

Heather Primary School Teaching and Learning Policy



This teaching and learning policy outlines how we work to ensure that provision in our school meets the Ofsted criteria for good and outstanding.

Our teaching

We believe that children learn best when there is consistency and continuity in our approach. We know the characteristics of good and outstanding teaching. We work to ensure that our teaching is good and that we are each able to produce examples of outstanding teaching.

We expect each teacher to take a full and determined responsibility for the progress of all of the pupils in their class. We expect teachers to have consistently high expectations of all pupils in all areas of their learning and school-life.

We communicate these expectations clearly to pupils.

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.

We recognise the need for consolidation and practice, but we are vigilant in our avoidance of tasks that involve unnecessary repetition or low levels of challenge. We monitor and respond to the progress of all groups of pupils including those with SEN.

Six core elements of our provision

1. Subject knowledge

We believe that children learn best when teachers are well-informed, knowledgeable and confident about what they are teaching. Our curriculum planning; our use of subject leaders; our CPD programme and our staffing patterns ensure that all learning is led by staff with good subject knowledge.

2. Planning

Our planning is based on systematic and accurate assessment of our pupils' prior learning. We plan teaching strategies carefully, creatively and imaginatively, based on our knowledge of our pupils' needs. We choose, design and adapt tasks that will challenge all pupils, whatever the level at which they are working. We avoid unnecessary repetition for children.

3. Interventions

We plan targeted interventions that will support pupils and will move them on in their learning. These are determined by our accurate knowledge of pupils' previous learning and by our high expectations of their progress. 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.

4. Homework

We recognize the importance of pupils learning at home. We believe it helps them to consolidate and extend 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.

5. Assessment for Learning

We listen, observe and question groups and individuals carefully. We reshape tasks and explanations in order to improve learning. Our responses are timely and relevant. We anticipate the most likely areas of misunderstanding and we prepare planned interventions and support that will address these. However, we are also ready to adapt our approach spontaneously when we meet unexpected misconceptions or difficulties.

6. Marking and feedback

We assess progress regularly. We discuss assessments with pupils so that they know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. We plan regular routines for pupils to respond to marking, so that it improves their learning.

We give ongoing oral feedback to individuals and to groups of pupils throughout lessons. Our feedback is more often positive than negative. 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.

Outcomes: basic skills, classroom climate, pupil attitudes

Basic skills

We recognise the centrality to learning of the core basic skills.

We have clear teaching programmes for reading, writing, communication and maths which help pupils make good progress in these areas. In addition, we have designed opportunities in our wider curriculum that allow pupils to develop and apply a range of basic skills.

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 use time very carefully, minimising waste and taking every opportunity to practise and reinforce core basic skills.

Classroom climate

Through careful planning, good teaching and good relationships, we ensure that our pupils are enthusiastic and are motivated to participate. 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. We give positive feedback when we see examples of this and we take measured and thoughtful action when it is absent.

Pupil attitudes

We are developing the aptitudes of resilience, confidence and independence. We ensure that the tasks we choose give regular opportunities for pupils to develop these aptitudes. We explain their importance to learning. We notice and comment positively when pupils demonstrate these aptitudes and we model them in our own actions. We work with individual pupils to build these aptitudes where they are lacking.