



Teaching & Learning Policy

In God's hands, we love, learn, grow and inspire

"What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like the mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on the earth. Yet, when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

Mark 4: 30-32

Date Approved	11.6.26
Reviewer	Liz Orton
Reviewed	April 2026
Next Review Due	April 2027



Vision

This policy outlines our vision, aims and practices for effective teaching and learning across our schools. As a trust, we are committed to our vision,

'Opening minds, creating opportunities in a safe and nurturing environment where children can explore and ignite a passion for a life-long curiosity to learn about themselves and the world around them'.

We aim to improve the life chances and choices for all of our pupils through the delivery of high quality, knowledge-rich lessons, delivered in inclusive classroom environments. Our values of integrity, inclusivity, resilience, kindness and curiosity underpin everything we do.

Aims

- Ensure consistent high-quality practice across our schools in teaching, learning, assessment and provision of learning environment.
- Provide opportunities for the staff to develop their own practice, assisting the children to become curious, independent and effective learners.
- For effective monitoring to ensure consistently high expectations across all schools.

The policies, procedures and plans for the curriculum, learning (objectives, resources, processes, organisation of learning situations), behaviour for learning, assessment and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) should complement each other in order to provide a cohesive experience for learners and staff.

'Research shows that high-quality teaching and learning is the most important factor in improving attainment outcomes.'

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), 2022.

Our Guiding Principles



Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. We recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, the community and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit all should work closely together to support the process of learning.

Working in partnership, we aim to ensure that children can learn effectively by:

- Having their basic physical and emotional needs met through a supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment
- Encouraging all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being
- Providing the physical space, tools and resources needed to access learning
- Planning a challenging curriculum where children can see the relevance, understand the task and the intended outcome
- Providing opportunities for children to practise what they are learning in both familiar and new contexts
- Identifying and supporting the needs and aspirations of all individuals
- Supporting them to manage their emotions and to persevere when learning is hard
- Helping to develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work both independently and collaboratively
- Recognising that all learners make mistakes and mistakes can help us learn.

Our Ethos

The ethos and culture underpin the agreed aims of the schools. Through daily practice the staff will contribute to the development of this ethos through:

- Providing a calm and effective working environment, in which each child can produce their best work
- Providing a welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered
- Providing positive role models
- Providing a fair and disciplined environment, in line with the school's Positive Relationships & Behaviour policy
- Effective management of their professional time
- Developing links with all stakeholders and the wider community
- Valuing and celebrating pupils' success and achievements
- Reviewing personal and professional development in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.

Roles and Responsibilities

Learning and teaching is a shared responsibility, and all members of the school community have an important part to play.

All members of the school communities should work towards the school's aims by:

- Holding children in high esteem as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs
- Fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community
- Providing a well-ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations
- Offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures
- Encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviours and work
- Working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

Teaching Staff

Teachers will provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to encourage all children to reach the highest standard of achievement. They will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>
- Actively engage parents/carers in their child's learning. For example, via newsletters, website, letters, parent meetings, workshops, assemblies etc.
- Ensure that learning is progressive and continuous
- Know pupils well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs
- Have high expectations and celebrate achievement
- Be positive role models, punctual, well prepared and organised
- Keep up to date with educational updates and engage with professional development opportunities
- Provide clear information on school procedures and pupil progress

- Establish links with the local community to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life
- Work collaboratively with wider agencies in education to develop a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.

Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning by:

- Ensuring that their child is 'school ready'
- Valuing education and encouraging their child as a learner
- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health
- Supporting the role and decisions of the teacher within school
- Participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment
- Communicating with the school to share information promptly to discuss matters which may affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour
- Supporting and giving importance to any home learning
- Encouraging their child to take responsibility for their own learning
- Attending parent workshops and parent consultations

Pupils

Pupils will:

- Take responsibility for their own learning, and support the learning of others
- Meet expectations for good behaviour for learning at all times, respecting the rights of others to learn
- Be curious, ambitious, engaged and confident learners
- Engage with learning without causing disruption or distraction to others
- Know their targets and how to improve, taking increased responsibility for their own learning.



