



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

September 2021

REVIEW DATE:	September 2023	
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STATUS:		

Sandal Magna Teaching and Learning Policy

Abbreviations within the document:

WALT	We are learning to
WISH	What I should have
ICT	Information Communication Technology
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
INSET	In-Service Training
SMT	Senior Management Team

Introduction

Any attempt to continue to raise standards in our school must be focused on the classroom. Continued and sustained improvement is dependent upon sustaining the high quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis.

Across our school the expectation is that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement.

We expect every teacher to be a good teacher – no child deserves less.

By adopting a whole school approach to teaching and learning across our school, we aim:

- to provide consistency of teaching and learning across our school
- to enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible
- to enable children to learn as efficiently as possible
- to give children the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners
- to provide an inclusive education for all children
- to learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative approach, where good practice is shared

There is no single recipe for improving teaching and learning in a school. However, this policy outlines some of the **key elements** which are key to raising standards in teaching and learning.

Key elements and principles of teaching and learning at Sandal Magna – a practical guide

All lessons across our school should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning. New teachers to our school will receive training to ensure they fully understand these elements and to enable them to embed them in their everyday practice.

All lessons have ... *clear learning objectives*

- Learning objectives are shared orally and displayed (as a 'WALT' – 'we are learning to')
- All learning objectives are written up and shared orally in child friendly language
- Learning objectives are not muddled up with the context of the lesson
- Objective can be related back to the national curriculum
- The WALT is written or stuck into children's books

For learning objectives to be shared effectively, teachers must:

- Move away from saying 'Today we are doing' ... and instead say 'By the end of today's lesson you will all know/be able to/understand...'
- Make learning objectives specific
- Use child-friendly language – there is little point in sharing learning objectives if children don't understand what you mean
- Write them down
- Refer to them: at the start of the lesson, during the lesson and during the plenary
- Children must know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson.

All lessons have ... *well planned success criteria*

- All pupils are clear about how they will achieve the learning objective (WALT)
- The success criteria for the lesson will be displayed for the children to follow during the lesson or drawn up with the children (to be written and displayed as a 'WISH' – 'what I should have')
- Weekly planning includes success criteria/WISH for each learning objective
- Children use the success criteria/WISH to self-assess their own or other children's work
- Children are reminded of the success criteria/WISH during the lesson – often children's work is used by the teacher to illustrate the success criteria/WISH in action

All lessons are ... *clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning*

- All learners are challenged appropriately
- Planning shows clear differentiation
- A range of learning styles are catered for through a VAK approach (Visual, Audio, Kinaesthetic)

All pupils are ... *actively engaged in learning and work co-operatively*

- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account children’s concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods
- Opportunities to *Think/Pair/Share* and discussions with a *Talk Partner* are regular features in all lessons. Pupils are trained to use appropriate body language when engaged in discussion with a partner
- Mini whiteboards, jotting pages and remember books are used for short bursts of activity, to develop understanding and to ensure children are active and engaged during the lesson
- Visuals, artefacts, auditory input are all used creatively as a way to enhance learning
- Children help and encourage each other
- Everyone participates
- Children explain their ideas clearly and in full sentences.

We believe it is important for pupils to talk during lessons.

When we talk we do more than articulate our current level of understanding. The very act of talking forces us to organise our thoughts and so deepens understanding. It is partly the reason why we remember so much of what we teach to others.

Learning is enhanced through ... *effective use of questioning*

It is adults who help pupils make sense of information. The frequency and nature of interactions between teacher and pupils is highly significant. We develop understanding by:

- Using open ended questions
- Providing wait time - pupils need time to think through their answers before replying.
- Providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as ‘*In two minutes I am going to ask you...’*’
- Allowing pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups. Pupils then respond with ‘*We think that...’*’
- Ensuring pupils fully understand the question

All pupils receive regular and clear ... *feedback which enhances learning*

- Assessment for learning is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning
- All pupils are clear about how they need to improve
- When marking children’s work, the main focus is on meeting the child’s WALT, WISH or targets. Evidence is highlighted, or commented on
- Marking identifies the next step in learning (using prompts)

- Pupils are given regular time to address issues raised in marking

For more information on our curriculum, please see our Marking and Feedback Policy (October 2019).

Learning is enhanced through ... *the use of IT*

IT is used to enhance learning when appropriate. Although IT is often used at the start of lessons to engage children and in the plenary to consolidate learning, it can be used during the lesson as an aid to learning (e.g. laptops or iPads). The use of iPads are carefully woven within teaching and learning at our school to help children ‘interrupt the forgetting’ as they are able to scan QR codes attached to videos within their books to remind them of key learning or vocabulary from the previous lesson(s).

Learning is enhanced through the use of ... *effective behaviour management*

Effective, positive behaviour management is used to foster a positive learning environment in the classroom.

For further details, please refer to our Behaviour Policy (October 2019).

Learning is enhanced through the ... *effective use of additional adults*

- Additional adults are clearly directed to support learning
- Teaching assistants are fully engaged with pupils on the carpet and tables during lesson times
- They are clear about *who* they are supporting and *why*
- Planning is shared in advance with teaching assistants
- They sit next to the pupil/pupils they are working with, quietly engaging the pupils, explaining the task or using other resources, e.g. number line to facilitate learning
- They are involved in assessing pupil’s understanding and feeding back to the teacher
- Teaching assistants to annotate in books to indicate support (*see Marking Policy*)

Learning is enhanced through ... *the effective use of a plenary and mini plenaries*

Review what has been learned

Reflect on how it has been learned.

Reviewing learning is a key to memory and not confined to the end of the lesson. Teachers review throughout the entire lesson and constantly refer students back to the success criteria of the lesson, reinforcing prior learning. Making links to future learning is also essential and expected in every lesson.

Encourage pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what has helped them to learn. Use prompts like:

- What did you do today that you found most helpful when you were learning?
- What did you do today that you found less helpful?
- If you had to do the task again, how would you do it?
- If you had to give one piece of advice to someone tackling the same task, what would it be?

Learning is enhanced through ... *a great classroom environment*

Across our school we aim to ensure that all classrooms, group learning areas and whole school areas are spaces that everyone can use to learn and be proud of.

We change working wall displays regularly and our Foundation subject boards (which are within and outside the classroom) once a half term so it reflects the units studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. We use displays as learning prompts for the children. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and that an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources, which results in high-quality work by the children.

All classes across the school should have:

Working walls

Every class should have a working wall for English and Maths. This should reflect the work currently being studied in each of the subjects. It should include:

- Age appropriate learning resources
- Key vocabulary
- Visuals and artifacts to stimulate thinking.

Well-labelled and neatly organised resources

Classroom resources should be well-organised and clearly labelled. Children should know where to find the resources they need for an activity. This will help to foster independent learning skills.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- group work;

- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- watching television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

Our Curriculum

When we are teaching, we focus on motivating all the children, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the National Curriculum 2014 to help plan our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school, and details what is to be taught to each year group.

When tailoring the curriculum, we carefully considered what the needs of the children and community in which we serve. At Sandal Magna Community Academy, we aim to ensure that all children leave our care with 6 'Key Habits' that will make them successful for life. These key habits are taught throughout all subject areas and aid planning.

Our Key Habits are as follows:

1. Awareness
2. Curious
3. Perseverance
4. Creative
5. Making links
6. Collaboration

For more information on our curriculum, please see our Curriculum Policy (September 2021).

Assessment and Planning

Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with SEND needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's One Page Profile. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way in which we assess the children's work. We evaluate all lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching.

For more information on our curriculum, please see our Planning Policy (September 2021).

Teacher's Values

A teacher's own values, attitudes and interpersonal skills play a crucial part in setting the climate within the school. Important aspects to consider are:

- Language – This should be appropriate to the learner's level of understanding and encourage participation and confidence. Teachers should also act as a role model of Standard English.
- Tone and demeanour – Should be calm and reassuring, firm and non-threatening.
- Equality of regard – Ensure fair and equal treatment for all learners, yet still have a regard to individual needs.
- Interaction – Establish a good rapport with all learners and treat them as a partner within the learning process.
- Behaviour – Employ consistent and fair positive strategies for managing children's behaviour that helps pupils to understand the school's expectations.
- Enthusiasm and commitment – Teachers to make a learning experience enjoyable and exciting as the learner will respond more positively. They will also develop a positive attitude for learning.

The Role of Parents and Carers

We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents and carers about what and how their children are learning:

- By holding parents' evenings to explain to parents and carers how they can support their children with homework, and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work
- Give parents and carers regular reports in which we explain the progress made by each child, and indicate how the child can improve further

We believe that parents and carers have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents and carers to:

- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible.
- Make sure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit.
- Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school.
- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour.
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

The Role of Governors

The School Governors take an active role in the school. Governors attend INSET opportunities and staff meetings so they have a firm understanding of new initiatives in school such as Floppy Phonics.

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for monitoring the standards of teaching and learning, for supporting colleagues, being informed about current developments and for providing a strategic lead and direction in the school. The SMT are responsible for school self-evaluation and use monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to identify the strengths and areas for development in the school, in order to drive school improvement.

We are aware of the need to monitor the school's teaching and learning policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary.