SOLIHULL

Preparatory School Teaching and Learning Policy

Owner: Senior Deputy Head (Academic) of the Preparatory School
Reviewer: Assistant Head (Junior School) and Assistant Head (Alice House)
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Version 8

Preparatory School
Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

This policy also applies to pupils in the EYFS setting.

Teaching and learning is at the very heart of school life. It is the means by which we offer, and put into practice, a curriculum that is relevant, broad and balanced, which builds on the child's previous knowledge to ensure continuity and progression and provides a solid basis for a lifelong love of learning.

We are committed to providing a learning environment in which all students are challenged through high quality teaching, supported by excellent pastoral care. We believe that a truly excellent school is about more than academic achievement: it is about developing a passion for learning, a capacity for independent and critical thinking, self-awareness and resilience, self-confidence and genuine interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

Our aim is to enable all our pupils, whatever their ability, to develop their competencies and learning skills so that they can be confident, happy and positive and not afraid to take risks and tackle challenging issues. We aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Above all, it should be fun!

Effective teaching and learning:

- Enables students to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills.
- Fosters self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves.
- Involves well planned learned sequences and lessons utilising effective teaching methods, activities and management of time.
- Shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of students; ensuring that these are taken into account when planning learning.
- Demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught.
- Utilises effective classroom resources of good quality, quantity and range.
- Implements effective assessment strategies to inform teaching and impact on student progress.
- Utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging students to act responsibly.
- Supports the promotion of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Promotes diversity and equality.

1. Teaching

Our teaching is based on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment and therefore we ensure that teaching and tasks set are appropriate to their level of ability. Planning considers the differing requirements of pupils, particularly the more able and those with identified special needs.

Schemes of Work

Good teaching starts with good schemes of work. Prep School Subject Leaders will ensure that schemes of work:

- specify content and methodology in accordance with best practice
- describe the resources needed and available for each topic
- describe appropriate teaching approaches to topics
- give guidance on lesson-planning consistent with this policy and other school guidance
- specify approaches to assessment

Planning

Planning is a crucial and necessary process in which all teachers are involved. Planning takes place in weekly year group meetings and in subject related meetings. Termly Schemes of Work and detailed weekly plans are drawn up by individual teachers, stored on the school network, and monitored by the Subject Leaders and Assistant Heads.

Planning is based on the Schemes of Work which have been developed by subject leaders in collaboration with the whole staff. Regular staff meetings and INSET sessions are held to discuss various aspects of the curriculum, ensure consistency of approach and that the highest standards and expectations are maintained.

The Head of Year will oversee these meetings, with a member of staff in each year group taking responsibility for planning across the year group for maths, science and English. The Head of Year will plan and oversee the WPD curriculum.

Lesson Planning

The exact approach to lesson planning will vary from subject to subject and it is impractical to lay down precise rules that will cover every possibility. However, it is expected that lessons will include planning that will cover:

- ensuring pace and shape in the lesson
- ensuring that there are opportunities for pupils to make both academic and personal progress
- ensuring that lessons are appropriately challenging to all pupils
- identifying work that is suitable for the pupil's age, abilities, learning needs and

personality types.

- arrangements for assessment of learning, formal or informal that can lead into effective feedback to pupils and shape the teacher's planning for future lessons in accordance with the school's assessment policy

Teaching Strategies

To facilitate pupils' learning a variety of teaching strategies are employed:

- Discussion and questioning (open and closed as appropriate)
- Modelling
- Interactive shared work
- Brainstorming or "mind mapping"
- Providing opportunities for reflection by pupils
- Providing opportunities for pupils to solve problems both independently and in small groups. Encouraging them to make links between concepts.
- Providing opportunities for repetition/reinforcement
- Intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to encourage development.
- Provide all pupils with opportunities for success.
- Encourage self-evaluation and target setting.
- Encourage perceptive and sensitive evaluation of other pupils' work.
- Encourage creativity and personal responses
- Enable the pupils to work with increasing independence, to provide a significant and growing influence on the purpose and nature of the learning, the task, the resources and approaches.
- Set and monitor appropriate and purposeful homework in accordance with the school's homework policy.

2. Learning Processes

Teachers plan their lessons by:

- **Setting suitable learning challenges:** giving every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.

- **Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs:** planning and setting high expectations and taking specific action to provide opportunities for all pupils to fulfil their academic potential, including pupils with SEND.

Pupils develop their skills through a variety of learning processes.