Governors

Governors at our school will:

- Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to teaching and learning
- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies on pupils' progress and attainment
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation

The community is invited to support the school by:

- Contributing to activities, such as assemblies, specialist outings and clubs.
- Presenting themselves as positive role models to be emulated
- Volunteering to support activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills

Senior leaders

Senior leaders will:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone
- Hold staff and pupils to account for their teaching and learning

- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across the school
- Manage resources to support high-quality teaching and learning
- Provide support and guidance to staff through coaching and mentoring
- Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Promote team working at all levels, for example by buddying teachers up to work collaboratively where appropriate
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly

Planning

The foundation for curricular development is the School Improvement Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff, and approved by governors. This is then broken down into Action Plans which ensure that areas are addressed and actions taken in a systematic and efficient way.

We are committed to following the programmes of study as outlined in the National Curriculum 2014 to ensure we prepare our learners for today and the future.

Our approach is cross curricular which enables us to teach subject specific content through a range of topics which engage and enthuse young learners. Plans build upon prior learning, the needs and interests of the individual cohort of children.

Planning is shared with parents via our school website and is updated termly <https://pencombe.hmfa.org.uk/> Information can be found under the classes tab where each class has its own area with planning.

Subject Leaders and teaching staff regularly review learning progress in each subject, carefully monitoring progress and coverage. They will:

- Help to create well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum plans that build knowledge and skills
- Ensure that they keep up to date with most recent developments in their subject through research, wider reading and CPD
- Drive improvement in their subject/phase, working with teachers to identify any challenges
- Monitoring progress in their subjects and advising staff and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on action needed; taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects
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- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice
- Work collaboratively with other subject leaders across the wider trust to share good practice, moderate progress, monitor, review, provide/attend training and any other practice which will benefit the learning in their subject.

Adaptive Teaching

Teaching in our schools is fully inclusive and all staff adapt learning to cater for the individual strengths and needs of all pupils.

We have an integrated topic approach and provide regular opportunities to take the curriculum outside of the classroom environment. This engages all learners and effectively caters for their varied learning styles. Children have the opportunity to work individually, in pairs, small and large groups.

We believe this holistic approach will help our children to develop the skills needed to become responsible global citizens. Work is adapted appropriately to take account of the ability of each child using different strategies to access the curriculum which can include:

- Providing practical first-hand experiences
- Scaffolding work to support the child in completing the task
- Base classroom practice on Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction (Appendix 1)
- Build in opportunities for paired speaking and listening during exposition time to enable children to share ideas
- Using a variety of teaching strategies - individual work, pairs, mixed groupings, single sex groupings and ability groupings and whole class as appropriate
- Support staff supporting the child and or the groups creating opportunities to discuss planning and needs/progress of children on a regular basis
- The background and culture of each child is valued. Opportunities must be provided for these experiences to be shared at appropriate points within the curriculum
- Provide opportunities across the curriculum for reading for pleasure and comprehension
- Provide opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of concepts and skills through Mastery and challenge
- Children are treated with equal respect and the appropriate behaviour management strategies
- Children's individual education and medical needs are considered in curriculum planning and organisation of the classroom and resources.
- Staff ensure that they are aware of the Educational Health Care Plans for all children in their classes/groups.
- Teachers to create and deliver individual provision maps for children with additional needs and provide opportunities for the children to progress and achieve their targets in a positive and supported way.

Targeted classroom support or interventions are provided for children for whom English is an additional language. Nurture opportunity exists to provide support for children who may have missed out on some experiences or developmental milestones. These experiences may be curriculum based but they may also be of a social or emotional nature, if these difficulties are impeding the learning of the child. We have an ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) to support our children with this.

