



Teaching & Learning Policy

**"The mediocre teacher tells.
The good teacher explains.
The superior teacher demonstrates.
The great teacher inspires."
WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD**

**"Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn"
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**

Those who go into teaching, do so because we have a calling to the profession. We are moved enough, for a range of different reasons, to want to create positive impact on those around us in order to lay the foundations for a positive future and a strong society. We all bring our own ideas and methods, which are often influenced by our own school experiences. For this reason, helping teachers to 'shift their thinking' from what they believe a teacher should do, to truly understanding the needs of each learner can be a difficult journey.

Each individual learner's journey is a unique process of active engagement, which leads to a change in long-term memory. Effective learning leads to an increase in skills, knowledge or understanding, development and a desire to know more. People tend to learn to the degree to which they are motivated, so the responsibility falls to the facilitator to identify the intrinsic motivation within any learning opportunity (or the '*what's in it for me?*').

We want all members of our school community to have the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to participate in a rapidly changing world. We are committed to ensuring equal respect for all ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic and social traditions of the students, staff, parents, local and global community as well as addressing issues of disproportionality wherever they arise.

At Ainslie Wood we are working towards a vision where learning is understood, valued and accessible to everyone as a right. We aim to stimulate learning that will sustain people for life.

It is our job to ensure each child has an understanding of their own learning process and develop methods to take responsibility for that learning. This policy will help you to understand the methods and strategies we use to help our children become autonomous and effective learners.

Philosophy for our Learners

All learners are born with a toolkit to help them understand themselves and the world around them. How we refine and add to that toolkit is the subject of much research. Research about the brain and how it works is providing us with fascinating insights as to how we learn. Our staff are supported to keep up to date with current research and reflect on its implications. Our **Adult Development Team** supports school staff in sharing current research and trialling new ways of teaching and learning across the school.

We recognise many different people influence our learning – our family, peers as well as adults within school. At different times, facilitators play the role of mentors, coaches and teachers. Within school, we maximise our professional skills to provide children with opportunities to experience problem-based learning, collaborative learning and experiential learning. We facilitate the exploration of critical learning skills that of problem solving, decision making, creative thinking, communication and leadership. We know we have been successful with this when we see learners frequently working in teams, actively solving problems, publicly exhibiting their learning, reflecting on their learning and taking responsibility and ownership for it.

Our Philosophy for Practitioners

At Ainslie Wood, we are committed to developing effective and reflective practitioners who are engaged in being lifelong learners. We provide the environment and support network for all staff to be supported to develop and hone their practice through exploration, trials and

collaborations. As a result of this, we aim for staff to be actively engaged in their own development, able to provide the best education and seek out new ways of collaborating across classes, year groups, and Quads.

Our development support systems ensure staff are capable of designing and delivering learning opportunities that are active, personalised, engaging, challenging and supportive.

We also know that learners learn best when they feel safe, secure and supported. The relationship between the learner and their teacher is a crucial element in achieving success. While the school can provide a significant amount of support to help develop the practice within a learning space, we expect that all adults working at Ainslie Wood build strong, positive relationships with their pupils in order to understand each individual and their needs.

Constructing the Learning

Like building a Lego tower, learning connects with what has gone before and what is to come. It should always build on what the learners already know and understand and help them to integrate new knowledge.

Learners should always be clear about:

- ✓ What am I learning?
- ✓ Why am I learning it?
- ✓ How the learning links to and builds on previous learning – what do I already know that could help me?
- ✓ The learning outcomes – what will I know or be able to answer at the end of the experience?

Maximising Learning Potential

Through experience and research, the following elements are the ones we consider will maximise learning potential:

An environment which is accessible, appropriately stimulating, supportive and challenging The learning environment should...

- ✓ Support the development of consistent, trusting and secure relationships
- ✓ Promote a high degree of self-belief and self esteem
- ✓ Minimise threat and promote challenge
- ✓ Be peaceful, well organised and creative
- ✓ Motivate everyone to achieve their very best
- ✓ Celebrate success and supports learning
- ✓ Promote learning to take place both inside and outside the classroom

Adults should always....