These include:

- Investigation
- Experimentation
- Observation
- Listening
- Discussion
- Asking questions
- Practical exploration and role play

- Retrieving information
- Imagination
- Repetition
- Problem-solving
- Making choices and decision making

When learning is effective pupils are motivated to:

- Improve their performance and be willing to learn from areas for development as well as strengths.
- Enjoy lessons and readily respond to the challenge of the task set.
- Take an interest in their learning.
- Care about the presentation of their work and look after the resources provided.
- Take responsibility for their own learning.
- Develop confidence to ask questions and ask for help when needed.
- Evaluate their achievements

3. Classroom Management and Organisation

The learning environment is managed in such a way as to facilitate different learning styles, and the needs of **all** pupils, enabling access to a full and appropriate curriculum entitlement. There should be:

- Whole class teaching
- Group work organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability groupings, mixed ability groupings, interest or friendship groupings etc.)
- Guided group work
- Collaborative learning in pairs or groups
- Independent learning
- One-to-one learning with the teacher or another adult

All areas of the learning environment are planned for, including Computing Suites, Hall, SMArt Centre, Library and outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of activities which will develop appropriate skills, concepts and knowledge.

The classrooms are organised to facilitate learning via a range of approaches including enquiry, active learning, practical and constructive tasks and the development of independence. Pupils are encouraged to organise their equipment appropriately themselves and given opportunities to work with different people at different times. Pupils work in a variety of contexts, within and beyond the school and will share experiences with a range of other people from the local community and beyond, so that skills of social investigation can be developed.

The purpose of the learning aspect of the policy is to ensure that the learning of pupils is systematically supported, guided and encouraged so that they become effective learners; understanding how they learn; possessing a range of effective study techniques; and take responsibility for their own learning and progress. All staff are responsible for creating the conditions for good learning.

Resources

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments where displays ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children and celebrates their work. 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.

Each classroom is equipped with basic resources appropriate to the age range. Subject leaders are responsible for the identification and provision of resources for their subject area and should audit their resources regularly. They have an annual budget. Teachers should draw the subject leader's attention to particular resource needs.

ICT

ICT is a major resource, which is used across the whole curriculum. There are 3 networked suites, each containing 20 desktop computers. In addition, each classroom has an interactive whiteboard. iPads are available for pupils' use in lessons, and each Form Tutor also has an iPad based in their form room to use for mirroring, research, video projects etc. Solihull Prep School is committed to delivering and developing all aspects of ICT in a systematic way through discreet and cross curricular ICT to ensure progression, continuity and purpose.

The Library

The library is a valuable and central resource for the School, run by the Librarian and groups of J4 librarian monitors. All pupils are encouraged and taught to use the library both as an essential component of the curriculum and for their own personal development. The library is kept stocked with relevant and up-to- date materials to aid independent learning.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Preparatory Management Group

Monitoring of teaching and learning by PMG takes place through informal walkabouts, formal lesson observations and as part of the PDR, Departmental Review and staff induction processes. Results of pupil work reviews are shared with PMG and discussed further, to ensure future actions are implemented and any immediate concerns addressed. The Assistant Heads and the Deputy Head (Academic) may assist and support with monitoring and evaluation and mentor new subject leaders.

To create the conditions for good learning throughout the Prep School they will:

- promote learning to parents and pupils
- promote whole school approaches that encourage enthusiasm for learning and continuous improvement among pupils
- monitor attitudes to learning across the school, by subject and by groups of pupils

- monitor attainment across the school, by subject and by groups of pupils
- evaluate findings and develop approaches to improve attitudes and achievement continuously
- intervene where attitudes and attainment are low
- ensure that all staff are appropriately trained, and are fit and competent to teach in the programmes of study that they are directed to participate in
- implement arrangements for the regular monitoring and review of the policy and strategies

Prep School Subject Leaders

Subject leaders are empowered to monitor, oversee and manage teaching and learning in their subjects through lesson observation, work trawls and reviews of planning. They are expected to inform the Deputy Head (Academic) of their findings, to identify particular strengths and to facilitate and promote progress and improvements where necessary. Effective monitoring by subject leaders helps to identify clear targets for improvement, to maximise pupils' progress in every subject.

In English and maths, monitoring is carried out termly and recorded on '321' summary page which is shared with PMG and then disseminated to staff. Foundation subject monitoring is carried out annually.

