



**TEACHING AND LEARNING**  
**POLICY**

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## Teaching and Learning Policy

The aims of this document are to set out a clear set of high expectations and a common approach to teaching and learning at West Moors Middle School so that teachers, parents/carers and pupils are all aware of and can work towards the highest possible standards of education. It is designed in such a way that whilst teaching staff are encouraged to adopt a style of their own and are not expected to teach in any specific way, regular monitoring of teaching and learning takes place to ensure that high standards are always met and therefore, the best outcomes for the pupils. We aim to create enthusiastic, flexible, creative, resilient, resourceful, independent, lifelong learners.

We believe that all learners can make progress and that academic skills can be developed. Learning is an active process of constructing knowledge and developing meaning and best occurs when pupils have the opportunity to make sense of new content, practise and embed information and skills.

We work in a culture that celebrates effort and the learning journey, where 'making mistakes' are an important part of learning. We are aware that all pupils have different needs and we endeavour to cater for each individual to support them to make progress.

### **To achieve this we shall offer a curriculum that:**

- Is inclusive
- Is designed to develop both knowledge and understanding, and to review this to embed learning
- Is coherent, relevant and life enhancing and aims to give individuals a positive attitude to life and the valuable part he or she might play in it
- Is appropriately challenging for different groups of learners according to learning need
- Is organised in such a way that each learning experience is stimulating and worthwhile in itself and also part of a systematically planned programme of work
- Key Stage 2 is focused towards the grounding of core subject principles with 70% of Year 5 lessons delivered by the class tutor.
- Is increasingly specialised at Key Stage 3, allowing daily access to specialist rooms and teaching
- Recognises, respects and celebrates diversity in all its forms.
- Offers learners the opportunity and encouragement to attain the standards of which they are capable, to take pride in those achievements and respect the achievements of their peers
- Offers appropriate support for those pupils with specific learning difficulties, so that they can access subject content.

Underpinning this curriculum are values intended to develop learners' relationships with each other, other adults, the community and environment. In particular, the school values the whole individual, paying equal importance to his/her moral, social, emotional, spiritual, cultural and physical development. The qualities of honesty, respect and commitment are prized and reflected in our everyday interactions, but are also a core part of learning.

### **The teacher as learner:**

Effective teachers will be searching out new ideas and approaches in order to provide pupils with the very best learning opportunities. They are advanced learners themselves and keen to develop new skills and insights. They recognise that their personal and professional growth will have a profound

impact on pupil development. They have the highest expectations of themselves and the pupils in their care. Staff are given opportunities to attend courses for their personal professional development. The school makes provision for staff training through a programme of internal training opportunities that allows staff to share their expertise and move forward together.

## The conditions and climate for learning

We aim to provide a climate in which pupils are willing and able to learn. In particular we aim to support pupil self-esteem as this is central to a pupil's ability to learn and develop. The atmosphere should be purposeful and orderly with an attractive working environment. The school will have high expectations of what a pupil can achieve, and these will be clearly communicated. Expectations should be high and communicated clearly. Discipline should be firm and support the right of individuals to work without distraction or interference.

To achieve this, **the individual teacher** will endeavour to:

- Uphold and encourage qualities of honesty, respect and commitment
- Offer pupils a variety of engaging learning opportunities and provide access to new principles of learning such as Inspire Maths.
- Adhere to lesson timings, welcoming pupils and exiting them calmly and promptly, encouraging movement in between lessons to be brisk.
- Take advantage, where appropriate, of learning that can be enhanced by community and local opportunities
- Celebrate achievement in all its forms, particularly making an effort to encourage a 'growth mindset' in our pupils.
- Recognise the importance of the working environment and make challenging and interactive use of the available display space.
- Support the behaviour code to ensure that behaviour standards are maintained

## Planning for Progress:

It is important that teachers plan schemes of work and deliver lessons that enable pupils to work towards the learning objectives and make progress towards the success criteria. It is acknowledged that different teachers have their own preferred styles of teaching but it is imperative that the agreed criteria are followed to ensure the best outcomes for all pupils in all lessons. The ultimate aim is to ensure that thorough planning and focussed lesson implementation aids pupils in their quest to make progress over time.

Staff at West Moors Middle School have a shared vision of strong teaching, and its impact on learners. Please refer to **appendix 1: lesson planning proforma**. The core purpose of this document is to align the design of a lesson with learner outcome – that the teacher, therefore, is a facilitator of learning and progress. The following documentation supports this understanding:

- 1) Whole school planning tools are available to support staff to consider three important strands of planning: what the teacher does, the impact of this on learners, how the teacher can check progress.
- 2) All teachers will use context sheets, or a similar tool, to support differentiation, seating plans and progress.

- 3) Teachers make carefully planned use of TAs to support progress.

