



**Teaching and Learning
Policy September 2021**

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with: the Feedback and Marking policy, all Curriculum documents, the SEND policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the Appraisal policy, the Behaviour policy, the Assessment policy, the School Improvement Plan and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This policy is based on principles underlying the National Curriculum, up-to-date government directives and advice, the Teacher's Standards, recent educational action research and our own self-assessment (SEF) - which outlines what works best for our children in the unique context of Huxley CE Primary.

Although this policy is aimed primarily to cater for children in years 1 – 6, most principles will also apply to EYFS children.

This policy is designed to provide staff with clarity about expectations for teaching and learning practices at Huxley.

The Learning Environment - classrooms

- Tables should normally be arranged so that children can work in groups. However, there will be certain circumstances when it is appropriate for them to be arranged differently - however, there should be a clear rationale behind this.
- There should be a clearly understood seating plan for different sessions during the day with the principle that children learn well from others so this should change depending on teacher assessment of what will ensure maximum engagement and learning.

- If possible, there should be areas/tables created within classrooms to provide alternative individual work stations to be used as needed.
- If possible, a carpet space should be available at the front of the classroom for whole class, small group or 1:1 teaching.
- All classrooms should have an attractive reading area.
- Children should be encouraged to be independent so necessary resources should be well organised, easily accessible and labelled for children to use.
- Displays should be current, interactive, aspirational and attractive with a reasonable balance struck between displaying children's work and providing prompts for learning.
- All classrooms should have: a 'Working Wall', English prompts (eg: letter formation, phonic prompts, vocabulary and grammar prompts), Maths prompts (eg: number bonds, times tables, place value), a Visual Timetable, the Huxley High Five Poster, the work areas in the corridors should have SMSC focus- links to Careers, links to Diversity, links to PSHE, and links to our Christian values. Within this framework, displays should be differentiated to cater for specific age-groups and abilities within the class.
- Classroom doors should be decorated to link to topics and create an imaginative, motivating pathway into the room.
- All classrooms should be tidy, well organised and clutter-free

Shared Areas

- All shared areas should be tidy, well organised and clutter-free
- Displays in corridors and other shared areas should be current, aspirational, diverse and attractive and should include a range of curricular areas with prompts such as: maps, historical time-lines.

Preferred Teaching Methods and Principles

- There should be no 'dead time' in lessons - every minute should be used to maximise opportunities for learning
- The day should start the day with a calm, settling activity designed to focus attention. We encourage low level lighting, calming music and mindfulness activities to help transition our children into the school day. This is especially important for our EHE children. This strategy may also be used to start afternoon lessons or lessons following a break.
- Children need to move around so lessons should be 'chunked up' appropriately, depending on children's ages/abilities and the particular lesson focus.
- Within most lessons there should be opportunities to: listen/ to contribute to whole class and/or small group or partner discussions/ to practice skills independently/ to improve work and to recap/generalise learning
- Teachers should understand that children learn best, and lessons are memorable, when they are exciting and relevant and when the delivery is dynamic and interactive
- Teachers should ensure that children have a clear understanding of what they are learning and how it links to other areas and skills
- Teachers should use Modelling effectively and for optimum amounts of time, depending on the lesson content and the needs of the children. Account should be taken of the fact that some children will need a greater access to modelling than others and this should be built in flexibly into lessons.

