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The purpose of the plan is to:

- This Policy sets out the principles and expectations behind our approach,
- Which is underpinned by the Teachers' Standards, and in doing so provides new and existing staff with a clear vision of the school's expectations, providing an agreed focus for monitoring.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Yarrow Heights School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility updated August 2023](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part-time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school contracts the services of third-party organisations to ensure regulatory compliance and implement best practices for:

- HR and Employment Law
- Health & Safety Guidance
- DBS Check processing
- Mandatory Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and other relevant training
- Data protection and GDPR guidance
- Specialist insurance cover

Where this policy refers to 'employees', the term refers to any individual that is classified as an employee or a worker, working with and on behalf of the school (including volunteers and contractors).

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Yarrow Heights School.

The policy documents of Yarrow Heights School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Table of Contents

Section	Content	Page
1	Introduction	4
2	Aims	4
3	Key features of the Teaching and Learning Policy	4
4	The 6 Pedagogical Principles	6
5	Challenge	6
6	Explanation	7
7	Modelling	7
8	Practice	7
9	Feedback	7
10	Questioning	8
11	Other factors to consider	8
12	Leadership of Teaching	8
13	References, resources, further reading	9
14	Review of Implementation	9

1. Introduction

It is our goal to nurture independent and agile learners who have the skills to be successful in an increasingly globalised and rapidly changing world. To achieve this, we must equip pupils to be critical and reflective learners in their own right by 'learning how to learn'. Pupils need to be engaged in their own learning, be part of the creation of their 'next steps' and have the opportunity to assess their own work and that of their peers in a meaningful and useful manner.

2. Aims

This policy promotes best practice and establishes consistency in Teaching and Learning across the whole school. It is our aim to motivate all of our pupils to have high aspirations, to want to do their personal best and to have the desire to be successful in and out of school. To prepare our pupils for a rapidly changing world, we need to create a stimulating and successful learning environment in order to nurture flexible, driven and creative learners.

This policy sets out the principles and expectations behind our approach, which is underpinned by the Teachers' Standards, and in doing so provides new and existing staff with a clear vision of the school's expectations, providing an agreed focus for monitoring.

There are two sources that have informed the Teaching and Learning Policy. The first is *Making Every Lesson Count* by Allison and Tharby (2015). This distils teaching and learning into 6 core principles explained in more detail below and is based on robust evidence and practical wisdom. The second source is Rosenshine's *Principles of Instruction* (2012). Again, based on research from cognitive science, the classroom practice of master teachers, and cognitive scaffolds to help teach complex concepts, this is an evidence-informed approach to teaching.

This policy also provides further references and reading in the last section and should be read alongside the supporting resources provided.

3. Key Features of the Teaching and Learning Policy

3.1 Mastery

More traditional teaching methods assign a set amount of time for coverage of certain topics. However, over the past decade, theory has made a notable move away from teaching to a time constraint, to varying the time to ensure that pupils are confident and proficient in the outcomes and objectives before moving on to new content. To summarise, there is a far greater emphasis upon depth of understanding rather than a thin breadth of understanding.

The mastery approach considers the critical links that pupils must make in their learning and that without certain concepts and processes true understanding is not possible. It would be unrealistic to think that a pupil could understand division without a deep understanding of multiplication. If the bedrock of understanding is not secure, any additional content or learning will not be either.

Mastery is less effective if prior high attaining pupils are accelerated through the curriculum, without embedding understanding and concepts. Stretch and

challenge are, instead, achieved through deep questioning, both by the teacher and by the pupil, and a demand for greater precision. In the same way, support is provided through strategies, such as varied and multiple representations. The mastery approach is built upon the belief that all pupils can reach a desired outcome with the right support and depth of understanding.

The mastery-learning approach means that our pupils will be able to:

- ✓ Have multiple paths to learn deeply in the ways that work best for them,
- ✓ Demonstrate their mastery in ways that are engaging and meaningful,
- ✓ Move at their pace so that they can find their balance of challenge and time needed to learn.



3.2 Curriculum design

A detailed, structured curriculum is mapped out across all phases, ensuring continuity and supporting transition. Fundamental skills and knowledge are secured first.