- ✓ Promote clarity and confidence about learning tasks – by providing the big picture, enabling children to clarify what they are expected to do and learn while identifying long term goals
- ✓ Have high expectations and an ethos of achievement – by demonstrating through their actions that they genuinely believe that all their children can successfully tackle challenging learning tasks
- ✓ Provide purposeful, active learning opportunities which create progress through enjoyment in the classroom

Collaboration through talk and teamwork

Learning activities should...

- ✓ Explicitly teach oracy, listening skills and turn taking to support collaboration, negotiation and a team ethos
- ✓ Provide the structures and opportunities to verbalise thinking, clarify ideas and ask questions of each other
- ✓ Promote higher order thinking and social development

Problem solving through enquiry and perseverance

Learning activities should...

- ✓ Focus student's attention on thinking about their own thinking (metacognition)
- ✓ Promote self-led enquiry and the asking of questions to look for deeper reasons and meaning
- ✓ Challenge children in a way that helps to build resilience, perseverance and a 'have a go' attitude

Engagement through interest and motivation

Learning activities should...

- ✓ Be tailored to the interests of the children, 'hooking them in' and enabling them to develop key skills through avenues of personal interest
- ✓ Motivate children so that they engage at a higher level ensuring that consistent progress is made

Progress through challenge, confidence and personalisation

Learning activities should...

- ✓ Be individualised allowing for children to be challenged and to close the gap between the known and unknown
- ✓ Promote high expectations and provide children with a range of scaffolds in order for them to be successful
- ✓ Provide support where necessary so that strength of character and confidence are able to flourish
- ✓ Ensure consistent progress in order for all of our children to exceed expectations

The Practice of Teaching

What Teaching looks like at Ainslie Wood

Adults:

- ✓ build positive relationships with all learners
- ✓ have high expectations of all children
- ✓ have an understanding about what their children know and what their children need to know next
- ✓ have a knowledge of all children in their class and their individual needs
- ✓ personalise learning to meet the needs and interests of all learners
- ✓ assess 'in the moment' to respond dynamically to the children's need
- ✓ provide equitable opportunities and resources where learning could be affected by disproportionality of any type
- ✓ utilise 'hooks' to engage learners
- ✓ create imaginative and exciting learning opportunities

- ✓ utilise collaboration opportunities for children to be successful
- ✓ facilitate children to guide their own learning
- ✓ facilitate a developing independence for the children to take ownership of their learning
- ✓ challenge learners to push themselves to make constant progress

Children:

- ✓ learn real life skills
- ✓ frequently engage with experts and the real world
- ✓ focus on developing their own strengths and interests
- ✓ draft and re-draft to produce high quality outcomes for a genuine audience
- ✓ develop the skills of critique to support their own learning journey and that of others by being 'kind, specific and helpful'
- ✓ actively solve meaningful problems and/or guided questions
- ✓ publicly demonstrate their learning and/or expertise in real life contexts

The Support and Development of Practice

The Adult Development Team

A crucial element in the constant improvement and measurement of impact cycle of Ainslie Wood, is our commitment to the development of adult practice. This is achieved through our collaborative team teach model led by the Leader of Adult Development, the Leader of Early Teaching, the Adult Development Team and other 'exceptional' practitioners. The team use a range of methods including our structured team teaching model, Developing Teaching (Marginal Gains Tracker) and Steps to Improvement (PET Menu) documents, IRIS Connect, personalised development plans, planning support, coaching and mentoring.

The Adult Development Team work alongside individual teachers to target specific elements of practice in order to facilitate 'marginal gains' improvements in practice. The support is tailored to the needs of the individual using one-to-one support, peer, triad or group collaboration to improve areas such as the learning environment, planning, delivery and outcomes.

The Management of Learning

The 'WE ARE'¹ curriculum was designed at Ainslie Wood Primary School to structure learning opportunities and ensure coverage of the National Curriculum 2014. Each half-term, projects are developed around a particular area of the non-core curriculum with adults and children engaged in planning exciting and engaging learning opportunities. Over the course of a half term, children produce a project outcome that is shared with an 'authentic audience'. These are a group of individuals with experiences or knowledge relevant to the area of learning, who act as the impetus to children producing their 'best' learning and develop an expertise to rival that of their audience.

