



Teaching and Learning Policy

Reviewed April 2024

Our school vision is to **Love, Laugh, Learn** – *walking with Jesus to life in all its fullness, John 10:10*. We want all of our children to shine brightly in all that they do and we understand that for children to thrive in their learning they require access to high quality teaching and learning 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 achievement for all pupils. The aim of this document is to help the teachers in the school become the most effective practitioners they can be by using principles established from evidence based best practice research, cognitive science and experience.

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

- to ensure consistency of teaching and learning in each classroom and enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible
- to create effective learning environments to support and facilitate pupils learning
- to give children the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners
- for staff to work collaboratively in developing effective teaching and learning in a culture where opportunities for sharing good practice are in place
- achieve deep understanding, by helping children connect new knowledge with existing knowledge so they are fluent and unconsciously competent at applying their knowledge as skills
- deliver secure knowledge into long-term memory
- enable children to become confident and interested learners, actively engaged in their own learning
- develop a shared understanding of our Christian values; **thankfulness, respect, forgiveness, perseverance, hope, friendship, love and courage**
- develop our core learning behaviours; **concentration, perseverance, reflection, co-operation, curiosity, enjoyment and imagination.**

Responsibilities

Teachers at our school will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards
- Follow the expectations as set out in this policy
- Update parents/carers on students' progress through termly reports on progress.

Support staff at our school will:

- Know students well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs
- Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness
- Meet the expectations set out in this policy

Subject Leaders will:

- Help to create well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum that build knowledge and skills
- Sequence lessons in a way that allows students to make good progress
- Use their budget effectively to resource their subject, providing teachers with necessary resources for learning
- Drive improvement in their subject, working with teachers to identify any challenges
- Timetable their subject to allocate time for students to achieve breadth and depth, fully understand the topic and demonstrate excellence
- Moderate progress across their subject/phase by, for example, systematically reviewing progress against a range of evidence and reviewing performance data
- Improve on weaknesses identified in their monitoring activities
- Create and share clear intentions for their subject

- *Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice*

Senior leaders at our school will:

- *Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all*
- *Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone*
- *Hold staff account for their teaching and learning*
- *Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across school*
- *Manage staffing resources to promote high quality teaching and learning*
- *Provide support and guidance to staff through coaching and mentoring*
- *Promote team working at all levels*
- *Identify underachievement and intervene promptly*
- *Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge*

Teaching and Learning in the Early Years

The Foundation Stage is a distinct phase in education. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is important in its own right as well as underpinning all future learning by supporting and fostering children's personal, social and emotional well-being and establishing positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning.

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development specific areas
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

The role of adults

In nursery each child is assigned a key person. Parents and/or carers are informed of the name of that person, and explained their role, when a child starts. The key person's job is to help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The class teacher aims to support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate. In nursery and reception it is the role of all adults to support children's learning using a range of strategies. Adults are responsible for setting up a rich and stimulating learning environment that encourages independent play and investigation. In reception the class teacher supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

Time is given to allow children to explore the environment independently and learn at their own pace. Adults also use a range of teaching strategies such as supporting child initiated play, leading activities that have been planned from child interests and discrete teaching sessions. Adults need to plan for balance of these activities depending on the needs of the child. It is the role of all staff to ensure that the needs of all children are being met and that all children have an opportunity to take part in all activities. Adult led activities become more frequent across the Foundation Stage as children progress with their learning. In the Nursery there are timetabled group or whole class sessions such as singing or story sessions the children are introduced to a greater frequency of adult led learning sessions as they move through the nursery stage. As children move into Reception these sessions occur for maths, literacy and phonics as well as for a broader range of subjects such as music, RE, PE and humanities. These begin as short 15 minute sessions and increase in length over the course of the year as is appropriate. **In adult led learning sessions, teachers employ best practice approaches as set out in the KS1 teaching and learning section, albeit in a flexible way to enhance the play-based approach.**

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there is a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.' (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2020)

Planning and Assessments

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. All adults make informal observations of children at work and play to contribute towards formative assessments for each child. These occur while the learning is happening and inform teaching on an ongoing basis. They are then used to plan for activities based on child interests. Teachers use these formative assessments within their planning cycle.