## **Appendix 2: TAs Support Document.**

### **Schemes of Work**

Medium and long term planning can be presented in a way that best suits the subject to which they belong. However, it is expected that schemes of work will:

- Clarify objectives and outcomes (including success criteria) for progress over time.
- Identify clearly the subject knowledge to be taught.
- Include references to differentiated work to ensure all pupils are challenged in line with their ability.
- Detail literacy, numeracy and communication opportunities and how they will be taught.
- Make reference to 'learning skills' and habits that can be developed during a particular project.
- Include opportunities for a variety of assessment for learning strategies.
- Identify relevant and challenging opportunities for home learning.
- Reference specific health and safety aspects.

### **Learning Skills:**

We uphold the core principle that we are preparing young people for life and as such we value and promote those skills that will allow young people to be the creative, flexible, resilient young people they will need to become.

More recently, we have worked on aligning the language of the Growth Mindset which has provided West Moors Middle School with a contextualised understanding of learning skills and habits that young people need to develop that transfers across all learning. Boards in classrooms exhibit this language for learning and staff have identified opportunities in their long term planning, to promote these, both in the curriculum and extra- curricular opportunities. **See appendix 3 – School Values and Growth Mindset.**

### **Learning Cycles:**

Staff have started to consider 'learning cycles' that best support progress for their subject and learning activities. This will vary from lesson to lesson, but encourages teachers to think beyond the 'three part lesson' and arrive at a structure that will allow pupils to:

- Pitch into their learning at an appropriate stage
- Learn new content and skills progressively
- Practice and question
- Embed their new learning
- Demonstrate what they know and can do, setting appropriate targets for further progress

## Secure Learning Objectives

Secure learning objectives are shared with learners to clarify learning intentions. These can occur at any appropriate point in the learning cycle of a lesson or unit of work. Teachers also share 'challenge objectives' that will allow access for all, but for some to try and reach. Objectives in all cases should be a 'stretch' for pupils. Staff are encouraged to scaffold objectives, activities and questioning.

### Assessment for Learning – Differentiation.

Assessment should be integral, positive and rigorous, based on methods appropriate to the learning objectives and designed to help the learner make progress. Teachers will need to know what pupils know, and what they need to do to improve. They can only do this by systematically checking learning. Teachers will use a range of methods throughout a lesson such as:

- **Asking deep and probing questions** so that pupils are connecting their thoughts and creating meaning.
- **Asking questions that allow all pupils to respond**, for example using mini whiteboards so they can demonstrate their thinking so that teachers can know 'what pupils know' and make a decision about the design of the next stages of learning.
- **Marking and feedback** so that teachers have a more detailed understanding of what pupils know and understand, and how this might inform the next stages of learning.
- **Using Peer and self-assessment**
- **Using Physical signals, zoning in the room, RAG ratings** (red, amber, green indicators).
- Use subject driven assessment grids to identify pupils working towards, at and beyond age related expectations.

**Differentiation** can be planned for where particular needs of pupils need to be considered, either to support or stretch learners and ensure all can access learning appropriately.

Some differentiation however, can only be applied effectively following some 'assessment for learning' activities. AFL must accompany a design to affect the next stages of learning. This reshaping may require pupils to be working differently according to:

- Tasks
- Resources
- Orchestration or organisation of groups
- Times/duration
- Support

Further to day to day formative assessment, teachers will assess pupils across a range of identified skills and understanding, at key points to check learning understanding for summative information. This information will contribute to the assessment data which is shared with parents and carers and provides data which can be tracked and monitored.

**Refer to the Assessment Policy.**

## Home Learning

Home learning is regarded as an important opportunity to develop independence. It will often be separate from class work and will take advantage of conditions beyond the classroom for research, investigations, collecting materials and independent reading and writing.

**See separate Homework Policy (updated 2015)**

### **5 Key Action Points for Teachers to underpin the principles in this policy:**

- 1) **Collaborate in the planning** of schemes of work and teaching strategies to share best ideas, promote innovation and support manageability of day to day high quality teaching and learning.
- 2) Be aware of the all **needs of classes, using context sheets** as a working document to identify strategies for all pupils, including those who are underachieving. Refer to pupil passports and plans to support information where appropriate to ensure that any learning gaps are closing. Use TAs as identified in Appendix 3 and 4.
- 3) Consider how their pupils might best **learn the content for a lesson**, exploring how they will construct meaning. 'Telling' is not necessarily 'teaching' – and teachers will endeavour to allow pupils to make sense of learning content, for example, by:
  - 'Making personal sense of information and experiences
  - Making sense by making connections between what we already know and new inputs
  - Exploring different ways for pupils to manipulate information, such as reducing, prioritising, categorising, connecting,
- 4) There is an overarching concern with progress within a lesson, a unit, a year, a Key stage and school life. Teachers will find a way to know about prior learning, and pitch lessons with appropriate challenge. Within a lesson there will be a sense of layers of **challenge**, whilst pupils can also practice and embed what they know. The teacher will be particularly aware of underachievement in their groups, and will use contextual information to inform their planning to close achievement gaps.
- 5) Teachers are aware of National Curriculum development and develop **engaging lessons** with high quality resources that ensure progress in subject objectives accordingly.