



Witton Middle School Learning and Teaching Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to clarify the principles for **learning and teaching** and the associated areas of **curriculum, feedback and assessment**.

At Witton Middle School, we aim to 'Develop pride and prepare our children to go out into the world and make it a better place.' This vision and the associated values of PRIDE (Perseverance, Responsibility, Independence, Determination and Empathy) guide the principles and aims for learning and teaching in this policy.

2. CURRICULUM

In order for children to achieve well, and for teaching and learning to be the best it can be, the importance of a high quality curriculum cannot be underestimated. We aim to provide an outstanding curriculum which:

- Is committed to all learners achieving the best they can through high quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Is broad, balanced and has clear progression in subject knowledge and skills.
- Is filled with rich, stimulating and purposeful experiences.
- Promotes learners' engagement in learning through enquiry led approaches involving exploration, risk taking and discovery.
- Is underpinned by the agreed aims, values and purposes of the school.

The school curriculum comprises all learning and experiences we plan for our pupils, and at Witton we aim to provide a rich academic, creative and socially stimulating curriculum. The National Curriculum 2014 is the basis of our statutory provision, and our curriculum is mapped to ensure all pupils receive their entitlement, and these are progressive to ensure pupils are challenged to develop and extend knowledge and skills throughout their time at Witton. Subject leaders and teams work together to plan units of work that stimulate purpose for learning in engaging contexts.

In addition to this, school curriculum 'drivers' guide the provision of opportunities which develop non-statutory competencies in our learners. The current drivers of Problem Solving, Leadership, World View and Embracing Challenge are woven into curriculum planning to develop a holistic learning experience that meets the needs of all learners. Thematic learning is used to make meaningful links across the curriculum, whilst respecting important subject boundaries. Planning and teaching approaches are reviewed constantly to ensure that the needs of current pupils are being met and high standards are maintained.

The Deputy Headteacher takes delegated responsibility for the overall curriculum strategy and content for all pupils; plays a lead role in formulating the aims and objectives of the school and establishing the policies through which they are to be achieved; manages the professional development of all staff in line with agreed school priorities and takes responsibility for the effective deployment of teaching staff, including the construction of the school timetable.

Subject Leaders/Co-ordinators take delegated responsibility for their own subject, providing subject progression maps, as well as providing planning support and advice for teaching teams. They monitor teaching plans regularly and evaluate in the light of experience. (Associated subject policies are maintained by individual subject leaders.) Year Team Leaders have overall

responsibility for management and delivery of the curriculum within their team, including teaching and delivery decisions and adaptations to suit the needs of the children.

3. EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Effective teaching is that which leads to effective learning and as such, there is no one lesson model that ensures effective learning. However, there are some important principles which can be used to guide teaching and lesson planning in order to provide a 'Quality First' experience and ensure excellent outcomes for children. In lessons and units of work, we expect teachers to ensure:

- Children are clear about what they are learning in every lesson, and where this fits into the 'big picture'.
- Learning objectives are clearly focused on knowledge and skills, appropriately challenging and meaningful to learners.
- Children understand what they need to do to succeed: through the use of Success Criteria teachers make this explicit to learners.
- Appropriate and clear exposition, explanation, exemplars and models provide children with what they need to achieve high standards and achieve with increasing levels of independence.
- Teachers' questioning is carefully tailored to different levels and skilfully probes and extends understanding.
- Teaching meets the needs of all learners by providing 'scaffolds' to support and enable all children to access the learning in the lesson. Principles of inclusivity and personalisation mean that the teacher acts to meet these needs.
- Teachers have a strong awareness of what children can do and react in a timely fashion to ensure that all children are able to move on and extend or deepen their knowledge as soon as they are ready.
- The learning process takes place in a climate where achievement, success and learning through mistakes are celebrated.
- A range of approaches are adopted and blended to ensure variety, engagement, collaborative learning, choice and independence.
- Learners receive regular, helpful feedback in a range of ways, about how well they are doing and are given clear indications on what they can do to improve their performance.
- Regular classroom assessment allows a fluid and 'responsive' approach, where pupils are able to move on quickly or spend longer in consolidation of concepts. (See associated Responsive Teaching document)

Teachers prepare quality short-term planning and take responsibility for elements of shared planning (subject or curriculum areas) within their year team. They deliver effective teaching to ensure that all pupils achieve well relative to their starting points.

Year Team Leaders have an overview of standards of teaching in their Year Teams and provide regular opportunities to facilitate team planning. Teaching in the school is monitored through a range of mechanisms. Teachers are expected to evaluate and develop their own practice, and opportunities to review and improve are constantly provided. Through lesson observation, work scrutiny, pupil interviews, team planning and discussion, learning walks and subject monitoring the school ensures that lessons are constantly being improved to further meet the needs of all learners. The Senior Leadership Team provides support in developing effective learning and teaching strategies and monitors and evaluates the outcomes in accordance with school policy.

4. FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT

Purpose of Assessment

There are two main purposes of assessment:

Assessment of learning (also known as summative assessment);

Assessment for learning (also known as formative assessment).