Teachers plan challenging tasks based on systematic and accurate assessments of children previous skills and needs. Plans are shared on a regular basis amongst the team. Teams are required to meet at least once a week to discuss weekly plans and any changes that may be necessary. Planning is flexible and responsive to the needs of the children. Teachers are also expected to keep summative assessments on each child in the Foundation stage. Each child will have an on-entry assessment. The children are then tracked termly on the school Target Tracker system. There is an end of year report that is shared with the next teacher and the parents. There is also a transition meeting for each child between teachers. All assessments are shared and discussed at pupil progress meetings. When making all judgments practitioners consider The Characteristics of Effective Learning for each child and how these influence how the child learns. These are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

At the end of Reception, the Foundation Stage Profile is submitted for each child using the statutory Early Learning Goals. An end of year report is shared with the year one teacher and parents. There is also a transition meeting between the Reception and year one teachers.

Progress check at 2.

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners review their progress and provide parents and/ or carers with a short summary of their child's development in the prime areas. This progress check identifies the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, practitioners develop a targeted support plan to inform planning to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and/or carers and other professionals (for example, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or health professionals) as appropriate.

Assessment at the start of the reception year – the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). The Profile must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate. Early years providers must report EYFS Profile results to local authorities, upon request.

Enabling Environments

Children learn through having an interesting, stimulating and a safe environment and the time with which to explore it. A well set up learning environment is a powerful additional teacher. There are three aspects of the learning environment. These are the emotional environment, the indoor environment and the outdoor environment. All are equally valued and planned for by staff. A wide range of independent play opportunities are provided through stimulating and well resourced areas such as:

- sand
- water
- role play areas
- writing and mark making areas
- maths area
- book area
- music
- small world play
- construction Areas need to set up with a clear purpose for learning.

Children have as much access to the outdoor classroom as possible with a free flow approach operating.

KS1 Teaching and Learning at Abbey

Teaching is precise, which makes it possible for all children to engage successfully with tasks at the expected level of challenge. At Abbey, we strive to have the following in all lessons:

1. **A daily review** of previous learning through retrieval practice
2. **New materials presented in small steps**, with teachers ensuring that each step is mastered before moving on
3. **Teachers asking a variety of questions**
4. **Teachers provide models and modelling**
5. **A focus on metacognition** through our learning characters
6. **Time for children to do guided practice**
7. **Effective ongoing feedback provided to all children**
8. **Scaffolds provided for all**
9. **Adaptations to resources** to support children with specific learning needs
10. **Opportunities to work independently**
11. **Regular reviews of learning** both recently learnt content and reviewing content that has been taught over time.

In addition, teachers introduce sequences of learning with **an initial assessment to identify prior knowledge**. This informs future planning. **End of unit assessments** are also completed.

LESSON STRUCTURE:

The vast majority of lessons will follow a basic four part structure although precise interpretation of the four phase structure will inevitably be very different in different situations. Age, ability, timing of the lesson, subject area and the particular focus for the lesson will all have a significant impact. Teachers may well scroll through the phase more than once during the lesson. **The phases are not always sequential. Review, for example, is not confined to the end of the lessons.**

Phase One: set the scene, place learning in a wider context, review and retrieve prior learning; review previous lesson; share intended learning outcomes.

Phase Two: explaining and introducing new learning in small chunks and providing rehearsal time for pupils

Phase Three: Time for pupils to complete guided or independent practice

Phase Four: Review learning and plan next steps

1. Phase 1: Reviewing and retrieving prior learning

Evidence shows that lessons should include some recall of previous learning – not just of recently learned information, but also of information that was learned much earlier. This helps to build and strengthen the schema of knowledge in the child's mind, enabling new information to be understood, stick more easily and for longer. For knowledge to be used and applied in the long term memory, knowledge needs to be retrieved. It is vital that children are asked to search their memory for prior learning and then apply this knowledge in their learning.

2. Phase 2: Explaining and introducing new content and providing opportunities to rehearse

Providing Pupils with new Information or Skills

This is the teaching phase. Although it is our intention for pupils to understand the information as they encounter it, the emphasis within this phase is upon providing new content in small chunks. The quality of the input at this stage will clearly have a large bearing upon the extent to which the children understand information that they are given. We aim to achieve this through teaching skills in sequential parts with regular opportunities for children to rehearse and discuss their learning. At Abbey we also recognise the importance of metacognition and we strive to support children to become effective lifelong learners through explicit teaching of effective learning behaviours (learning characters)

Periods of input are short

We recognise that children have limited concentration spans particularly those in the younger year groups. Periods of input are therefore kept short and punctuated by rehearsal activities and partner talk. Research shows that significantly more learning takes place when new information is shared in shorter bursts of 10 minutes rather than extended periods of time.

Questioning (including checking for understanding)

Effective Questioning and Classroom Talk is essential to develop learning & higher order thinking, promoting imagination, speculation, creative thinking & to pitch a suitable challenge level. This is where the quality of questioning is paramount. Questions can highlight misconceptions and challenge children to think deeper. The greatest value of questioning is that they force children to practise retrieval; this strengthens and deepens memory hence the importance of high quality questioning.

Although we encourage questions to be planned we also encourage questioning to be responsive to what is happening in the lesson.

Formative Assessment

We recognise the importance of ensuring that levels of understanding of taught concepts are secure before learning is moved on in lessons. To achieve this teachers ask carefully crafted questions to assess against the lesson's success criteria. They carefully monitor pupils' responses to questions and tasks. Teachers give careful consideration towards the deployment of adults in the room and how this supports the ongoing assessment process.

Once misconceptions and gaps in learning have been identified within or after lessons we aim to maximise the impact of additional adults in the school.

- TAs are utilised to support the marking process to provide immediate feedback
- They deliver pre teaching and catch up interventions as necessary
- TAs are deployed to work with specific pupils during lessons, both within and outside the classroom to consolidate and extend children's learning.

Provide Models and Scaffolds

Evidence shows that successful teachers spent longer guiding children's practice through explanations and modelling than less effective teachers. After children have been exposed to high-quality explanations and models, they can begin to be involved in the knowledge recall or procedural process. This is where children begin to take ownership over parts of the task with the support of the teacher as a scaffold or guide.

At Abbey, we understand the importance of providing all children with scaffolds despite their level of ability to help guide their responses or help them recall information. This could be in the form of a sentence starters, word mats, writing frames or physical resources.

The input phase is punctuated through clear modelling of whatever it is that we want the children to be able to do. Opportunities for modelling key learning points are carefully considered in every lesson and planned collaboratively in year group teams. Periods of input are followed by rehearsal activities, teachers ensure that children are given opportunities to apply and deepen their understanding before the lesson moves on.

Phase 3: Time for pupils to complete guided or independent practice

Guided Practice

More effective teaching occurs when you give more time for guided practice, this is directly linked to children spending more time asking questions, more time checking for understanding and using more worked examples. The idea is that if learners are going to be successful in becoming confident and independent within a certain knowledge area, the teacher needs to make sure they are developing secure understanding. Therefore, at Abbey, all children participate in guided practice so that the chance of forming misconceptions is minimised. If children have any misconceptions, then these misconceptions are unpicked, and retaught where appropriate.

At Abbey, guided practice is where learning activities involve thorough explanations, high frequency, short answer questions or simple tasks where the teacher and learners are engaged interactively, with plenty of modelling, corrective or affirming feedback which links back to the success criteria and aspects of re-teaching where gaps remain.