More able

We ensure that we meet the needs of our more able children by:

- Recognising the needs of more able pupils within a framework of equal opportunity
- Adapting a personalised and varied approach with regard to meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of more able pupils
- Ensuring that more able pupils are motivated to achieve to the best of their ability and set standards of excellence as an example for others to follow



- Providing opportunities for more able pupils to work at high cognitive levels and /or to develop specific skills
- Fostering a culture of achievement by creating a climate of learning and excellence throughout the school
- Working in partnership with our trust schools to provide collaborative opportunities to promote and extend children's learning and development alongside peers with a similar strength
- Ensuring that during teaching time, more able students are challenged to extend and reach their potential through challenging tasks
- Making sure teaching staff are trained and well-informed of a range of strategies to support more able pupils.

Special Education Needs

Our staff are committed to providing care and education to all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). A child has special educational needs if he or she has difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for him or her to learn than most other children of about the same age. Many children will have a special need of some kind during their education. Some children will need extra help and support for some or all of their time at school. For detailed information about how we support children with SEND, please read our SEND Policy <https://pencombe.hmfa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/HMFA-SEND-Policy-.pdf>

Learning Environment

All areas of the learning environment are considered. This may include the classroom, outside areas and the wider community. We provide a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding. These spaces will be kept safe, clean and ready for pupils to use them.



The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- Accessible resources for learning such as books, worksheets and other equipment
- Clearly labelled, comfortable and attractive zones such as reading corners and quiet areas
- Accessible resources for learning such as books, worksheets and other equipment
- A seating layout that allows everyone to see the board and participate
- Displays that celebrate and support pupils' learning
- Labels and posters should be used wherever possible/appropriate to reflect the language diversity in the school
- In KS1, areas for imaginative play will change regularly to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner
- Classroom support is available in the form of both learning support assistants and volunteers. These are used at the discretion of the class teacher.

Pupils are expected to be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

Learning Processes and Learning Styles

We recognize that children enter school at different stages of development – academically, socially and emotionally. Children learn in different ways and make progress at different rates.

While learning, children develop their skills through a variety of processes and learning styles. These include:

- investigation
- experimentation
- listening
- observation
- talking and discussion
- asking questions
- child-initiated play
- practical exploration and role play
- retrieving information
- imagining
- repetition
- problem-solving
- making choices and decision-making.

At HMFA we recognise the importance of key skills. Opportunities will be made available across the curriculum to develop:

- application of number;
- communication;
- computing skills;
- problem solving;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance.

Thinking skills will also be developed across the curriculum. This will include:

- creative thinking;
- enquiry;
- information processing;
- reasoning;
- evaluation.

Home Learning

Home learning, or homework, provides opportunity to practise basic skills and can also support pupils to make the link between what they have learnt in school and the wider world. It also provides the opportunity to consolidate learning and help to embed learned knowledge into the long-term memory, which positively impacts their education.

Home learning will be reasonable in challenge and length, and its purpose will be clearly outlined alongside each task. Children should understand exactly what they are expected to do, how to do it, and how long it should take. Home Learning is most effective when done in a supportive, secure environment, with focused time set aside without distraction.

Across our schools, we set regular home learning activities for parents to support their children with, such as:

- practising phonics
- regular reading with an adult (recorded by parents in the reading diary)
- practising spellings (spelling logs provided)
- practising multiplication tables using Times Table Rock Stars (TTRS).

Parental support with these basic skills is imperative. Children who are well supported with practising these skills make better progress than their peers who don't have parental support.

'Parental involvement in children's education from an early age has a significant effect on educational achievement and continues to do so into adolescence and adulthood.'

Taken from data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS)

Home learning helps parents to keep abreast of what their child can and cannot do. It can be a great way to encourage children to talk about their work to their parents and explain what they are doing and how. This also helps to view learning as a life-long process and not just restricted to school hours.

In addition to learning in the school and home environment, we also provide wider experiences for our children such as educational visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. These are highly valued and are used to widen children's experiences and support their learning across a range of subject areas and topics.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment on a regular basis using this information to feed into our planning.

Formal summative assessment

- Early Years Baseline within six weeks of starting school
- Year 1 Phonics Check in June
- Year 2 Phonics Check in June for children who did not pass in Year 1
- Year 2 SAT Papers (optional) and Teacher Assessments in June
- Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check in June.

