



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Policy Review Date: September 2026

Relevance to other Policies

Please cross-reference this policy with the following:

- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Marking Policy
- Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- Dyslexia Policy

Version	Date	Created/Updated By
1.1	September 2018	A McGregor
1.2	September 2019	A McGregor
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1.4	December 2020	A.McGregor
1.5	November 2021	A.McGregor/M.Storey
1.6	November 2022	A.McGregor/N.Slater
1.7	November 2023	N.Slater / J.Handley
1.8	September 2024	J. Handley
1.9	September 2025	J. Handley

Introduction

This policy supports the school's statement of purpose to provide high quality education for young people with special educational needs.

Aims

This policy is underpinned by the aim to address the special needs of our learners, whose nature is highly complex. Our learners experience learning difficulties, social and/or emotional disorders, mental health challenges, have been diagnosed with autism or demonstrate behaviours associated with autism, experiences of difficult and often chaotic home arrangements and social contexts and often negative previous experiences in education. We want all of our learners to Feel Safe, Feel Valued and Feel Inspired.

Because of this, and in line with our Curriculum Policy, our commitment to our learners is to provide them an ambitious curriculum with supported opportunities to become:

- Successful learners;
- Confident individuals;
- Responsible citizens.

Student progress is measured from an initial starting point and against individual standards as well as in line with national averages. Maintaining high expectations of our learners by providing a learning environment that encourages and supports students in achieving their potential is a priority.

All of our students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that includes elements of the National Curriculum together with a range of additional qualifications. Extensive support is offered to each individual at a level appropriate to their needs.

Effective Learning and Teaching

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and recognise the need to develop strategies that allow our students to access learning in ways that support and challenge them. We aim to take into account the varied needs of our students when organising our curriculum and teaching. We also acknowledge that developing strong relationships with students in our school is beneficial and contributes to their academic and personal development.

Dyslexia Friendly Approach

Our school adopts a dyslexia-friendly approach in line with the British Dyslexia Association's principles, ensuring an inclusive and supportive learning environment. This includes tailored teaching strategies, clear communication, and accessible resources to meet individual needs. We emphasize multi-sensory learning, positive reinforcement, and regular staff training to maintain high standards of accessibility and engagement. Our commitment is to reduce barriers, enhance confidence, and enable all students, including those with dyslexia, to thrive academically and personally.

Learning

Sound teaching practice is evidenced in students engaging with/in learning tasks. When students are engaged, they can experience success and make progress, leading to developing their self-esteem and confidence.

Engaged students:

- Enjoy and are enthusiastic about learning
- Persevere with and complete tasks
- Ask questions

- Offer opinions and participate in discussions

When students are engaged, their behaviour is:

- Settled and safe
- Well-mannered and respectful/considerate
- Tolerant
- Cooperative

Students demonstrate progress in learning when they show growth in what they know, can do and understand. This is evidenced through:

- Participation in lessons and discussions with staff and peers
- Offering comments/opinions
- Asking questions
- Recalling prior learning to complete tasks
- Observations by staff and peers
- Work samples and progress files
- Self-assessment
- Reports

Teaching

A teacher's approach makes a major impact upon pupil learning, attainment and progress, and the way students respond to school. There are a number of key elements which indicate outstanding practice and ensure high quality teaching:

Planning and organisation

Teachers' planning is organised into schemes or units of work. An annual curriculum overview and sequence for each subject is planned and discussed by all staff. This is updated by subject leaders on a regular basis. Opportunities for cross-curricular links are identified for learning to occur in context across subject areas where possible.

Units of work highlight levelled objectives, ordered lessons, resources, considerations for differentiation and adjustments, and opportunities for assessment.

Short term lesson plans (**Appendix 1**) will state clear learning objectives, list engaging, challenging and differentiated learning activities that provide all students with opportunities for success; identify use of resources including ICT and support staff and also highlight the use of a plenary to consolidate and clarify learning. A range of pedagogical approaches should be employed to ensure lesson variation, and that learning is occurring with breadth and depth. Additional pupil information is also provided on each plan to ensure lessons are set at the right level and meet individual learning needs. Teachers also need to be flexible and evaluate their own practice to make necessary adjustments to planning in response to changing student needs. An individual pen portrait of each child is also provided on the back of the plan setting out prior learning, recent progress, trigger behaviours and effective teaching strategies for that child.

