



## **Teaching and Learning Policy Whole School and EYFS**

**IMPORTANT:** For the academic year 2021 – 2022, head/headteacher will be the principal and therefore these titles are interchangeable.

The Head undertakes a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed: Mr Tim Cannell

Date reviewed: 4 September 2021

Date of next review: 3 September 2022

### **Purpose**

The policy for teaching and learning is the core policy of the school and informs the best classroom practice. It will enable all children to make progress in every lesson taught and will ultimately raise standards. It was written as a result of developments in our practice and is owned by the teaching team. It is based on our current learning and understanding of recent research. Members of the teaching team are expected to refer to it frequently and use it to help evaluate and tweak practice to ensure the best provision for our children.

### **Aims**

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning and as a result improve standards.
- Provide clear guidance for teaching and learning, ensuring consistency across the school.
- Enable the teaching team to identify aspects of practice as part of their commitment to continual improvement.
- Provide a tool for monitoring, evaluation, school improvement and accountability.
- Support our commitment to equal opportunities.
- Set out our expectations of best practice.

The school vision and aims are at the heart of all our teaching and learning activities. This policy reflects our mission and aims which are available from the school office and on our website (<http://www.parsonsgreenprep.co.uk>).

### **Principles**

The principles that we have agreed are fundamental to children's learning and underpin the work we do. We aim to help children become creative thinkers who are not afraid to take risks and see mistakes as opportunities for learning. Children need good models to evaluate and have the opportunity to reflect and improve. We recognise that pupils are more likely to learn effectively if they are emotionally engaged in their learning by taking a multisensory



approach (visual, aural, kinaesthetic and social). Teachers therefore aim to include children in the process and be as creative as possible in seeking ways of making learning engaging and successful. Our aim is to maximise every learning opportunity to enable children to be the best they can be at that moment in time.

### **Definition of Learning:**

At Parsons Green Prep we have defined learning as:

‘A memorable experience which leads children to be able to practise new skills and commit knowledge to memory’.

It can be described by the following equation:

**Acquiring and practising skills + application of existing knowledge = new learning (synthesis).**

It should enable children to use their existing skills and knowledge and apply them to other contexts.

We believe that children learn best when learning is:

- modelled by teachers who demonstrate that they are life-long learners
- stimulating, challenging, creative, fun, varied and practical
- supported, progressive, reflective, interactive and enjoyable
- built on experience and provides opportunities for success for all children
- based on our knowledge of the children to ensure engagement for all
- based on high expectations of learning outcomes and is purposeful and relevant
- owned by the children. Children should have a role in the planning, choice of resources, feedback and agreement of next steps. Children should see their own passions and interests reflected within our curriculum

To enable learning to be at its best we also recognise that we should create the conditions for learning. These include:

#### Start of the school year

- Creating a safe and stimulating learning environment for children.
- Ensuring clear, consistent routines, rules, structures and boundaries are agreed, in place and adhered to.
- Organising and setting up a range of resources, questions, working walls, and artefacts.
- Ensuring consistent systems of rewards and sanctions.

#### Weekly

- Providing accessible labelled equipment.
- Teaching according to our EAL, SEND and AGT guidance.
- Developing and promoting an open mind-set through the use of effective differentiated higher ordering questioning

This policy will improve learning because:





- All staff are committed to achieving a consistent approach to learning.
- Expectations are clear for all.
- Children have a voice in their own learning and development.

Lessons should include the following:

- A purposeful learning dialogue.
- A mix of teacher-led and child-led learning with the latter making up the highest proportion of discussion and inquiry.
- Referring to the whole coverage and relevance of the learning to the real world; giving learning a purpose.
- A clear learning objective communicated to children.
- Identification of success criteria.
- Teachers will consider and incorporate where appropriate SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) expectations within the lesson.
- Questioning to ensure understanding and extend thinking.
- Mini-plenaries to clarify understanding, reinforce expectations and challenge misconceptions.
- Time for pupils to work (independently and collectively).
- Teacher modelling along with guided and shared learning.
- Opportunities for self- and peer-assessment against the learning objective and success criteria. In maths and English, success criteria for each lesson will be stuck in the children's books as per the Marking Policy.
- Summarising of learning, and then providing a short time for improvements and the sharing of next steps.

### **Points to reflect upon in planning**

#### **Differentiation**

We believe that children should be stretched to achieve their potential and that some children should be supported to work towards the learning objective. This means that differentiation is by the level of support provided, whether this is through adult support, resources used, questioning or learning objectives tailored to the working levels of individuals. We aim to ensure that our subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of our pupils and that individual tasks are accessible and stimulating for all pupils. (Please see our AGT, SEND and EAL policies for more information).

#### **Challenge**

Children will be extended and challenged through the higher levels of questioning in Bloom's Taxonomy and be encouraged to develop independence, synthesis and inquiry through challenges and problem-solving. 'RED (recognise, encourage and develop) Challenges' are used to extend the thinking of AGT and more able children. (Please see our AGT policy for more information).



