

SHEFFORD LOWER SCHOOL

Learning and Teaching Policy



Policy date & Author	Staff adoption	Governor ratification	Review date
October 2021 Head teacher	November 2021	November 2021	September 2024

1. **This policy should be read in conjunction with the:**
 - a. Marking and Feedback Policy;
 - b. Assessment Policy;
 - c. Expert Learner Policy;
 - d. SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) Policy.

2. **Rationale**
 - a. At Shefford Lower School we want children to develop a love of learning and to make excellent progress because they receive the best teaching. Children will be engaged, enthusiastic and curious. They understand that learning starts from a position of not knowing or having already developed a skill and they will confidently approach challenges and new experiences with determination, enquiry and perseverance.
 - b. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - i. Create a common understanding of what excellent learning looks like in order that teaching is most effective;
 - ii. Define the key aspects of excellent learning and teaching;
 - iii. Be a support tool for school self-evaluation so that our own effectiveness is monitored and children's learning is enhanced.

3. **Outstanding teaching should promote children's sense of achievement, their engagement and their progress.**
 - a. It should involve:
 - i. Designing opportunities for learning that stretch and challenge all children;
 - ii. Fostering a love for learning;
 - iii. Planned opportunities for assessment;
 - iv. Teacher's responsiveness to assessment of learning within lessons;
 - v. The mental agility to provide support and challenge when needed;
 - vi. The right conditions for learning, based on evidenced pedagogy;
 - vii. Classroom, community, collaborative and personalised learning;
 - viii. Learning to Learn – developing children's skills for learning (e.g. listening, questioning, autonomy);
 - ix. Progression in key aspects of learning.

4. **What does outstanding teaching, with a focus on learning, look like?**
 - a. An effective lesson that is accessible to all children in the class should have the following features:
 - i. Teachers are determined that children achieve well, encourage children to try hard, recognise their efforts and ensure they take pride in all aspects of their work;
 - ii. The learning objectives and success criteria should be shared with the children so that they know what they are doing and why they are doing it. Children will be encouraged to self evaluate and peer evaluate in so knowing;
 - iii. The children should have the opportunity to select their own starting points and learning aims for the lesson, largely guided by the teacher in the early years and year 1 and becoming increasingly independent in KS2;
 - iv. The lesson should be flexible and should be responsive of the children's learning needs. Teachers systematically and effectively check children's understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene (to address misconceptions, support or extend learning) and act quickly with notable impact on learning and progress for all children;
 - v. Teachers provide adequate time for practice to embed children's knowledge, understanding and skills securely; explicit links will be made across the curriculum;
 - vi. There should be the opportunities for self-assessment and/or peer assessment so that children know their next steps, at stages within the lesson;
 - vii. Lessons are differentiated so that there is appropriate challenge for all;

- viii. Teachers use well-judged teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed, timely support and intervention, match children's abilities accurately;
- ix. A further challenge (e.g. *The Big Question/Rocket Step*) is always planned for those children who have achieved the most challenging step in a lesson;
- x. Groupings should be diverse and meet the learning needs of the children: whole class, small groups, similar or mixed ability groups, pairings and individual working;
- xi. Enthusiastic and creative teaching where there is a good pace of learning;
- xii. Teachers have deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach;
- xiii. Teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure children are engaged in learning and generate high levels of commitment to learning across the school;
- xiv. Independence is encouraged and learners have opportunities to make choices and think for themselves, including open-ended and problem-solving activities;
- xv. Thinking skills are taught and opportunities are designed to put them into practice, helping children to establish metacognitive strategies;
- xvi. Children are given the opportunity to raise and answer questions and show their skills in a variety of ways;
- xvii. Positive feedback is used to reinforce good learning and behaviour for learning;
- xviii. Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure children make significant and sustained gains in their learning;
- xix. Children are encouraged to respond to the feedback they are given;
- xx. Teachers use questioning highly effectively and demonstrate understanding of the way pupils think about the subject content – an appendix to planning using the questioning matrix is sometimes used;
- xxi. Teachers provide opportunities for children to develop their language and express their ideas in a way that impacts on their achievements across the curriculum. This includes making links for later learning, or drawing upon prior learning;
- xxii. There are high expectations of learning behaviours and achievement;
- xxiii. Teachers plan lessons very effectively making maximum use of lesson time and coordinating lesson resources well;
- xxiv. Subject content is introduced progressively and constantly demands more of children. Teachers identify and support any pupil who is falling behind and enable almost all to catch up;
- xxv. Children who have easily grasped their learning are quickly identified and provided with extension opportunities that encourage further or deeper learning;
- xxvi. Respect for all contributions from adults and children alike;
- xxvii. Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are embedded exceptionally well across the curriculum. Expectations are the same across subjects;
- xxviii. Phonics teaching is highly effective in enabling younger children in their reading and writing across the curriculum.

5. What does an effective learning environment look like?

- a. An effective learning environment can be inside or outside and has the following features:
 - i. There are exceptionally positive relationships between all adults and all children, built on trust and respect. This is the ethos of Shefford Lower School and crucial to children's development;
 - ii. All learners are provided with an education matched to their individual abilities;
 - iii. Teachers have access to excellent subject knowledge and mental agility to further extend children's thinking and learning;
 - iv. Lessons are motivating and engaging, ensuring that every child is stretched, using different learning approaches as appropriate;
 - v. Learners are inspired, encouraged and challenged to question, speculate and hypothesise;
 - vi. Classroom and table layout is safe and promotes learning so children can move around safely, see central areas and work collaboratively;
 - vii. Rules, rewards, targets and values are clearly displayed and accessible;
 - viii. There is promotion of a safe learning culture where everyone has a go and mistakes are recognised as learning opportunities;
 - ix. Resources are well maintained, organised, respected, relevant and accessible;
 - x. Displays are interactive and stimulating. They value the work of all children, promote language, support children's learning across a range of curriculum areas and are clearly labelled with an objective and key questions/vocabulary.

6. What does excellent learning look like?

- a. We want all our children to be successful learners who demonstrate the following characteristics:
 - i. Achievement
 - 1. Children love the challenge of learning and are resilient to failure;

2. Make good progress related to age and ability, and to ensure gaps in learning are rapidly caught up;
 3. Work at an appropriate level;
 4. Connect to, and build upon what they know;
 5. Acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding;
 6. Review and improve their work;
 7. Progress from simple to more complex thinking and action.
- ii. Active Learning
1. Work productively at an appropriate pace;
 2. Show high levels of effort and interest;
 3. Make connections;
 4. Generate and test out ideas and hypotheses;
 5. Develop a range of strategies for problem solving;
 6. Critically evaluate and respond to information.
- iii. Developing independence
1. Are clear about what is to be achieved;
 2. Manage own work and can get 'unstuck' through problem solving;
 3. Ask when they do not understand;
 4. Monitor and self correct;
 5. Initiate and extend learning activities;
 6. Seek out and use information sources;
 7. Give opinions and expect views to be valued, conversely value the views of others;
 8. Develop skills for learning tools such as ICT;
 9. Evaluate and reflect upon their learning and achievement.
- iv. Working co-operatively
1. Behave well;
 2. Cooperate in pairs and groups;
 3. Contribute ideas and listen to and learn from others;
 4. Turn take and compromise;
 5. Support each other respectfully resolving conflicts and finding solutions;
 6. Act as leaders.
- v. Positive attitudes, motivation and enjoyment
1. Children are curious, interested learners who seek out and use new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills;
 2. Show interest and enjoy the challenge and success of new learning;
 3. Concentrate and follow through tasks;
 4. Use time well;
 5. Try to learn from mistakes and strategies that fail;
 6. Respond well to encouragement, feedback and constructive criticism.

7. Learning impact can be seen through:

- a. Children thrive in lessons and also regularly take up opportunities to learn through extra-curricular activities, They are eager to know how to improve their learning, and they capitalise on opportunities to use feedback, written or oral, to improve. The development of skills for learning: thinking, reasoning, questioning, hypothesising, experimenting, applying knowledge, skills and understanding to new contexts, researching, discovery and recording.

8. Supporting and Extending Learning

- a. The school provides a whole range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils and will endeavour to provide activities that enable our most able pupils to extend and challenge their skills. Whole school strategies include:
 - i. Differentiation by accessing the whole curriculum to the learning needs of the individual e.g Steps To Success;
 - ii. Enrichment and extension activities which add breadth and depth to the curriculum e.g the big question/rocket step;
 - iii. Independent projects and activities, such as passion projects;
 - iv. The encouragement and celebration of special abilities and individual achievements school newsletters, musical productions, sports events, music/class assemblies where children are

12. Evaluation

- a. The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team who will evaluate developments in this area and identify any action points on the school improvement plan. The policy will be reviewed every year by staff and governors.