Assessment for Learning

The information provided by and to teachers and children about 'how well' learners are doing is intrinsic to successful learning and teaching. Assessment for Learning (AfL) involves pupils in their own learning by providing them with effective feedback upon which they can build an understanding of what their 'next steps' are. It ensures that learner behaviours and outcomes are constantly used to inform and modify the teaching that takes place, so that levels of challenge and outcomes are correctly judged. Learners are informed consistently and can then make assessments of their own performance and each others' against clear criteria and take an active role in making improvements. Teachers are expected to provide consistent feedback, which is most effective when:

- The intended outcomes for learning are made fully explicit to children and clear criteria for success are established.
- It indicates specific and measurable 'next steps' to learners, and allows children to contribute to the setting of curricular targets.
- Feedback is provided at well-judged moments, including during and at the conclusion of lessons, and points appropriate to the child's own learning journey.
- It elucidates the high standards expected of all pupils.
- Examples of outcomes are provided so that children have a clear understanding of what they are aiming for.
- It encourages and provides clear, directed opportunities for children to participate in a teacher-learner dialogue. (responding to marking)
- It takes account of pupil views and experiences of learning activities.
- It allows pupils opportunities to self-assess and evaluate their own progress towards the learning outcomes, and to move themselves on during lessons when appropriate to do so.
- It includes a range of approaches, including verbal and written feedback (marking.)
- It is used to inform grouping and respond to learner needs in a flexible way.

The 'feedback cycle' and AfL are a highly valued element of teaching and learning at Witton, and as such are constantly monitored through lesson observation, work scrutiny and pupil interviews.

Assessment of Learning

Assessment of Learning is any assessment which summarises where learners are at a given point in time – it provides a snapshot of what has been learned and where they are in relation to similar children both locally and nationally. Progress and attainment is currently measured in National Curriculum Levels, and teachers make assessments based on tests and by examining pupils' performance and measuring against level criteria. However, the current Year 5 cohort are the first year group who will be assessed without levels in 2016, and the school is therefore gradually introducing alternative ways to assess attainment and track progress, initially in the form of 'Milestones'. Government expectations will be linked directly to age, and the curriculum stage for that year group. All assessment is moderated and standardised in school under the direction of subject leaders to ensure consistency, and in collaboration with feeder and destination schools.

Teacher assessments must be made continuously throughout all Key Stages and is recorded half-termly. The SIMS 'Pupil Tracker' is used to track individual and group data and provides evidence for termly Pupil Progress Meetings, whole school target-setting and identification of pupils at risk of under-achieving. It is each teacher's responsibility to ensure that progress is regularly assessed and school systems ensure that intervention processes are put in place to close any gaps in learning. Teaching Assistants support classroom practices to enable teachers to work closely with specific groups, support the delivery of intervention programmes and provide support for specific pupils who are identified on the SEN Register.

At the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) a teacher assessment (TA) must be made of the standard achieved in mathematics, reading, writing and science. Standard testing in these subjects must be administered in accordance with the instructions from the Standards and Testing Agency,

dispatched for external marking and results reported as soon as they are available. Pupils who move to another school will take with them their latest SATs results and/or TA levels for the relevant attainment targets, plus any ongoing targets. Teachers assess, monitor, record and report on the learning needs, progress and achievements of assigned pupils and participate in arrangements for preparing pupils for external examinations, where appropriate.

Reporting

Parents/Carers receive three reports on their child's progress each academic year. These reports provide an overview of the child's progress, attainment and targets in all subjects. More specific information is provided for English, mathematics and science. One report each year will be a 'longer' report which includes comments in relation to these subjects, and an overall class teacher comment. These reports are intended to give an overview of the child's achievements that year and provide formative information upon which the child can improve. Reporting is supported by a number of structured opportunities for parents/carers to meet with class teachers for individual discussion.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Senior Leaders and Curriculum Leaders/Coordinators monitor the effectiveness of learning and teaching on a regular basis.

Continuous monitoring by the whole school community helps to promote and establish:

- a self-improving culture, with the highest possible standards of curriculum, teaching and learning
- creative, responsive and effective approaches to learning and teaching
- a consistent school-wide focus on pupils' achievement, using data and benchmarks to monitor progress in every child's learning
- the principle that learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management
- a culture and ethos of challenge and support, where all pupils can achieve success and are actively engaged in their own learning
- a school community that demonstrates and articulates high expectations and sets challenging targets
- the strategic development of new and emerging technologies to enhance and extend the learning experience of pupils
- consistent monitoring, evaluation and review of classroom practice
- improvement strategies and performance reviews which challenge underperformance at all levels

Governors have a range of duties and powers and a general responsibility for promoting high standards of educational achievement for all pupils. Governors' responsibilities include:

- setting targets for pupil achievement, making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based
- providing effective challenge to the school and holding leaders to account.

Governors monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning through school self-evaluation processes, monitoring activities and reports from the Headteacher and other school staff.

6. REVIEWING SCHOOL POLICY

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher every year and amendments discussed with senior leadership, staff and Governors. This time-scale may be adjusted, if necessary, in the light of new legislation or key issues identified by inspection.

7. ASSOCIATED POLICIES

Behaviour Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Homework Policy
Monitoring & Evaluation Policy
Promoting Community Cohesion Policy
PSHE and Citizenship Policy
Responding to Pupils' Work Policy
Sex and Relationship Education Policy
Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural
Development Policy
Inclusion Policy
Religious Education and Collective Worship
Policy

Subject Policies:

Literacy/English Policy
Mathematics Policy
Science Policy
Art & Design Policy
Design & Technology Policy
Drama Policy
Modern Foreign Languages Policy
History Policy
Geography Policy
Music Policy
Physical Education Policy
ICT Policy

<u>Prepared by:</u>	Deputy Headteacher	<u>Responsibility of:</u>	Deputy Headteacher
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<p>This Policy was prepared giving due regard to the disabilities and/or special education needs, age, race, religion or belief, sex/sexual orientation, gender/gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity of the children and staff at Witton Middle School and its community.</p> <p>This Policy appears on the school website.</p>			