Within lessons and over a series of lessons within a teaching unit, children are given time to practice using new knowledge and skills. Research recognises independent practice as a vital part of learning because it provides pupils with the much-required opportunity to complete a procedure or activity over and over. 'Overlearning' is considered as necessary for pupils to become fluent or automatic in a skill. When children become automatic in a process or skill, they free up their working memory which can be used to apply their learning to new contexts. This is when pupils can consolidate their learning.

Independent Practice

At Abbey, we consider the following when planning effective independent practice.

- Planning the right practice activity (during independent practice, pupils should work on the same material covered during guided practice to give them an opportunity to consolidate their learning. All practice is linked tightly to the lesson objectives and success criteria).
- Providing further guides and scaffolds
- Using collaborative practice to best effect
- Gradually removing scaffolds

The more children practise, the stronger the retrieval strength becomes. Without enough independent practice, children will find it more challenging to recall information or procedure at a later stage.

Phase 4: Review learning and plan next steps

The emphasis in this phase is reviewing what has been learned and reflecting on how and why it has been learned. Review is key to memory, and we understand that it is important not just to confine it to the end of the lesson. At Abbey we recognise that good teaching requires teachers to constantly refer back to the planned objectives and success criteria throughout the lesson and reinforce prior learning. This is a very important aspect of the lesson and the learning process in general as large amounts of information can be forgotten quickly by children.

We recognise that when teachers summarise what has been learned, the effect on children's memories can be restricted. However, when the children are involved in identifying what they have learned in the lesson, their memories will be significantly boosted.

All lessons at Abbey include the following key elements to ensure the effective delivery of the Teaching and Learning model

All lessons are.... *built upon planning which has clear learning outcomes*

- Intended learning outcomes create the right level of challenge and are built upon prior learning
- There is a good balance of substantive and disciplinary knowledge across learning sequences
- Key vocabulary is identified and shared in all lessons
- All learning sequences are planned carefully with year group partners and shared with children in child friendly language
- Teams are required to meet at least once a week to discuss weekly plans and any changes that may be necessary

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

- All children are clear about how they will achieve the intended learning outcome through clear modelling and discussions of strategies
- Teachers ensure that the success criteria are revisited regularly throughout the lesson
- Teachers may refer to individual children's work during lessons to illustrate examples of good practice and successful use of success criteria

All lessons are *Clearly designed to meet the needs of different groups of learners*

All groups of learners are challenged appropriately in lessons, including the needs of pupils with SEND. More information can be found in the SEND policy. This is achieved through the use of scaffolded questioning, and planned tasks which support different depths of learning. Intended learning outcomes are the same for all children. This is to ensure that all our pupils are able to access the same learning. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to scaffold tasks through the use of questioning, resources and levels of support.

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

- The school's policy for providing feedback and responding to children's work is embedded in everyday practice and is used to support and inform teaching and learning
- All pupils are clear about what they need to do in order to improve their work
- Marking is sharply focused against the intended learning outcome and success criteria. This accurately identifies next steps
- Pupils are given regular time to respond to feedback and this is built into lesson planning and facilitated through adult support
- Live marking – The use of live marking in lessons ensures that misconceptions or observations and assessments are quickly addressed

Learning is enhanced through the use of consistent behaviour and classroom management approaches

All our staff consistently apply the same approaches which are clearly outlined in the positive behaviour policy.

- We follow the Thrive approach to supporting children's healthy social and emotional development. Where children experience barriers to behaving well, teachers work closely with the SENDCo to develop a personalised behaviour plan which enables them to behave well and access the learning.
- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account children's concentration span, age, stage of development and additional needs and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods.
- At Abbey we strive to provide a magical curriculum which inspires children through practical and real life learning opportunities.
- Through the use of Talk Partners, pupils are provided with regular opportunities to think and share ideas together to develop their learning

Classroom Environments

- The surroundings in which children learn can greatly influence their academic performance and wellbeing in our school. A positive and well cared for learning environment has the power to inspire the community within it.
- At Abbey we believe that classrooms should be calm, well organised learning spaces (please see learning environment policy for further details).

