

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY



Learning, Developing, Growing Together

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Spinfield School

Teaching & Learning Policy

1. Introduction

At Spinfield School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day.

At Spinfield our aim is to nurture the joy of learning to help children succeed not just in education but in life. We nurture and develop the whole child by being part of a community that works on academic, social and emotional development. We have fun while learning because that enhances the learning experience.

Our mission is to strive to deliver an enriching educational environment that focuses not only on the core curriculum subjects but also encompasses the following in our curriculum:

- Encouraging responsibility
- Fostering an understanding of culture and diversity
- Tolerance and understanding of others
- The environment & ecology
- Personal health and well-being

We have three school rules and values:

- Be ready
- Be respectful
- Be safe

Through these we encourage:

- Collaboration
- Resilience
- Creativity
- Respect
- Curiosity

We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. Through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

2. Aims and Objectives

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school, we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching, we aim to:

- ✓ Enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
- ✓ Foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people
- ✓ Develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others
- ✓ Show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people
- ✓ Enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community
- ✓ Help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens
- ✓ Develop a growth mind set demonstrating the ability to be resilient, have curiosity and persevere in all tasks

3. **Effective Learning**

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. The psychologist, Howard Gardner, identifies seven main areas of intelligence; linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working and interpersonal/reflective. We take into account these different forms of intelligence when planning teaching and learning styles.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- Investigation and problem solving
- Giving feedback to children
- Traffic lighting work and self-assessment
- Promoting learning for life
- Research and finding out
- Group work
- Pair work
- Independent work
- Whole class work
- Asking and answering questions
- Use of ICT
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Creative activities
- Watching programmes and responding to musical material
- Participation in musical activity
- Debates, role plays and oral presentations
- Designing and making things
- Participation in athletic or physical activity
- Outdoor learning such as forest school
- Brain breaks
- Reflection time and mindfulness

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn and to reflect on how they learn; what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

4. Effective Teaching

When teaching, we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use the school long term and medium term curriculum plans to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims and objectives of each year group based on the national curriculum and our themes of 'discover' 'explore' and 'create'

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's SEN support plans, MAPPS or EHCPS. We also ensure that any child who has been identified as more able, is provided with extension activities and the chance to broaden their individual learning through personal study or challenges set by the teacher, appropriate to their ability. We have high expectations of *all* children and we believe that their work here at Spinfield School is of the highest possible standard.

We set academic targets for the children in each academic year. We review the progress of each child after assessment weeks and the end of the academic year when we set revised targets.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. Our lesson plans take the format that works for each individual teacher and may contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed and the way we assess the children's work. We informally evaluate all lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

Our teaching is adaptive and here's why:

Adaptive teaching is beneficial because it ensures that every child can access and succeed in a high-quality curriculum. By responding to pupils' needs through effective scaffolding, feedback and flexible challenge, teachers promote progress for all learners, including the most able. UK research from the Education Endowment Foundation and guidance from the Department for Education and Ofsted show that adaptive teaching supports inclusion, fosters independence, and improves learning outcomes across diverse classrooms.

1. It ensures every child can access learning.

Adaptive teaching means teachers adjust instruction so that all pupils — regardless of prior attainment, language background or learning need can succeed. The Department for Education (DfE, 2023) describes adaptive teaching as "responsive teaching that ensures all pupils can engage with the curriculum."

Evidence: The DfE's Teachers' Standards (Standard 5) explicitly require teachers to "adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils." The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF, 2023) reinforces that high-quality teaching "meets the needs of all learners" through adaptivity rather than separate or simplified tasks.

2. It promotes progress for all learners, including the most able.

By adapting questioning, scaffolding, and the level of challenge, teachers can ensure that every pupil makes progress from their own starting point. Adaptive teaching doesn't mean "watering down" content; instead, it means using responsive feedback, formative assessment, and flexible grouping to maintain high expectations for everyone.

Evidence: The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2021) guidance on Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools found that adaptive strategies — such as pre-teaching vocabulary, providing visual scaffolds, and offering extension tasks — significantly improve learning outcomes across attainment groups.

3. It supports inclusion and equity.

Adaptive teaching aligns with the UK's SEND Code of Practice (2015), which promotes a graduated approach of "assess, plan, do, review." This ensures that children with additional needs are supported within the classroom first, before resorting to withdrawal or one-to-one interventions.

Evidence: The Ofsted research review series (e.g., Mathematics, 2023) shows that adaptive approaches such as modelling, scaffolding, and precise feedback allow teachers to maintain access to the same ambitious curriculum while meeting individual needs. This leads to greater inclusion and reduced attainment gaps.

4. It builds learner independence and metacognition.

When teachers adapt instruction responsively, for example, by gradually removing scaffolds or prompting pupils to reflect on their learning strategies, children become more self-aware and independent learners.

Evidence: The EEF's Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning Guidance Report (2018) found that explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies, combined with adaptive scaffolding, can add up to +7 months' progress per year.

5. It improves teacher understanding of pupil learning.

Adaptive teaching is grounded in formative assessment: teachers use questioning, observation, and short tasks to identify misconceptions and adjust teaching in real time. This feedback loop enhances teachers' understanding of how pupils learn.