### **Outdoor Environment**

Our outdoor environment is a vital element in teaching and learning at Parsons Green Prep. Staff should always be exploring meaningful opportunities to use the outdoor space and incorporate outdoor learning to ensure that learning is relevant, successful and fun.

### **Community**

We recognise that our school is part of a wider world. As a result, we make use of our community to support our learning. We also contribute to our local, national and global community where possible, e.g. through house charity work, Harvest Festival collections and the work of the school eco committee.

### **Observational indicators**

We recognise the importance of agreeing indicators that enable us to reflect, evaluate and improve our own practice. In addition to the development of our own lesson pathway, we are developing our own Outstanding Criteria and have adopted GL as a form of assessment and teacher assessment against learning objectives as tools to monitor and record children's progress and therefore the success of teaching and learning at Parsons Green Prep. The assessment framework in place allows for the regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work and for information gathered to advise and guide teaching to enable pupils to progress further.

We aim for teaching in the school to include 'excellent' understanding of pupils' needs, 'excellent' subject knowledge and using resources of 'excellent' quality.

### **Children**

We encourage children to;

- Develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Develop a growth mindset through challenges, problem solving and reflection.
- Distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- See their mistakes in a positive light and as opportunities for learning.
- Be resilient, persistent, reflective and resourceful members of society.
- Support their peers and be willing to share their learning with others.
- Support and promote the fundamental British values and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality and to society more widely.

### **Parents**

Parents are essential in helping to support their children's learning. In addition, we encourage parents to:

- Attend parent information/workshop/open day sessions.
- Have an open dialogue with the class teacher and teaching assistant.
- To support the school policies (e.g., homework).
- Provide opportunities for children to practise and extend their learning at home.
- Encourage and support children in bringing learning from home back into the classroom e.g., projects etc



- To support the school and work in partnership with additional support for learning (e.g. Individual Education Plans (IEPs), one-to-one tuition, booster classes, intervention programmes, and specialist teaching).

## **Responsibilities of our staff team**

### **Teaching team**

- To secure good learning outcomes for pupils.
- To secure a positive belief in the children that they can achieve.
- To support pupils in applying their learning to secure new learning (i.e. learning how to learn across contexts).
- To foster and promote fundamental British values and mutual respect, equality and tolerance of those with different faiths, beliefs and backgrounds.
- To support each other in our own professional development.
- To communicate effectively with children, parents and other professionals regarding children's learning and welfare.
- To offer a balanced presentation of opposing views where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils.

### **Senior leadership team**

- To be positive role models to their teaching teams.
- To support their teams.
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of learning within their roles and teams.
- To hold members of their team to account.

### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

As members of the teaching profession, we recognise that we are life-long learners and that we value our own professional learning.

We:

- direct ourselves as learners
- extend and enhance our professional skills
- develop our own awareness and self-esteem
- contribute fully to the learning and success of the school and its children.

This can take many forms including:

- peer coaching/mentoring
- action research
- collective and collaborative project work/observations/planning etc.
- performance management
- staff meetings/inset
- off-site courses
- professional reading

Please see our Continuing Professional Development Policy for more information.



## Sharing Best Practice

At PGP, we understand that sharing best practice is an effective way to enhance our continuing professional development. Therefore, at the beginning of each half term, members of the SLT, teachers and TAs will be sorted into teacher triads, a form of peer-coaching that enables all staff to learn from one another by tapping into different areas of expertise.

The teacher triad is a model that promotes informal and relaxed observations across the school. Over the half term, each member of the triad will visit another class, join in with the lesson and then discuss any 'takeaways' during staff meetings. Takeaways are positive and free from criticism and serve to enhance the proficiency and range of applied teaching and learning strategies across the school. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Learning environment features, e.g., displays, interactive whiteboard use/features etc.
- Supporting resources, both online and physical
- Behaviour management strategies
- Transition strategies
- Structure of learning, e.g., debate, presentation, investigation etc.
- Mini-plenaries and other use of on-the-spot assessment (AfL)

Along with feedback from teacher triads, best practice will also include sharing a set of books from a specific subject each week. This is not a book scrutiny but is another informal way to share best practice as well as provide subject leaders a snapshot of how their subjects are progressing across the school and that policies, such as the marking policy, are purposeful, effective and applied correctly.

## Assessment

The assessment framework in place allows for the regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work and for information gathered to advise and guide teaching to enable pupils to progress further. At Parsons Green Prep we aim for pupils to make above average demonstrable progress and attainment according to their ability. Please refer to our Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting Policy.

## Teaching and learning criteria

Teaching and Learning at Parsons Green Prep is underpinned by our school mission statement, aims and the ISI (Independent School Inspectorate) framework.

A PGP checklist of what makes a good lesson is attached at appendix 1.

When introducing a new topic all class teachers introduce the topic through questioning. This can take the following forms:

- KWL grid: 'what do you already know? (about this topic), 'what would you like to find out?'. The third question is a continuation of learning 'what have I learned?'
- Mind map: children create a mind map of everything they already know about a subject at the beginning of the first lesson. At intervals throughout the topic, children add what they have learned using either a different colour pen or date each branch



of the map. As well as providing important AfL opportunities, the teacher can also monitor progress across the class.