3.3 Lesson Design

Our skilled practitioners plan lessons built upon a secure understanding of the:

- ✓ Subject matter
- ✓ Individual pupils, and their prior learning
- ✓ Class group dynamics
- ✓ School and community context, and
- ✓ Evidence of what works within these contexts.

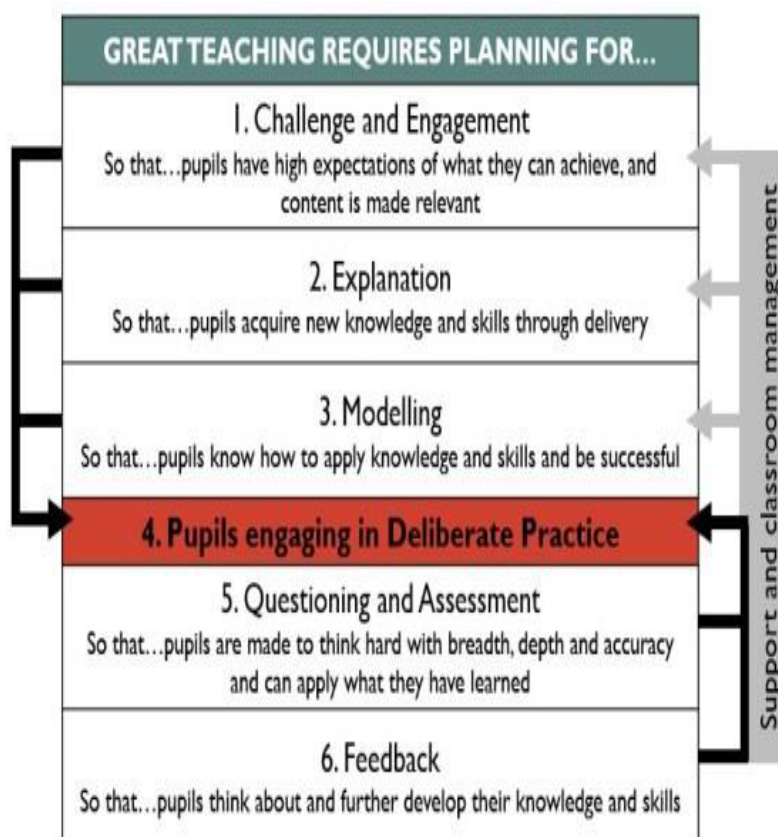
3.4 Adaptation and inclusivity

Adaptation occurs in the support provided in every lesson. Pupils are taught an age-related curriculum, but the questioning and scaffolding individual pupils receive in class as they work through problems will differ. For example, higher attaining pupils are challenged through more demanding problems which deepen their knowledge of the same content. Pupils' difficulties and misconceptions are identified through ongoing formative assessment and addressed with rapid intervention during the lesson. This is an inclusive approach to individual learners' needs, ensuring language, questioning, concepts and ultimately learning is accessible to all.

Explicit learning is important in the journey towards fluency and embedding knowledge. All tasks are chosen and sequenced carefully. Both individual work, group work and learning outside of the classroom, helps to develop deep and sustainable knowledge and transferable skills.

4. The 6 Pedagogical Principles

The Teaching and Learning Policy is encapsulated by the following diagram (Allison and Tharby 2015). Teachers are clear that their role is to teach in a precise way which makes it possible for all pupils to engage successfully with tasks at the expected level of challenge:



These 6 principles are key to effective teaching but, by its very nature, teaching is a creative profession, so there is no prescribed formula for the way they are implemented in the classroom. When dealing with varied subjects it is about how these principles are best implemented to present subject and lesson specific concepts in the most effective way to pupils.

5. Challenge

With the mastery learning model, rather than prejudging potential outcomes and stifling expectations by setting a host of differentiated learning objectives based on prior attainment, our practice is to identify a single challenging learning objective and then introduce scaffolding and progressive steps for each individual pupil to support their achievement of the objective.

- ✓ What do they struggle with?
- ✓ What switches them off?
- ✓ How much and what type of support do they respond well to?

