



Teaching and Learning Policy

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how we'll create an environment at our school of high expectations where all students learn best and love to do so
- Ensure all pupils are challenged
- Summarize expectations to make sure all staff have clarity and understanding about what excellent teaching and learning looks like across the school.
- Ensure consistency of approach across the school.
- Ensure all members of school community recognize the importance of excellent Teaching and Learning and a robust curriculum is our most powerful tool to achieve excellent inclusion and equality across the school.
- Ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge to identify gaps in students' learning and to address this through their teaching.

Our Vision, Values and Ethos:

'Our vision is to empower everyone to be brilliant every day, releasing their inner superhero so that they can flourish and thrive'.



Quality of Education

Expertly teach an ambitious knowledge-rich curriculum that inspires and fosters a love and thirst for learning. Supporting all pupils to excel and ensuring outcomes are consistently strong throughout the school.



Responsibilities

Teaching and learning in our school is a shared responsibility, and everyone in our school community has an important role to play.

Teachers at our school will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards
- Ensure that they provide a knowledge rich curriculum for all pupils
- Follow the expectations as set out in this policy
- Engage in regular CPD and research to ensure their teaching and learning practices are up-to-date with the latest educational theory and practice
- Provide an inclusive teaching and learning environment with high expectations for all pupils including those with SEND and the disadvantaged pupils.
- Update parents/carers on students' progress through termly reports on progress and yearly parent/carer consultation evenings.

Support staff at our school will:

- Know students well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs
- Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness
- Engage in regular CPD and research to ensure their teaching and learning practices are up-to-date with the latest educational theory and practice
- Meet the expectations set out in this policy.

Subject Leaders will:

- Help to create well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum that build knowledge and skills
- Ensure that rich knowledge is specified, well sequenced in a way that allows students to make good progress and taught to be remembered.
- Use their budget effectively to resource their subject, providing teachers with necessary resources for learning
- Continually drive improvement in their subject, working with teachers to identify any challenges
- Sequence the key knowledge in their subject to allocate time for students to achieve breadth and depth, fully understand the topic and demonstrate excellence
- Monitor their subject using a range of methods to understand the strengths and development points of their subject.
- Create an annual action plan for their subject to identify the key areas for development.
- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice



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Senior leaders at our school will:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone
- Hold staff and students to account for their teaching and learning
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across school
- Manage resources to support high-quality teaching and learning
- Provide support and guidance to other staff through coaching and mentoring
- Lead and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Promote team working at all levels
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly

Governors at our school will:

- Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to teaching and learning
- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies on students' progress
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold school leaders to account for its implementation
- Regularly come into school and liaise with subject leaders to understand developments within the curriculum, and with teaching and learning strategies.



Planning

Planning is a process not a product. It has one purpose; to enable high quality delivery which enables all students to learn. All teachers need to be clear and precise about the knowledge and skills they want students to learn in every lesson. Planning is about hard thinking, not form filling. Teachers should spend time thinking about what they want students to learn first before they give consideration to what you want them to do. The questions teachers need to ask when planning a lesson are:

1. Where are the students starting from?
2. What previous learning do you need to activate and retrieve?
3. Where do you want them to get to?
4. How will you know when they are there?
5. How can you best help them get there?
6. How will I ensure the progress of all pupils?

Learning Objectives/WALTs

It is important that teacher, students, support staff are all clear about the key learning that will take place in a lesson. In EYFS and KS1, this is in the form of a WALT (We are learning to...) and in KS2 the children have clear Learning Objectives (LOs). Teachers should make learning objectives explicit to students, so that all students are able to explain what the key learning of the lesson is. WALTs and LOs are sometimes broken down into smaller steps with the use of success criteria.

Long term planning

Subject leaders have carefully devised their long term plans for their subject where key knowledge is specified and sequenced effectively to ensure that it is taught to be remembered by pupils. Year teams then use this long term plan to plan out the academic year. Teachers block foundation subjects to ensure that the children can be fully immersed in the learning. Because of this, subjects like History, Geography, Science, Art and Design and Technology, are not taught weekly but are taught as a clear block over the course of a half term. When planning a lesson, teachers should be clear where this fits into their subject's overall curriculum sequence and use the long term plans developed by subject leaders. Teachers will know what prior knowledge needed to be learnt before a lesson is taught, and when they will retrieve the key learning of a lesson in future lesson. Where the children don't have this prior knowledge due to the infancy of knowledge rich curriculum, teachers will be proactive in teaching the children the knowledge required to access the new learning.



Short term planning

Teachers are expected to produce clear lesson plans using the school's agreed proformas to ensure that key learning is specified and all pupils needs are catered for. This should be given to support staff in good time so that they are able to prepare fully for the lesson.

Inclusion

At Firfield, we are an inclusive school where every child is entitled to access a knowledge rich curriculum. Knowledge of the students, their prior attainment and specific needs, is a key part of planning. Quality first teaching is the first wave of intervention for meeting the needs of SEND students. Differentiation should be planned over time to ensure a quality first approach which meets the needs of all students and groups and maximises the use of any additional adults in the room.

Teaching

"Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better." (Professor Dylan Wiliam)

Teachers must be explicit about the key knowledge and vocabulary that all students must learn. Students must know the knowledge and key skills you want them to learn and the language they are expected to understand and use. We are all teachers of literacy. The quality of both students' and teachers' language, through instructions and questioning, are significant determinants of progress. Key vocabulary is identified and sequenced by subject leaders to make sure the children build a large schema of knowledge.

Responsive Teaching

Teachers should ensure that learning has stuck, by regularly checking for understanding. Teachers understand that if learning is not committed from the short term memory to the long term memory and regularly retrieved to strengthen the memory than knowledge will be forgotten (The Forgetting Curve). Teachers are aware of the difference between performance and learning, and know that learning is a change to the long term memory. All teachers should confidently and accurately use teaching techniques to gather a secure overview about whether the key learning has actually been learnt. If learning is not yet secure for students, the lesson should be adapted or retaught.



For responsive teaching, teachers can use:

Questioning

Effective teachers ask a large number of questions skilfully, as questioning is our main tool to probe, check and extend student understanding. Teachers should ask lots of questions, to lots of students, and then use what they learn from this process to adapt and reshape teaching within and between lessons. The majority of questions should be done through cold calling, with targeted questioning used to support and challenge students. Whole class responses to questioning can be done effectively with mini whiteboards, hand gestures etc.

Retrieval Practice and Multiple Choices Quizzes (MCQs)

Retrieval is a learning strategy that should be used regularly in lessons to support students with retrieving material that they have previously learnt from their long-term memory. It should be low stakes, completed without access to notes and used in a spaced manner. Children and teachers can refer back to knowledge organisers and knowledge mind maps to support them to retrieve key information. Retrieval practice is built into the start of most lessons so that the children can help activate previously taught knowledge and to recap prior knowledge needed for today's lesson and support teacher with understanding prior learning of the class.

Use effective feedback

Feedback exists in many forms (e.g. teacher marking of exercise books, whole class marking sheets, verbal feedback, peer and self-assessment), but what matters is what students do with it.

Effective feedback should:

- Be frequent and timely
- Preferably at the point of teaching – immediate feedback
- Be specific and focused on the most prominent areas to improve.
- Be accompanied by support in how to be successful and the next step



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Marking and assessment (see Feedback and Marking Policy for more details)

Marking and assessment have two purposes.

1. It allows students to get feedback which they act on to make progress over time.
2. It informs a teacher's future planning and teaching

Effective marking should be meaningful, manageable and motivating for the recipient whilst simultaneously being manageable and sustainable for the teacher. Marking must be primarily formative, may be selective, and be clear about what students must act upon to improve their work.

The Learning Environment

In order for there to be excellent learning behaviour, there needs to be the right classroom conditions, where all students feel safe, supported and valued. We have 3 school rules; Be ready, be respectful and be safe.

At Firfield, we use SLANT, STEPS and SHAPE to model expected learning behaviours. The expected learning behaviours at Firfield are explicitly displayed in all classrooms and shared areas. They are regularly taught and form part of the every day school vocabulary.

Homework

At Firfield, we set weekly homework which will support students to further develop their learning outside of the classroom. It will be planned, meaningful and set in accordance with the Homework Policy (see homework policy)

Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

We will monitor teaching and learning across the school to make sure that all our students make the best possible progress from their starting points. This will be led by school leaders and subject leaders, and overseen by the school governors.

Aims of monitoring and evaluation:

- To make secure judgements of teaching and learning across the school
- To monitor and evaluate the progress of students
- To evaluate the performance of individual teachers against the Teacher Standards and Great Teaching Toolkit to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained.



To identify training needs across the teaching and support staff and drive the CPD programme, SLT and subject leaders will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on student's learning through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Book scrutinies
- Review of pupil progress meetings
- Gathering input from pupil voice and teacher questionnaires

Continuing Professional Development

"Be the best you can until you know better, and when you know better, do better and be better". Maya Angelou

All staff at Firfield should engage with high quality researched based CPD and to be open minded, reflective and proactive at continually trying to improve their teaching practice. Teaching and Learning CPD will be focused around what will make the biggest impact to teachers and students, and staff will be given time to work collaboratively in subject specific teams to implement it. The aim is to ensure all CPD is embedded, reviewed and evaluated.

CPD at Firfield is:

- Focused on Quality First Teaching
- Underpinned by the Teaching Standards
- Developmental
- Research Informed
- Personalised to the needs of individual teachers and the needs of the pupils

Written by: Adam Thurgood, Deputy Headteacher
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Ratified by Governors:
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Signed: