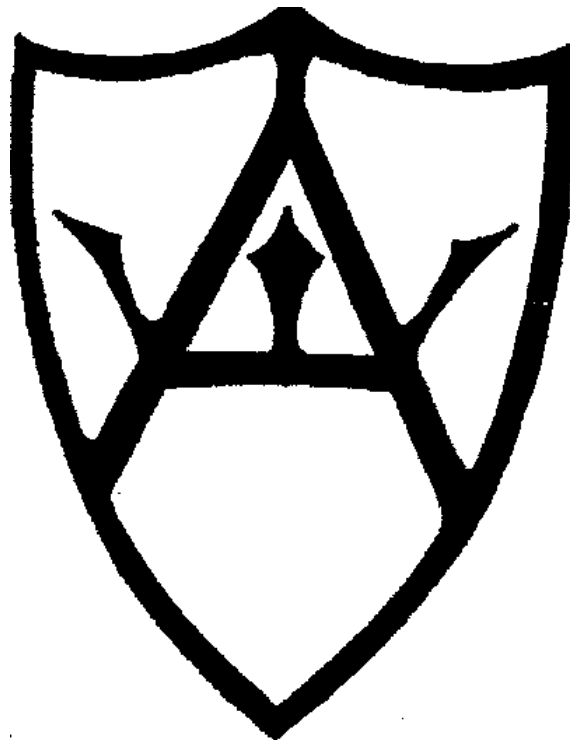# Alfriston School

Learning & Teaching Policy

Reviewed and agreed by staff: February 2016
Approved by FGB: March 2016

INTRODUCTION

At Alfriston School we believe that the policy for learning and teaching is the core policy of the school and informs best practice. It will enable all children to make progress in every lesson taught and will ultimately raise standards.

The policy reflects the beliefs of the governors and the staff. Its implementation is the responsibility of all members of the School.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To set out clear expectations for teachers.

- Raise the quality of learning and as a result improve standards.

- To provide clear guidance for learning and teaching ensuring consistency across the school.

- To ensure that teachers set high expectations so as to challenge all pupils.

- To outline good practice as regards classroom organisation and management.

- To support the aims and objectives of the Behaviour Policy in achieving high standards of discipline.

- To support teachers' effective planning and assessment.

EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHERS

As teachers we need to have high expectations of pupils and encourage them to produce high quality work. This refers to:

- The depth of their response to the tasks set.
- Their attitude towards learning and application.
- The pace of work.
- The presentation of their work.

Good teaching makes clear the importance of the above and provides the stimulus, knowledge and methods for children to do their best in all these respects.

We believe that successful inclusion can lead to the raising of standards for all. Our staff will set high expectations and provide a variety of opportunities to enable all pupils to achieve success and thrive within the educational environment. When planning the curriculum, teachers take account of prior knowledge and experiences that children bring with them to school, e.g.

cultures, languages, interests and abilities which all influence the way the pupils can participate in the lessons. Staff strive to identify and respond to individual learning needs and to ensure any achievements are recognised and celebrated.

Please see the Appendix to this policy which sets out in detail the expectations for teachers.

THE ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADERS

Each Subject Leader has a responsibility for securing high standards of learning and teaching in their subject, ensuring that practices improve the quality of education, meet the needs of and aspirations of all pupils, and raise standards of achievement in the school.

Subject Leaders have responsibility for:
- Supporting, guiding and motivating teachers and other adults in developing their subject knowledge and understanding; successful approaches to organisation and optimum use of resources.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning, the subject curriculum and progress towards targets for pupils and staff.
- Identifying future priorities and targets for the subject.
- The nature of the subject policy and scheme of work and how these support teachers' planning and provide continuity and progression.
- Monitoring and evaluating the quality of the children's work and whether it represents consistent progress and standards of achievement, and how they compare with national expectations.
- The adequacy of resources, their selection and provision.

Subject Leaders monitor progress in their subject through:
- observing lessons
- observing displays
- scrutinising children's work
- talking to children
- examining colleagues' planning

Subject Leaders advise the headteacher and governors on action needed. They are expected to feedback to staff directly.

Further guidance on the role of the Subject Leader can be found in the Subject Leader Policy.

PARENTS IN PARTNERSHIP

Parents will receive information about their children's achievements and learning experiences. Teachers will work in partnership with parents to know how they can support or assist their child's learning at home. This partnership is outlined in the Home School Agreement.

This will be ensured through the following:

- Good quality oral and written information about learning prior to the start of school.
- Written annual reports (providing test result data where applicable).
- Curriculum summary sheets will be sent out on a termly basis from each class.
- Parent/teacher interviews to discuss progress.
- The opportunity to share in school life, e.g. seeing presentations, assemblies, sports events, curriculum evenings and by supporting the 'Friends of Alfriston School' (PTFA) and helping as a volunteer in school.
- Providing opportunities at home to support the school in its effort to promote teaching and learning.

EQUALITIES

We aim to ensure that all pupils have equal access and opportunity in the curriculum, regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and that teaching and learning in our school reflects our diverse society and promotes inclusion.

APPENDIX – a guidance for teachers

1. A CLIMATE FOR LEARNING IN A WHOLE-SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

We believe that children learn most effectively when they are motivated and are therefore interested in the activities throughout the school. To foster this situation, we aim to:

- Provide a stimulating, informative and well-resourced environment in which the children can be happy and feel safe.

- Treat everyone with respect and fairness as a means to developing self-esteem. This includes child to child, adult to child, child to adult and adult to adult.

- Value contributions in a positive manner not only to encourage self-esteem but also to create a culture in which children are willing to take risks.

The pupils and staff have agreed on <u>five key 'Life Values'</u> (Feb 2016):

- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Curiosity
- ✓ Determination
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Independence

We place great importance on these in everything we do, and it links very well to our approach to the teaching, learning and assessment of the curriculum in order to equip the children with the behaviours and attitudes necessary for success and to develop a life-long love of learning.

<u>We will create a climate for successful learning by</u>:

- Setting challenging tasks, differentiated according to the next steps of the child, ensuring success.

- The staff having high expectations of all pupils (A Growth Mindset culture where all can succeed).

- Creating enjoyable and stimulating activities.

- Employing a variety of learning and teaching skills (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic).

- Deploying all adults effectively within the classroom to facilitate learning.

- Linking visits and visitors where appropriate.

- An emphasis on praising and rewarding for effort rather than for success.

2. CLASSROOM ORGANISATION

We aim to provide a stimulating, informative and well-resourced environment in which the children can feel happy and safe.

Classes are organised by age. The Foundation Stage forms Pearl Class. Years 1 to 6 are vertically grouped, two consecutive year groups combining to form one class: Years 1 & 2 (Ruby Class); Years 3 & 4 (Sapphire Class); Years 5 & 6 (Emerald Class).

Children's learning will take place in an environment which:

- Is safe and secure

- Is stable

- Is stimulating, attractive and informative

- Is well organised – uncluttered, tidy, clearly labelled resources

- Is comfortable, well lit, airy and welcoming

- Has appropriate resources which are well identified and easily available

- Has clearly defined and understood behavioural expectations with class agreements displayed

- Celebrates learning and effort

We will achieve this by:

- Providing stimulating displays incorporating:
  - prompts
  - interactive elements
  - celebration of children's work (displays mainly *outside* the classrooms)
  - having a designated working wall for English/Literacy and Mathematics in each classroom

- Displaying appropriate vocabulary

- Displaying a visual timetable

- Ensuring there is an activity for children to work on while teachers register their class

- Labelling resources clearly

- Children's writing will be in pencil until they can write fluently, neatly and in joined, cursive script. Children in KS2 will have the opportunity to earn a 'pen licence' and will then be able to write in ink pen with blue ink: no biros. By the end of Year 6, all children will be able to use pen, in

readiness for secondary school. Maths will be recorded in pencil. (See Presentation Policy for more details)

- Making water available for children in every classroom

- Routines will be common in all classrooms:

  - teachers will welcome pupils at the beginning of each day when taking the register
  - children will know where resources are located, use them freely, and return them in a condition ready for others to use
  - have similar strategies for children to use when they are stuck:
    - i   prompts
    - ii   learning buddies/talk partners

- PSHE, Science and PE will take place each week. RE and French may be taught in blocks over the year.

- One child in each year group from YR to Y6 will be given a special award ('Star of the Week') each Friday for a positive contribution towards the classroom/school ethos. Good learning certificates awarded for exceptional effort for the individual child shared with the school each Friday assembly. Children in the Foundation Stage will gradually be introduced to this system.

3. PLANNING

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage will plan according to the Early Learning Goals using appropriate planning formats.

Long-term planning

The Early Years and Years 1 & 2 plan using a three-year topic based programme, and Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 work to a four-year topic based rolling programme. Years 1 – 6 follow the National Curriculum 2014 in all subjects. There are schemes of work for music, French and R.E. Art & Design and Design Technology are mapped to the topics. We use a variety of resources, including Val Sabin, Tops Cards and Elevating Athletics for P.E., and SEAL plus supplementary activities for PSHE.

Medium-term planning

Every opportunity will be exploited to provide cross curricula work where skills from one subject are applied in another. This is particularly true of maths and literacy skills. Assessment opportunities will be planned in. There will be an overall map of work for the term.

Where schemes of work with individual lessons set out are used, the map will identify which part of the scheme is used. For other subjects the following will be clear:-

- Learning intention

- Opportunities for assessment, including questions

- Resources, visits and visitors

- Timescale

- Differentiation

- Cross-curricular links

All medium term plans are saved on the 'O' drive.

Short-term planning

There are set templates for these stored on the 'O' drive.

For Years 1 – 6, in English, there will need to be weekly planning to show:-
- Daily English lessons which will regularly incorporate elements of grammar and punctuation
- Spelling or phonics or both (depending on the needs of the children) sessions – daily for KS1, at least twice weekly for KS2
- Handwriting – regularly, depending on the needs of the children
- Class story time – at least twice weekly

For Years 1 – 6, in Mathematics, there will need to be weekly planning to show:-
- Daily Maths lesson, including Mental Maths and arithmetic

For Years 1 – 6, in Science, there will need to be planning to show:-
- Specific teaching
- Opportunities for scientific enquiry – at least twice a term

Weekly planning will be done by individual teachers. Short term (weekly) planning for English, maths and science is essential. Plans should show:-

- Learning intentions for each lesson

- The same learning intention but differentiated objectives for lower, middle and high ability and for SEN (using the terms: mild, hot, spicy)

- Success criteria, usually presented in the format of a 'success ladder', which will be developed with the class.

- How support will be provided e.g. where adults will work, prompts, apparatus, word cards etc.

- Main points to include in a plenary session

- Assessment opportunities

- Resources to be used, including ICT to be integrated into the classroom

- Use of other adults

- Key questions/vocabulary

- Home Learning, if appropriate

Learning Intentions & Success Criteria

The learning intention for every lesson should be on children's work. This can be done via a sticker or written in.

Success ladders are used which will enable children to see the progression and to challenge themselves in taking the 'next step' in their learning. These may be linked to key features of a genre or a subject.

Success criteria and success ladders can be on stickers or children can write these in their book, or they can be displayed on the board. Children are encouraged to develop success ladders and success criteria to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning; to become active learners.

Children should be actively encouraged through plenaries and mini plenaries in every lesson to use these as a way of reflecting on and assessing either their own or others learning.

Availability of plans

All planning should be available to supply teachers. Weekly plans are to be on the 'O' drive by Monday morning and will be checked by the Headteacher and/or the Senior Leadership Team.

Although plans will be ready by this time (showing the unit of work, learning intentions, skills and progression), it is understood that planning might be adapted throughout the week according to the teacher's assessment and the needs of the children.

If teachers are absent, they should send plans to the school by email.

All support staff (Teaching Assistants, INAs) should receive plans in good time and be involved in the planning process. Teachers and support staff discuss the week's plans during assembly time.

4. LEARNING

Learners should be successful, active, independent and co-operative.

Successful learning within the classroom will be encouraged through and identified by:

- All children know what to do, why they are doing it, what they are learning

- All children make progress

- Children knowing how to use and are using strategies to solve their learning obstacles

- Children knowing and reviewing their personal targets regularly

- Being engaged and on task

- Being happy

- Being independent

- Being proud of their achievements

- Being enthusiastic and confident

- Having a high self esteem

- Being emotionally competent

Active learners will:

- Be engaged

- Respond to challenge

- Take initiative

- Share learning

- Maintain concentration

Independent learners will be:

- Able to make appropriate choices

- Responsible and take initiative

- Able to think laterally

- Confident and fully engaged in their learning

- Able to work on an extended activity

- Able to use resources effectively

Co-operative learners will:

- Respect the opinions of others

- Support each other

- Work as part of a group

- Listen to others

- Be prepared to learn from others

- Be aware of others and empathise with them

It is important children are explicitly taught the skills above on occasion. For instance children can be explicitly taught what good listening looks like. They can be given activities which focus on this key skill. They can be taught to work as a group, discussing beforehand what difficulties may arise and how to solve these.