To create the conditions for good learning within their subject they will:

- inspire pupils' interest in the subject by promoting it in every way
- be a leader to staff in the subject in encouraging them to promote the subject and inspire pupils with an interest in it
- be a leader of staff in the subject in understanding pupils' learning and using this understanding by applying it to their lessons
- monitor the attitudes and achievements of the whole school and groups of pupils in the subject
- develop approaches to improve attitudes and achievement continuously
- support staff teaching the subject to create the conditions for learning
- support a culture of pupil reflection on their own work and learning processes

Classroom Staff

(NB: It is the policy of the school that whatever management responsibilities are held, once in a classroom all teachers are classroom teachers and that these responsibilities apply to all classroom teachers equally).

In the Prep School it is the responsibility of all classroom staff to encourage positive attitudes and aspirations among pupils, help them to develop the skills for study and take responsibility for their own learning. Classroom staff are responsible for creating conditions for good learning with the groups for which they are responsible.

They will:

- demonstrate high aspirations for pupils and make high demands of them
- plan lessons that are both accessible and appropriately challenging to all pupils in the class
- plan lessons that enable good progress and provide opportunities for both the academic and personal development of pupils
- assist pupils in developing skills of organisation and a willingness to persevere when work is hard
- report back to pupils on their progress in ways that celebrate success and encourage them to address mistakes and aspire to continuous improvement
- monitor and evaluate the commitment and enthusiasm of pupils and continually review and modify teaching approaches to take account of these reviews
- ensure that they keep up to date with appropriate learning and teaching strategies and techniques in their subject(s)

5. EYFS

Teaching and learning in EYFS is centred on a play-based approach to learning. A balance of activities is planned between pupils having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those planned by the teacher. During play, adults in the setting interact to stretch and challenge pupils further.

The children are provided with a range of interesting, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active both inside and outdoors. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communications skills and physical development. Through observations and assessment, each child's strengths, interest and needs are considered in order to provide a balanced curriculum.

Expectations

At Solihull Prep School we expect our staff to:

- treat children as individuals, respectful of their rights, values and beliefs, value their comments and contributions, enthuse and praise.
- provide a well ordered, secure environment which is stimulating and attractive.
- to offer equal opportunities in all aspects of school life, and celebrate, recognise and reward their achievements.
- to provide a challenging, stimulating curriculum to enable all children to reach their full potential.
- to ensure that learning is enjoyable, purposeful, progressive and continuous.
- to be positive role models – punctual, well prepared, organised and behave consistently.
- to maintain an up to date knowledge of current educational thinking and subject expertise, using and monitoring new ideas and methods as appropriate
- work collaboratively with a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.
- set high expectations for children's behaviour, effort and achievement.
- provide tasks with clear learning objectives and expectations, which maximise opportunities for open- ended investigation and independent learning.
- offer regular, constructive feedback and marking which gives clear strategies for improvement.

At Solihull Prep School we expect our pupils to:

- attend school regularly and always persevere to do their best work.
- to be organised and be responsible for their own belongings.
- to conduct themselves in an orderly, polite and respectful manner
- to take responsibility and initiative for their own learning, being self-motivated, independent learners.

At Solihull Prep School we expect parents to:

- ensure that the children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually.
- to provide support for the discipline within the school and the teacher's role.
- to be realistic about children's abilities and offer them encouragement and praise.
- make every effort to attend parents' meetings.
- work with the school if a problem occurs.
- give support with regards to homework.

6. Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the Prep School. All pupils are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or ability, are valued within our school and given every opportunity to achieve their best.

Required adjustments and support must be put in place for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to thrive. It is particularly important to encourage aspiration and to make appropriate adjustments to make learning accessible. This will involve close co-operation between all staff. It may involve the use of various aids to access (mechanical and technological), and adjustments to, lessons, and classroom organisation. (See Learning and Curriculum Support Policy)

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all children in their form and teaching sets. We treat the children with kindness and respect, treat them fairly and give them equal opportunities to take part in class activities.

We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We always insist on good conduct and behaviour. All our teachers follow the school policies with regard to discipline and behaviour. We expect all children to comply with any rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all.

Our overall aim is to make teaching and learning most effective so that pupils understand the quality of work expected and how to improve and achieve their very best.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies e.g. Assessment and Feedback Policy, Learning and Curriculum Support Policy, Curriculum Policy, Stretch and Challenge Policy

Appendix 1

Teachers' Standards

Preamble

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

Part One: Teaching

A teacher must:

1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviourwhich are expected of pupils.

2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impact on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English,

whatever the teacher's specialist subject

- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics

- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

4. Plan and teach well-structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time

- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity

- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired

- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching

- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively

- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these

- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development

- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

6. Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements

- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress

- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons

- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility
for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy

- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly

- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them

- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority

8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school

- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support

- deploy support staff effectively

- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues

- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position

- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions

- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others

- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.