- Carefully considered teacher questioning is key to ensuring progress. Teachers should know when to prompt, when to give thinking (or discussion) time, when to scaffold answers and when to explain.
- Teachers should employ a wide range of different strategies to ensure that learning 'sticks'. As a school, we are working towards creating a bank of universal 'sticky' learning resources following the principle that 'retrieval has a greater impact on memory than re-study'. These strategies include the use of: signs, visual symbols, songs, rhymes, repetition (I say/you say) and mnemonics.
- Teachers should build in opportunities for generalising and applying knowledge and skills to a range of different situations – making links overtly. They should also adopt the principle that 'teaching is the best way to learn' thereby giving pupils the opportunity to teach others
- Teachers are expected to use all available opportunities to make on-going assessments of pupil progress in order to adjust immediate questioning and lesson content and to plan for future learning
- Pupils should be encouraged to engage in Self Assessment in meaningful ways. This usually works better with older children. Peer-to-peer feedback is also a useful tool when used appropriately.
- Differentiation should be built into daily practice in a variety of ways in order to best meet the needs of individuals and groups of children in a particular lesson. This may include: support through additional prompts and materials/ direct support from the teacher, TA or additional adults/ support through partner work and/or differentiated criteria for success. No one method of differentiation should be relied upon too heavily.
- Every lesson should include opportunities for challenge/extension
- Teachers should understand that they have responsibility for ensuring that all children make good progress and, with this in mind, they need to ensure that they create opportunities to work directly with all children in the class. It is expected that teachers will engage in guided group work for short periods of time in the majority of lessons. This will be to address a particular learning outcome, specifically targeted at that particular group of children.
- All resources should be motivating, attractive and accessible. Teachers should not rely heavily on worksheets and published schemes but should adapt materials to suit the needs of children.
- An atmosphere of resilience and risk-taking should pervade in all lessons. This is linked to one of our SDOP priorities. This means that both staff and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes or to admit that they are unsure about something. A variety of overt strategies can be used to ensure this
- Teachers should direct classroom staff to fulfil a range of teaching tasks within lessons. However, support staff should also use their own skills and initiative to dynamically address the learning needs of individuals and groups of children as they arise.
- Support staff often work with groups of children and are responsible for preparing resources and keeping records under the direction of teachers.
- Teachers should employ the 'First Day Response' to interventions. This means that at the end of lessons, work is sorted into groups of those who have attained the intended learning outcome and those who need further support or challenge. This can then be addressed during: breaks/lunchtimes/mindfulness time

or during afternoon sessions. This may be undertaken by teachers or support staff. Books may also be prepared to include corrections and challenges for pupils to address at the beginning of following lessons.

- At the end of lessons, there should be opportunities to reinforce learning. This works well when teachers show children's work on the screen to improve and/or to show how the success criteria has been met.

Sets, Groupings, Interventions and Timetables

- Children should work in their own mixed-ability groupings for all lessons – mixing and matching seating arrangements to the work set, need and approach taken.
- Children work in smaller groups for Phonics (from September) and 'Fundamentals in maths' (from January) on a daily basis. Staff are allocated groups on a termly basis and teachers should take overall responsibility for progress for all children in their own class.
- Timetables are set to ensure adequate coverage of all aspects of the curriculum over the year. They are subject to review on a half-termly basis and there are a small number of occasions during the year where timetables are changed to account for a specific focus eg: Christmas. This should always be undertaken in consultation with the Head.
- Alongside 'First Day Response' Interventions, a programme of bespoke and 'off the shelf' interventions are planned for individuals and small groups of children. These are planned and evaluated in conjunction with all staff working with the child to ensure effective generalisation of skills. The SENDCO is also involved if the child is in receipt of support for special educational needs. This should usually take place during afternoon sessions and care should be taken to ensure that a child's daily/weekly diet is not narrowed so that they continue to benefit from all rich curricular experiences.
- Opportunities for extra-curricular Catch-up and Booster sessions are undertaken in addition to interventions during school time

Planning

- Day-to-day planning is not scrutinised. However, teachers should understand that they need to work closely to ensure that there is uniformity of opportunity and clear progression between the two classes. It is vital that there is an on-going dialogue to ensure that plans are flexible in order to meet the changing needs of pupils, which depends heavily on dynamic teacher assessment. Therefore, although an overview of end outcomes is desirable, weekly and daily planning should not be finalised too far in advance.

- Teachers should understand that the responsibility for day-to-day planning is shared and that they are ultimately accountable for what they teach and the methods they employ.

Monitoring and Support

- The headteacher is available for informal support whenever needed. They are visible and drop in and out of lessons, talking to children and discussing their work on a regular basis in an informal manner. They may ask questions of staff and may make suggestions at any point, intending to help further the principles of effective teaching and learning.
- The headteacher will endeavour to give details of plans for informal and formal monitoring well in advance. This is likely to include: Book Scrutinies/ data meetings/ Learning Walks - including talking to children and Lesson Observations (no longer than 3 hours in total per academic year)
- Feedback is given to teachers in a timely manner and may take a variety of forms, designed to offer constructive advice and support
- Performance management meetings are undertaken twice per academic year to set and review targets
- Formal Staff surveys are undertaken on a yearly basis and results are reported to the Governors
- Staff wellbeing is taken into account during all decision-making processes