It is also important to realise that children can be well behaved, but passive rather than active learners.

5. TEACHING

What makes good teaching?   Using good assessment for learning.

- Make sure before you start a unit of work that you know what your children know and can do. This normally means undertaking a pre-unit assessment activity. It also means that accurate records should be kept at the end of units.
- Make sure you know what the next step is for the differing levels of ability.

Plan your lessons with care
- Have a tight focus for teaching.
- Know the pre- step and the post step to the one you are teaching.
- Ensure maximum participation by all children in the whole class in the whole class teaching using talk partners, mini whiteboards, activity, visual support, random name generators.
- Do all children need the same input – ie. can they just have a reminder and then start?
- Use a model, scaffold, independent framework for learning and tasks.
- Plan where you will focus teach to take children on - ensure the focus is a small next step.
- Put higher order questions on your plan (use of Bloom's Taxonomy).
- Plan how to ensure children can work independently.

- Model what you want the children to do and achieve.
- Scaffold learning so children can begin to achieve on their own (apparatus, adult support, writing frame, short burst, step by step prompts)
- Encourage independence from all children at some point during the week.
- Opportunities for mini-plenaries.
- Use working walls effectively and constantly refer to them.

Lesson structure

Lessons should be structured so that all children can progress during the lesson. In parts of the lesson which involve large groups/whole class, the aim is to maximise participation by the children.

There should be clear differentiation for children of different ages and abilities as appropriate.

All teachers are expected to show efficient and effective teaching methods. Lessons will be well structured and have clear learning intentions. Teachers will have a secure, up-to-date knowledge of subjects within the primary phase. This will be achieved by:

- Sharing expertise

- Attending courses/training

- Reading subject matter

Teaching will involve whole class, groups, pairs or individuals and will:

- Be well-paced and challenging

- Have active learners

- Include good modelling and scaffolding

- Include focus group teaching

- Have visual and other support materials.

- Encourage the children to support each other.

- Have connections with previous learning/life skills.

- Be linked to whole-school progression

- Be matched to pupils' needs through differentiation

- Be linked to targets

- Include opportunities built into the process for everyone to succeed

- Be inclusive and include a variety of teaching styles (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic)

- Be supportive and non-threatening

- Be interactive and enjoyable

- Use praise to recognise effort and achievement

- Use support staff

- Identify opportunities for assessment

Presentation

All work should be dated and have a learning intention. Children are expected to present their work as neatly as they are able. For instance older children should use a ruler to underline the date and learning intention. Children are not allowed to doodle in or on books.
For further details, please see our 'Presentation Policy'.

Using support staff

Support staff should be fully utilised throughout the lesson if present. It is essential for them to have a clear plan and focus.

Support staff need to be supporting the children in *all* parts of the lesson and should usually try to remain in the classroom area rather than working with a group of children outside the classroom.

The teacher is still responsible for the learning of the children who are being supported by the additional adult, therefore the teacher must make time to monitor those children, ie. Planning time in the lesson to sit with these children too and teach/model/assess what they are doing with the additional adult present, before returning to focus elsewhere.

Additional adults are not just to be used to support SEN children. They could be used in many a ways at the teacher's discretion, but these could include:-

Helping with behaviour management, supporting less able or children with less concentration in whole class input, hot marking with the class, supervising the class as whole while teacher teaches a focus group, teaching a focus group, facilitating independent work, observing and assessing.

Where appropriate or needed, a teacher can also direct a TA or INA to do admin work, ie. Photocopying, gathering resources, recording, display. However, this should as far as possible be avoided within lesson time and

should in any case be carried out *outside* the classroom, away from the children at all times.

SEN

Children who are on the SEN Register may need additional support to make progress in class. The child with SEN must have their specific needs taken into account. Without quality first wave teaching aimed at their level they will not make good progress.