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child's progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. We make our assessments through a variety of ways including:

- Discussions with the child/children to assess understanding
- Short tests in which pupils write answers, including 'hot' and 'cold' tasks in writing
- Specific assessment activities set for individual pupils
- Observations.

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through discussion and the marking of work. Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work. Effective feedback:

- Helps children understand how to improve and comments aim to be positive and constructive
- Is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher
- When written, is used sensitively and with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time. This will vary according to the age, ability and task.

Monitoring and evaluation

We provide regular targets for pupils and provide termly verbal reports against these at parents' evenings. Assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform future planning.

We will monitor teaching and learning in our schools to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points. We monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Regular pupil progress meetings
- Pupil Voice
- Planning reviews
- Book Looks
- Meetings with parents

Reporting to parents is done at least twice a year through formal consultations and once through a written report. Parents of children with additional needs also have termly meetings to discuss progress and set new targets. Open classroom events are held throughout the school, where children have the opportunity to showcase the hard work and progress in their books and discuss this with their parents. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents to engage with school about their child. We welcome the communication whether it be to celebrate successes or discuss challenges.

Impact of high-quality learning

Impact reveals itself in the following ways in children as they:

- Make progress because of the good teaching they receive
- Show high levels of interest and engagement and work purposefully
- Have a self-belief in what they can achieve, and express high aspirations for themselves
- Talk confidently about what they are learning and identify the next steps they need to take
- Actively reflect on and evaluate their own work/actions
- Take increasing responsibility for their own learning and progress towards independent learning
- Are able to problem solve and explore their learning
- Express their own views on their achievements.



Teachers at HMFA schools feel that pupils learn best when:

- they are happy, healthy and alert – receptive and positive
- they are interested and involved – learning is relevant and stimulating
- the purpose of a task is understood – they understand why they are doing it
- they feel secure – in terms of environment, relationships and learning
- they feel valued – teachers and other adults care about their development as learners
- they have opportunities to explore and take risks
- they are actively involved, making choices and taking responsibility in their learning
- they have an element of control and can work with independence
- they receive positive feedback and praise for achievements
- the learning environment is well-organised and resources are easily accessed
- tasks are differentiated, matched to the child
- learning is built on existing knowledge and experience – clearly defined small steps
- they have opportunities to talk about their work, reflecting, discussing and sharing ideas
- the teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and motivated
- they have clearly defined targets which they can successfully achieve e.g. appropriate time scale

Links with other policies

- This policy links with the following policies and procedures:
- Positive Relationships & Behaviour policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy
- SEND policy and School Information report
- Feedback and Marking Guidance
- Home-school agreement
- Parent Engagement Strategy
- Assessment policy
- Equality information and objectives

THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

TAKEN FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION

This poster is from the work of Barak Rosenshine who based these ten principles of instruction and suggested classroom practices on:

- research on how the brain acquires and uses new information
- research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.

HOW2
teachinghow2s.com

01 DAILY REVIEW



Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.

02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS



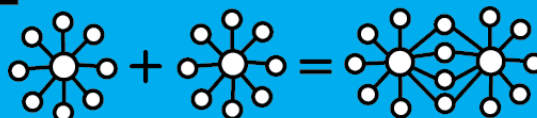
Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.

03 ASK QUESTIONS



The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.

04 PROVIDE MODELS



Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.

05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE



Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarise new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.

06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING



Less successful teachers merely ask "Are there any questions?" No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.

07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE



A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.

08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS



Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.

09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE



Independent practice produces 'overlearning' — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students' working memory.

10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW



The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.

Understanding Adaptive Teaching

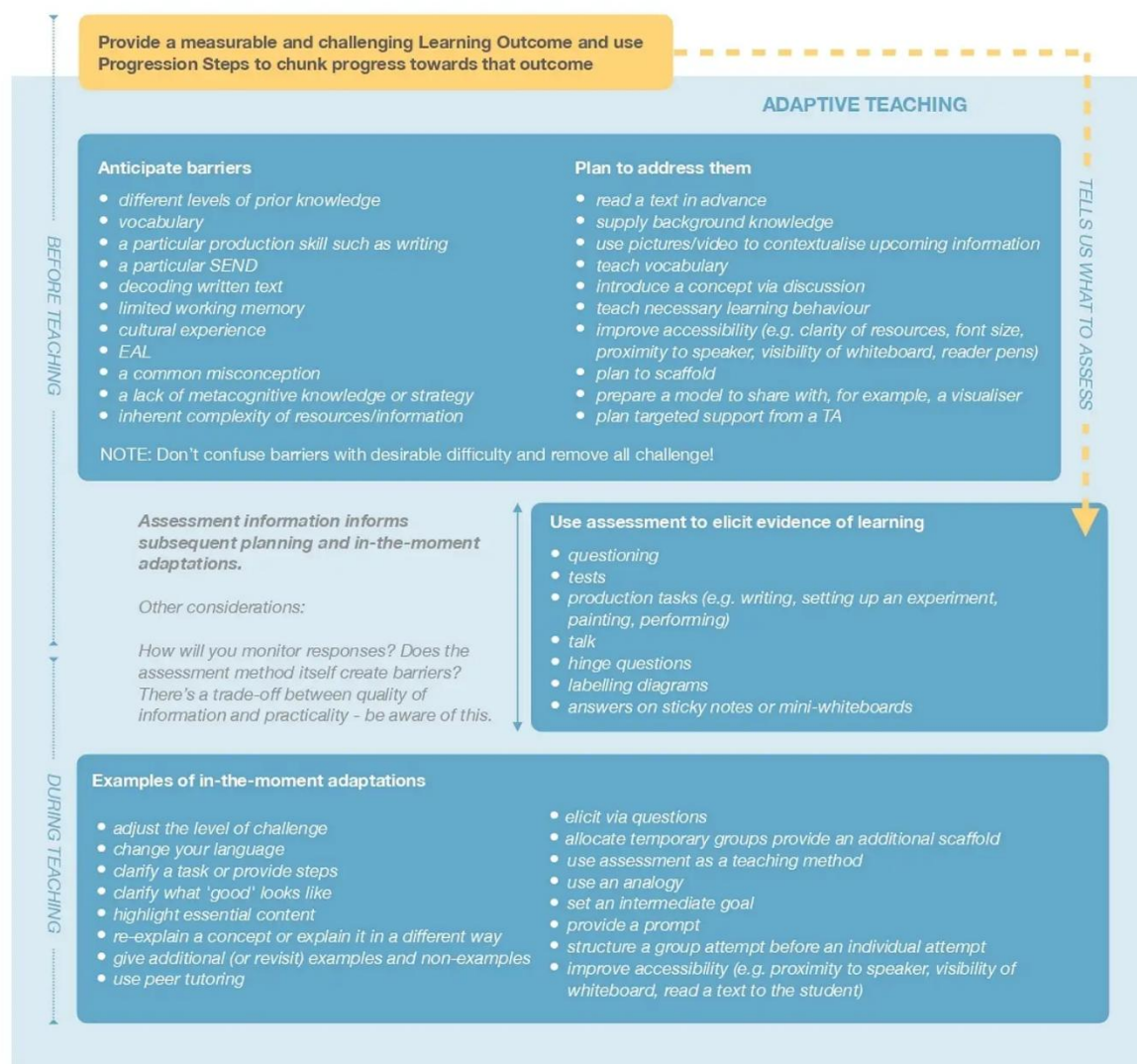
The Early Career Framework provides a helpful explanation of why Adaptive Teaching matters:

- Pupils are likely to learn at different rates and to require different levels and types of support from teachers to succeed.
- Seeking to understand pupils' differences, including their different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning, is an essential part of teaching.
- Adapting teaching in a responsive way, including by providing targeted support to pupils who are struggling, is likely to increase pupil success.

As far as possible, make curriculum do the work of determining learning objectives, assessment methods and likely barriers. A well-planned curriculum will reduce the teacher's need to make in-the-moment adaptations. When additional adaptations are necessary, note that the strategies below are illustrative, not exhaustive, and that adaptations will need considering from a subject-specific point of view.