Evidence: The EEF's Formative Assessment review (2020) highlights that adaptive teaching informed by real-time assessment leads to stronger progress and engagement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Our Curriculum is centred around Enquiry Based Learning (EBL) and this is why:

Enquiry-based learning promotes curiosity, encourages independent study, allows children to take learning beyond the classroom, and, where appropriate, allows children to create a learning journey. UK evidence shows that when enquiry is well scaffolded by teachers and combined with explicit teaching, it deepens understanding, builds higher-order thinking and particularly benefits able learners by giving them meaningful extension and ownership of their learning.

1) It promotes curiosity.

EBL structures learning around questions and problems rather than only facts, which directly stimulates pupils' natural curiosity and motivation to find out more — a key driver of deeper learning. UK research into enquiry and practical science shows enquiry approaches can sustain curiosity and engagement when they're well planned.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7db3f940f0b65d88633e62/Maintainin_g_20curiosity_20a_20survey_20into_20science_20education_20in_20schools.pdf?utm_

2) It encourages independent study.

When learners pursue an inquiry, they practise planning, researching, evaluating sources and reflecting on progress — the same habits needed for effective independent study. This is especially valuable for able learners who can move further and faster when given ownership of their learning pathway. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) trials and guidance emphasise programmes that develop pupils' investigative skills and independence.

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/thinking-doing-talking-science-effectiveness-trial?utm_

3) It allows children to take learning beyond the classroom.

Enquiry tasks (projects, CREST awards, community investigations, fieldwork) naturally extend learning into homes, local places and online spaces, so pupils apply school learning in real contexts and sustain learning over longer periods. The CREST and other UK project-based programmes explicitly support extended, out-of-class enquiry.

4) It allows children, where appropriate, to create a learning journey. Well-designed enquiries can be sequenced so pupils build skills and knowledge over time. Choosing questions, testing ideas, refining methods and presenting results which creates a personalised learning journey for individuals or small groups. UCL work on socio-scientific inquiry and rapid evidence reviews show enquiry designs help learners develop disciplinary thinking when teachers scaffold the process.

https://journals.uclpress.co.uk/ijdeg/article/1891/galley/14147/view/?utm_source

We recognise that high-quality UK reviews and guidance advise balance: enquiry is powerful when combined with clear teaching and subject knowledge instruction. The recent

government science subject report cautions that enquiry approaches should not replace teacher explanation where disciplinary knowledge is needed — the best outcomes come when enquiry is used alongside explicit teaching and careful assessment. In short: enquiry + strong teacher scaffolding = best results.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-science/finding-the-optimum-the-science-subject-report--2?utm_source

Why this approach benefits learners

Learners often need depth over pace: enquiry lets them take topics further rather than repeat content. (EEF trials show enquiry programs can increase challenge and conceptual demand.)

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/thinking-doing-talking-science-effectiveness-trial?utm>

It develops higher-order skills (reasoning, problem-solving, metacognition) that able learners can apply across subjects. (NFER and UCL work highlight research engagement and teacher-led inquiry as routes to these skills.)
https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/pirld5fq/using_research_in_your_school_and_your_teaching.pdf?utm

Independent and extended enquiries let able pupils create their own learning journeys and produce work that is personally meaningful — which supports motivation and retention.

Practical classroom ideas that we can use:

Start with a rich question (open, connected to real issues) that promotes curiosity.

Model the enquiry steps (question, plan, gather, test and conclude) so pupils know how to study independently.

Offer tiered success criteria: give able learners extension prompts (deeper data analysis, alternative hypotheses, public outputs) so they can take learning beyond the classroom.

Use assessment for learning checkpoints rather than one endpoint — this helps pupils create a learning journey with visible steps and next actions.

Blend explicit teaching of key knowledge before or during the enquiry so pupils aren't left with gaps. (This aligns with gov.uk and EEF recommendations.)

Each of our teachers, specialist support assistants and teaching assistants makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all the children in class. We treat the

children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children, the class code of conduct. We expect all children to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by doing so, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission (see our Educational Visits Policy).

We deploy teaching assistants (TAs) and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups. Our adult helpers also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment and creating displays.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high quality work by the children.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and areas for development and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

5. The Role of Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular, they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality of teaching
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include the termly headteacher's report to governors, reports from subject co-ordinators and governors' visits to the school.

6. The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Holding parents' meetings and workshops to explain our school strategies for teaching literacy, numeracy and health education
- Sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school
- Holding parent consultation interviews and sending an interim and an annual written report to parents in which we explain the progress made by their child and indicated how the child can improve further
- Holding meetings with parents to discuss concerns about progress or any other matters
- Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- Ensure their child has the best attendance record possible
- Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit
- Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school
- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement

7. Monitoring and Review

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. Learning is showcased in assemblies and target setting is used to promote next steps. The school's own self evaluation process in the Autumn term informs whole school development. Staff, parental and children's questionnaires also aid effective review. Children also aid the review process and contribute their ideas to ensure that at Spinfield we continuously strive for effective and successful learning and teaching.