknowledge they have seen it by initialing it;
- staff will use agreed annotations to record support and feedback given;
- celebratory comments such as good, well done, try harder are unhelpful and should be avoided.

Annotations:

vf	verbal feedback given
I	Completed independently
G	Guided Learning
S	Supported Learning

Appendix 2
Super six learning powers.

Commitment	Determination	Creativity	Collaboration	Resourcefulness	Reflection
• Being ready to learn.	• Thinking 'I can'	• Imagining.	• Learning from each other.	• Choosing the best tool.	• Using feedback to improve
• Always doing your best.	• Having a go.	• Being curious.	• Supporting each other.	• What do I know?	• Learning from mistakes
• Being prepared.	• Not giving up.	• Asking questions.	• Sharing ideas.	• Where can I find out?	• What have I learned?
• Concentrating.		• Trying new things.			• What could I do differently next time?
• Managing distractions.		• Taking risks. • Thinking 'what if....'			