For an overview of strategies which research evidence suggests can have a positive impact across phases and for all pupil groups, including those with SEND, see the EEF's '5-a-day' approach:

<https://bit.ly/EEF5aday>



Appendix 3: Examples of class planning shared on our websites



OAK CLASS – Spring Term

"The Land of the Rising Sun" and "The Transatlantic Slave Trade"

English

In Talk4Writing and Reading this term, we start with biographies, looking at key life events, factual information and a person's achievements and legacy.

We will then move onto poetry writing, using Japan as a stimulus to experiment with haiku poems.

After half term, our focus will be stories based on other cultures looking at slave trade stories, traditions passed on through generations to explore resilience, freedom and injustice.

Daily Basic Skills SPAG lessons will continue, with weekly spelling tests and targeted vocabulary sessions. Comprehension will also be covered each week.

Maths

We will focus on daily basic skills sessions for quick recall. Areas that children will cover include:

- Multiplication and Division
- Fractions
- Decimals
- Fractions, decimals and percentages
- Area and perimeter

Children will use TT Rockstars to secure their knowledge of times tables and complete regular arithmetic tests. All maths understanding will be challenged and scaffolded using mastery and reasoning, and Y6 will access SATS materials.

Science



This term in science we are investigating different materials and how their properties link to different uses in the world like being hard, transparent and having conductivity.

The children will set up their own investigations, making predictions to test reversible and irreversible changes. They will try making solutions through mixing and dissolving different substances and then separate them by filtration or evaporation, before recording their results.

We are reading.



RE

In RE, we will be looking at Genesis 1, exploring creation versus science. The children will learn about and discuss conflicting and complementary viewpoints.

After half term, we will follow the Understanding Christianity scheme of Salvation and what Christians believe Jesus did to save people.

Art and DT

The children will study the work of the famous Japanese artist Hokusai and his artistic techniques including Mount Fuji in his artwork and The Great Wave. They will also create Japanese blossom pieces using the following skills:

- Perspective
- Mixing and applying colours to represent still-life objects
- Painting with greater control

In DT this term, we will be examining how ingredients are reared and processed, before developing our own recipes related to Japan.



History

Our history focus this term is The Transatlantic Slave Trade. The children will discuss what slavery means using historical sources. They will learn about the experiences of slaves and the routes they took including the 'Underground Railroad' (a network of secret routes and safe houses that helped enslaved people to escape) and Harriet Tubman.

The children will understand the term abolition and those who were pivotal in ending the slave trade and introducing the Abolition Act of 1833 which outlawed slavery across the British Empire.

Geography



Through our topic of "The Land of the Rising Sun", the children will look at the geography of Japan:

- Latitude and longitude to describe the position of Japan in the world – map work
- The physical geography of Japan - deserts, bodies of water, mountains, climate, soil, forests
- The human geography of Japan - man-made structures, cities, roads, houses shops

Music

In music, we will be learning about the history of The Blues.

The children will experiment with 12-bar blues and blues scales, performing and improvising their own compositions.



PSHE

This term, our Jigsaw PSHE curriculum will be split into two areas; Dreams and Goals, and Healthy Me. They will consider their dream job when they grow up and will look at the dreams and goals of people from other cultures. Healthy Me is a journey through a healthy lifestyle; balanced diet, healthy choices, friendships, physical fitness and safety.



Computing

In computing we are looking at systems and networks focusing on the history of computers at Bletchley Park, secret codes, passwords and possible future computers. After half term, we will tinker with new software, write programs and change codes with Micro-bits.

French

Oak class will continue to learn French, focusing on being able to verbalise, read and write vocabulary and phrases for:

- At the supermarket
- Going shopping for clothes

PE

We will continue with practising the skills and techniques necessary to be successful in team games. These skills include:

- Pivoting, dodging and passing
- Attacking and defending
- Playing in different positions

The children will take part in football, hockey gymnastics and dance lessons with specialist PE teachers.

The children will also take part in The Moving Targets Project involving dance.



Values of the term:

January – Hope
February – Love
March – Creativity
April – Respect