Staff across all Key Stages share their Mid-Term planning using Sharepoint. This enables staff to share and edit plans for the coming week and also allows teachers and TA's the facility to view planning for the week ahead.

Assessment and Marking

Assessment (both formative and summative) for each student is ongoing and used to inform planning, provide feedback to students, staff and parents. It identifies students' individual needs, including specific support, further diagnostic assessment and intervention. (Please refer to **Assessment Policy** and **Marking and Presentation Policy** for more detailed information)

Classroom Environment

Classrooms should be safe, stimulating places, where student work is valued, marked and displayed. Classroom expectations should be displayed, as well as visual supports for daily timetables and other school routines. Resources need to be effectively managed.

Management of Pupils

Building positive relationships with pupils is key. Students should have a clear understanding of school expectations through explicit teaching and clear, consistent communication. A consistent approach to expectations and consequences throughout the school day are necessary for student development. Credits for behaviour and achievement are awarded at the end of each lesson as part of the School Credit and Reward system. 'Catch Up' is also offered during breaks, lunchtimes and at the end of each education day to support pupils who have not completed work. Knowledge of details of the students' Individual Education Plan (IEP) is essential for specific variations in dealing with individual children. Individual risk assessments and Positive Handling Plans (PHP) also provide important information with regard to safe and effective management of students.

Monitoring and Evaluation (for additional information see **Monitoring and Evaluation Policy)**

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring their teaching and their pupils' learning is of the highest possible standard. This should be done with reference to the information presented above. It is important that teachers actively use their assessment of pupils to inform planning and ensure that work is well matched to each pupil's needs. Work produced should be regularly reviewed to ensure that pupils are making appropriate and sufficient progress. Moderation is completed termly, this is completed across core and non-core subjects including KS4 qualifications.

The overall responsibility for the monitoring of teaching and learning rests with the Headteacher who will make regular visits to classrooms to observe lessons and review pupils' work. Staff will be provided with feedback from these visits. Subject Leaders will also be expected to observe lessons within their own subject area using the Teaching Observation pro forma (**Appendix 2**). Formal lesson observation will take place 3 times during the academic year, during Half Terms 2,4,and 6.

Coaching

In addition to the formal lessons observation process the school operates a school wide coaching programme. This is where colleagues are coached by each other in order to share best practice and to develop pedagogy skills in the classroom. The focus is for one to observe/coach the other including the provision of constructive feedback and then for you both to agree a time for the process to be reversed. (**Appendix 3**). For each of the 6 half terms there is a different area of focus (**Appendix 4**).

The role of the Teaching Assistant

The primary role of the Teaching Assistant is to enable access to the curriculum and to facilitate independent learning, and to promote inclusion. This may be with pupils who have specific learning difficulties, pupils with communication problems or pupils experiencing behavioural difficulties. It is critical that all TA's are aware of each learner's individual needs, has access to all relevant information and also plays an active role in planning lessons and setting individual targets. Teachers are aware that TA's also play a key role in day to day assessment of progress – regular, ongoing communication with teaching staff is essential. The role of the Teaching Assistant is crucial if pupils are to achieve greater autonomy, higher academic standards, greater social awareness and feel part of the whole school community.

It is of equal importance that Teaching Assistants should feel valued and part of a team approach, to meeting the needs of the pupil/s in their care. They are, therefore, included in planning meetings and their

training needs are discussed and identified in regular performance management meetings and supervision meetings.

Appendix 1 Short Term Lesson Plan



Teacher:	Class:	Subject:
Pupil Work Trawl:		
Context of Lesson:		
Learning Objective:		
Success Criteria:		
Working Ability	Target Ability	Stretch & Challenge
Starter: Main Activity: Differentiation: Extension Activity: Plenary:		

Assessment:	Self	Peer	Teacher	TA
	Questioning	Evidence of work	Verbal feedback	Written feedback
Use of TA				
Resources				
Use of ICT				
Literacy Links (e.g use of reading rewards, differentiation and resources for intervention Wave 2 and Wave 3 pupils)				
Numeracy Links (eg use of maths based language and key words, differentiation and resources for intervention Wave 2 and Wave 3 pupils)				
SMSC/British Values Links				