- Questions: Children ask questions about the topic which then get entered into a grid at the beginning of the topic. This is printed out and stuck in the children's books so that they can refer to them and answer each question as they are addressed throughout the series of lessons.

By allowing the children ask questions of surrounding the topic, we enable them to take ownership of their own learning. The class teacher will then take these questions and use these to inform his/ her planning and enhance engagement through tailored learning each week.

### **The Monitoring of Teaching**

Please see Teach and Learning (monitoring) policy for full details.

### **Classroom Observation Protocol**

The Head and senior management team (SMT) are committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- Carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy.
- Evaluate objectively.
- Report accurately and fairly.
- Respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

The total period for classroom observation arranged for any teacher will not exceed three hours per term, having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher. There is no requirement to use all three hours. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual. Information gathered during the observation will be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including to inform school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies in accordance with the school's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on staff.

Where evidence emerges about an individual's teaching performance which gives rise to concern during the cycle classroom observations, additional observations may be arranged subject to a revision meeting being held in accordance with regulations.

Classroom observations may be undertaken by SMT for monitoring purposes as well as opportunities for peer observation. Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day. It will be given during directed time in a suitable, private environment.

The Head and Head of Teaching and Learning have a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The Head and Head of Teaching and Learning have the right to drop in to inform their monitoring of the quality of learning.



## **Monitoring meetings**

At Parsons Green Prep we have the following teams to monitor performance:

### **Senior management team (SMT)**

This team meets once a week and is responsible for discussing and assessing the following indicators of performance as they arise:

- lesson observations
- pupil voice and questionnaire feedback
- parent and staff questionnaires
- teacher planning scrutiny
- creative curriculum scrutiny
- pupil book scrutiny
- examination of pupil reports
- pupil behaviour, punctuality and attendance data
- progress and attainment data

## **Evaluation of teaching and learning**

Evaluation is primarily a summative activity through the analysis of monitoring evidence which answers the questions, 'is the activity worthwhile?' and 'has it fulfilled its objectives and achieved its targets?'

The following are planned examples of evaluation within the school year:

- Self-evaluation of the School Development Plan (SDP) based on objectives, success criteria and methods of monitoring by the senior management team (SMT).
- Individual Performance Management includes evaluation for continuous professional development aligned to the School Development Plan and their objectives.
- Analysis and evaluation data including baseline assessments, attainment progress, qualification results, and patterns of exclusion, behaviour and attendance.
- Financial reports to identify revenue and capital spending and determine future budgets based on the areas determined for the School Development Plan.
- Any possible external accreditation.

### **The role of the proprietor**

The proprietor needs to be assured that monitoring and evaluation are strong within the school for organisational effectiveness and operational excellence. Day-to-day responsibility for this is devolved to the Director of Governance. Reports presented by the Headmaster to the Director of Governance and to the shareholders will enable the Shareholders to determine progression and impact against the School Development Plan. This information will allow the proprietor to discuss and determine future objectives and allocate resources.

### **Self-evaluation**

The self-evaluation is ongoing throughout the year and will inform the School Development Plan.



**Behaviour, punctuality and attendance**

A review of children's behaviour, punctuality and attendance will take place each term using Double First Engage database data.

**School policies**

School policies will be reviewed and ratified if necessary on an annual basis. Staff will be given access to copies of the policies to read and review.

**Appendix 1**

**EXCELLENT LESSONS CHECKLIST**

These principles are a combination of Barak Rosenshine's 12 Principles together with the "Excellent" Criteria from ISI

Start with a short review	
Pace – well planned activities, appropriate to the learners' needs	
Wow moments - engage and inspire	
Range of high quality resources, fit for purpose	
Differentiation SEN – Link to personal learning plans and focus on SMART targets. LA – visual aids, word banks, smaller set of questions, context for maths, MA – possibilities for moving onto more challenging work. HA – Widen the learning, reasoning questions, analysis and evaluation.	
Deliver new material in small clear steps	
Ensure instructions are clear and detailed	
Make the objective / challenge clear	
Key questions planned throughout the lesson (to differentiate, promote higher order thinking, gauge understanding, child initiated questioning)	
Provide modelled/scaffolded practice (eg WAGOLL, exploring concrete materials in maths, working through problem in a group)	
Collaboration with peers (partner talk, think pair and share, jigsaw, peer assessment etc)	



Children think for themselves, independent learning	
Check for understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask children to summarise</li> <li>• Ask children to hypothesise</li> <li>• Ask children to express an opinion / reflect</li> <li>• Ask why something works or might be true</li> <li>• Ask children why they think something</li> </ul>	
Monitor children when doing individual practice  (mini plenaries, share learning, focus groups, use of TA)	
Give feedback that is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular and specific</li> <li>• Of high quality</li> <li>• Low-stress</li> </ul>	
Ask children to explain what they have learned	

An excellent lesson will contain a lot (but not all) of the above features. Children should show that they can make links with what they already know or have been taught; they should ask higher order questions (what if... ? how come...?) and should show persistence and creativity in their approach to tasks.



Reviewed and approved:	Job title: Head
	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Next review due:	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2022