All pupils may have different starting points but should aspire to the learning objective. This can be further enabled by adapting the teaching and learning, for example:

- ✓ Focused questioning

- ✓ Use of sentence starters
- ✓ Adult / peer support with a draft copy
- ✓ Use of apparatus
- ✓ Further challenge including problem solving opportunities for higher attaining pupils.

6. **Explanation**

Three key principles should guide explanations:

- ✓ How to link to and build on something already known.
- ✓ Begin each lesson with a short review of previous learning (rehearsal).
- ✓ Allow for the limitations of the working memory when asking pupils to take on board new information, giving instructions, asking them to sort key bits of information etc.
- ✓ Present new information in small steps with pupil practice after each step.
- ✓ Where possible, try to make the abstract concrete – think about and plan, how to make abstract ideas make sense.
- ✓ Drawing diagrams; demonstrations in science; sharing and discussing images; taking the learning outside etc.
- ✓ Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks.
- ✓ Direct explicit instruction.

7. **Modelling**

Explain the key ideas, then model how to do it / what to do with it.

- ✓ Model the creation of products/procedures. For example: write an essay → *show* them how to do it. Write it out on the board and discuss how/why you are doing each step as you go. Question them on what is being done. Explain, out loud, thought processes. If mistakes are made, point them out.
- ✓ Deconstruct expert examples and use worked examples – have an excellent finished example and share it, identifying why it is good.

8. **Practice**

During the lesson and over a series of lessons, plan in time for pupils to practise using new knowledge and skills.

- ✓ Practise for fluency and long-term retention – repeating things in order to master them; revisiting in subsequent lessons etc.
- ✓ Allowing pupils to make connections and see patterns.

9. **Questioning**

Some questions can be planned for, but some should be responsive to what is happening in the lesson. When considering planned questions, they should be to:

- ✓ Check for understanding – i.e. Use hinge questions that pupils should be able to answer at a certain point in the lesson, before they move on.
- ✓ Ask a large number of questions and check the responses of all pupils.
- ✓ Check for understanding.
- ✓ Provoke deeper thinking.

- ✓ Increase the ratio of participation and thinking of all pupils.

10. Feedback

For feedback to be meaningful, pupils should respond to the feedback. Feedback is a two-way process, and the teacher should use the pupils' feedback to inform future planning. See Academic Learning Assessment Policy for more information.

11. Other factors to consider

11.1 Role of the Environment

The school and the classroom environment are key in underpinning and supporting the 6 core principles. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs puts the learner first, with the responsibility of ensuring the learner's needs are met. Working walls and displays should evolve and be celebrated as the learning journey develops.

11.2 Role of parent/carers

Parents/carers have particular insights about the strengths, skills, interests, preferences, aspirations, anxieties and difficulties of their children. Accordingly, the importance of meaningful communications and co-operation between the school and the pupils' parents/carers cannot be overstated and is a key contribution to learning. This communication is an important part of developing understanding of individual needs as well as praising pupils in line with school rewards policies.

12. Leadership of Teaching

12.1 Staff performance

- The SLT will communicate to staff the importance of undertaking CPD.
- Staff performance will be reviewed in our annual appraisal process.
- Staff will be encouraged to complete self-evaluation surveys to critically assess their own performance as part of the annual appraisal process.
- Performance information collected from a member of staff's appraisal and self-evaluation survey will be used as part of their ongoing individual performance targets.
- Overall staff performance will be monitored and evaluated by the Head Teacher and will be collected using the following methods:
 - ✓ Lesson observations
 - ✓ Appraisal process
 - ✓ Surveys
 - ✓ Self-evaluation
 - ✓ Attendance tracking
 - ✓ Discussions with staff

- Staff conduct will be recorded and monitored in line with the Staff Code of Conduct and records of conduct will be made available to the Head Teacher and Governance Body.
- Disciplinary processes will be monitored by the Governance Body to ensure they are in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

13. References, resources and further reading

Allison. S & Tharby. T (2015) *'Making Every Lesson Count: Six principles to support great teaching and learning'*

Rosenshine. B (2010) *'10 Principles of Instruction'*

14. Review of implementation

The implementation of this policy is reviewed by the school's Senior Leadership Team in consultation with staff and a report is made to the Governance Body.

The school may submit to Cavendish Education proposals for amendments to this policy.