Appendix 2 Lesson Observation Form

Lesson Observation/Feedback Form



Teacher:	Class:	Subject:	Date:
Skill Area		Comment/Evidence	
Planning - Long/Mid/Short term plans - Subject documentation in place and up to date - Clear signs of progression and matches ability/needs of learner – differentiated		Lesson Plan on the BOX ☐	
Effective Teaching Techniques - Learning objectives and required outcomes clearly signalled to learners and reinforced during lesson - Previous lesson recapped - Variety of appropriate, planned tasks and activities - Clear differentiation of tasks - Use of appropriate range of teaching styles - Clear, controlled communication with learners, effective use of questioning - Sound subject knowledge - Appropriate plenary - Appropriate health and safety measures			
Learning - Pupils interested and engaged - Acquisition and application of skills - Individual and group learning opportunities - Learning checked, progress made - Learners ask questions			
Classroom Management - Appropriate seating arrangements for students - Effective behaviour management strategies used, disruption kept to a minimum – positive interactions, praise, constructive feedback, clear understanding of whole school behaviour policy - Positive learning environment – effective use of posters, classroom expectations, NC Levels, subject specific word lists, pupil spelling lists etc. - Clear understanding of credit system and effective management of credits at end of lesson			
Assessment - Regular assessment of progress – in lesson and also clear documented evidence of student learning and progress - Awareness of student IEP targets, linked to planning of lesson - Opportunities for pupil self-assessment and peer assessment - Opportunities for students to reflect on progress - All marking completed in line with whole school policy - Next steps indicated			
Use of resources - Effective use of Teaching Assistants – awareness of role in the classroom and understanding of their contribution to supporting learning - Effective use of IT in lesson delivery - Effective use of additional support materials - All resources available and ready at start of lesson - Effective use of individual targets – target board			

Lesson Observation/Feedback Form



Feedback and Discussion	
Pupil Work Trawl:	
Strengths	Areas for Development

Staff Reflection and Evaluation

Signed: _____

Observer

Signed: _____

Teacher

Appendix 3 Coaching Form

Coaching Feedback Form



Staff Name

Date

Coach Name

Class/Group

Aspect of the Lesson to be observed

Comments/Feedback

Suggested Strategies

-
-
-

Lesson Objectives Clear	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Lesson Objectives Referenced	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Students Aware of Working Step and How to Progress	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Students Aware how to progress	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Literacy Opportunities in lesson	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Work Differentiated	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Effective Questioning Used	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Marking Consistent & Constructive	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Effective Use of Plenary	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Links to SMSC/British Values	YES	☐	NO	☐	
Assessment Opportunities	Teacher	☐	Self	☐	Peer ☐
Effective Communication	YES	☐	NO	☐	

Signed Staff _____ Signed Coach _____



	Area of Focus
1	Positive Behaviour Management Set of activities/responses by which the teacher promotes appropriate student behaviour and eliminates/prevents inappropriate student behaviour, develops good interpersonal relationships and a positive socio-emotional climate in the classroom, and establishes and maintains an effective and productive classroom organisation. Staff learn pupils' responses and can pick up small cues early in the pupil's behaviour presentation.
2	Core Skills/Formal Learning The set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in the community and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which the community values and finds useful.
3	Assessment for Learning and Progress Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. The use of peer and self-marking is evident and used effectively.
4	Communication Strategies Do students understand the lesson objectives (are they referred back to, has each individual pupil made progress within the lesson. How are objectives communicated to the pupils? Are the communication techniques used in line with the young person's ability to process information? Are verbal and non-verbal communication strategies used (Makaton/PECS)
5	ASC Friendly Strategies Responding to the needs of all learners in the class. Personalised learning environments to enable all learners to flourish. Evidence of individualised curriculum and strategies used to support the ASC Aware of IEP's, pupil learning levels and sensory challenges to be able to complete tasks effectively.
6	Innovative Practice Thinking outside the box, new ideas to engage pupils in their learning. Creative use of resources to check, support and enhance the learning experiences in the classroom.
7	Stretch & Challenge Are all pupils in the lesson challenged by the tasks. Are tasks developmental to provide challenge and extend learning. Are a range of tasks used to check and embed learning?