This could include all or some of the following:-
- Pre- teaching a concept
- Additional reinforcement of a concept
- Apparatus
- Individual dictionary/ word card/ phoneme mat
- Written instructions ('Communicate in print')
- Use of a laptop or other electronic devices
- Adult support
- A different task from the rest of the class
- A simplified task

The Inclusion Manager should be consulted for additional advice. Class teachers are responsible for planning and monitoring any additional support given to SEN children. Class teachers need to liaise with any staff who provide support and get regular feedback on progress (verbal and/or written). They should also provide guidance to such staff when pupils are finding a particular aspect of learning hard.

6. ASSESSMENT, MARKING & FEEDBACK

Summative assessment

 Assessment of children's progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage takes place through the early learning goals. A baseline is completed on starting school and updated every six weeks.

Teachers in KS1 and KS2 update assessments for reading, writing and maths for each pupil onto SIMS every term. These provide the basis for Pupil Progress Meetings and provide data that staff can use to analyse.

The National Statutory Assessments take place towards the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2: 7-year-olds) and Key Stage 2 (Year 6: 11-year-olds).

Phonics screening for Year 1 and those Year 2 who did not reach the required standard in the test in the previous year, takes place in June.

At regular intervals throughout the year, appropriate tests are used in reading, writing and maths to triangulate teacher assessments.

Formative assessment

Teachers will:

- Assess progress against targets set and feed back to pupils

- Assess progress by marking and planning in time to feedback to pupils

- Assess progress through observing

- Assess progress by questioning children about their work

- Track pupils' progress in order to set future targets

- Record assessments and pass on information to the next class

- Celebrate children's achievements eg. 'Star of the Week', award certificates, house points, 'terrific texts'

Please also see the Marking & Feedback Policy and the Assessment Policy.

Record Keeping - other subjects

It is important to keep a track of children's achievement in different subjects. In particular more detailed records should be kept where written work is not available to support assessment for instance in reading.

- For reading in KS1, every child will be heard read and their progress recorded.
- All KS1 and KS2 children have an individual reading record book which is used to record their reading at home.
- Individual records should be kept more frequently for children who are still learning to decode. This may take the form of assessment or comments against specific targets.
- For English, Key Stage 1 track children's achievement on the phonic tracker and against the high frequency word list every term/6 weeks. Key Stage 2 track progress against the high frequency word lists and regular spelling tests.
- For maths, Key Stage 2 (and where appropriate key Stage 1) will track pupil achievement in mental maths, including multiplication tables.

  It is important that children's progress in other subjects should be recorded. This is particularly true when a child is not confident with a topic or has been absent. This may be notes on plans/work or tick lists as the teacher chooses.

Marking and feedback

Marking and feedback is part of a child's learning journey and should show the child what they have done well and what they need to do next.

(See Marking & Feedback Policy)

7. ABSENCE

Absence can affect progress. We are aware of children's absence and if they miss a unit of work, they may need to be given work to do at home to catch up or have some extra boost in school.

Absences of over 10 sessions (5 days) result in a letter warning parents that it may affect progress.

8. REPORTING TO PARENTS

Reports are provided twice a year. The main report is given at the end of the year and a progress report is given mid-year. Parents' evenings take place in Terms 1 and 3.

9. LIAISON WITH PARENTS

The school welcomes parents into the school by:

- Involving them in the classroom

- Making use of their expertise and skills

- Celebrating work and achievements by inviting them into celebration assemblies and class presentations

The school will involve them in the education of their child by:

- Providing written reports

- Communicating with parents about issues in school, providing positive information as well as negative

- Providing class newsletters informing parents of termly plans

- Providing whole school information through a newsletter

- Encouraging parents to take an active part in helping their children to practise and reinforce what they learn in school

- Informing parents of work to be done at home

- Asking parents to support the school in allowing children a quiet space and time to do learning at home, to offer help and advice to children where appropriate and ensure that learning completed at home is returned on time

- Formal and informal parents' meetings

- Providing workshops to update or support parents on teaching methods, home learning activity ideas or use of technology

- Using the school website to ensure parents have up-to-date information

10. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

The school has a Behaviour Policy (reviewed at least annually) which is followed and available for parents to view. Please be aware our aim is to praise the positive and use preventative strategies for the negative.

The whole school will be involved in agreeing acceptable behaviour both within individual classrooms, around the school and on the playground. Staff will have high expectation with regard to behaviour.