Development and Support for Teaching staff:

'Developing Teaching' plans and 'Steps to Improvement' plans are regularly used as part of targeted intervention both coming from in-person observations/IRIS observations and responsive to need. In terms of specifics, the 'Developing Teaching' plans target the support to ensure swift

¹ Whole Engaging Real Active & Exceeding Expectations

marginal gains improvements in specific areas of practice if a teacher needs to meet the standards of teaching and expectations of AW; the support is personalised and focused on developing practice with clear support from the Adult Development Team. Whilst the 'Steps to Improvement' plans enable a teacher (working alongside the Adult Development Team) to tweak their practice to 'exceptional' in areas of need and/or interest. A cycle of revisits of practice is planned into the development work by the Adult Development Team. The effectiveness of all intervention is regularly monitored to quality assure the support given and to tweak it as necessary.

IRIS Connect

An important resource in our CPD toolkit is IRIS Connect, which is a means of reflecting on one's own teaching. Teachers who choose to share their reflections with others can do so, allowing for collaborative unpicking in a Film Club and setting of own 'marginal gain' targets. IRIS Connect can also be used to focus on other areas such as the behaviour for learning, outcomes and engagement of specific groups of children or individuals. This enables staff to maximise their effectiveness for all pupils.

Development and Support for Support staff

A bespoke system supports and develops the practice of all support staff in specific areas related to the needs of the children they work with and/or their own development needs. A cycle of regular observations are planned into the development work by the Adult Development Team.

Monitoring and evaluation:

In order to build a thorough profile of the quality of practice across the school, we gather information about the quality of practice, monitoring of learning, pupil data and pupil leaders' observations to ensure a comprehensive teaching profile is gathered.

- **Quality of Practice:** Lead members of the Adult Development Team support individuals through a system that includes observations, learning snapshots and Iris drop-ins in order to continually develop practice. Quality assurance is provided by the HT and Deputy Headteacher. Working under the guidance of the Leader of Adult Development, the Adult Development Team use the quality of teaching feedback to identify and target individuals who could benefit from their mentoring or coaching to improve practice.
- **Monitoring:** The Leadership Team and the Senior Leadership Team regularly monitor children's books. In addition, pupils' learning is monitored and moderated in each core curriculum area by Learning Leaders, the Assistant Head Teacher (LofL), Deputy Head Teacher or Head Teacher. Using the feedback from monitoring, Quad Leads and the Adult Development Team respond to target specific areas such as marking, personalisation, content, pitch or presentation through short-term, impactful interventions.
- **Data:** Pupil Progress Meetings are carried out through whole team discussion. The team includes the Head Teacher, the AHT Leader of Learning, the DHT Leader of Adult Development, SENDCo as well as all adults, who directly impact the child/ren being discussed (e.g. class teacher/s, SLs, 1:1's, LM) to identify children and/or groups in need of specific and targeted intervention. The data picture of a class is used by the Adult Development Team to support gaps in practice, which may be impacting on children's progress.
- **Pupil Leaders:** As part of the cycle of observations, we draw on the AW Pupil Leaders to share their insights into adult practice around our school in order for our adults to better understand the pupil experience.

Planning and Planning Support

The Adult Development Team actively supports all teachers with improving their planning to meet the needs of all children and to ensure it is active, personalised, engaging, challenging and supportive for all.

Using the 'WE ARE' Curriculum overview, supported medium term planning takes place half-termly in year group teams based on ideas generated in collaboration with the children, with reference to the development of skills for each year group, Curriculum Guidance for the EYFS, and the whole school long term plan.

A fundamental requirement of our planning process is personalisation to ensure we are meeting the needs of all children, which is achieved through continuous child focused dialogues and a focus on the whole child. Drawing on the **PBL Toolkit** to support the planning and facilitation of projects, planning support and team teaching focuses on teachers personalising the curriculum by:

- ✓ meeting the needs of every learner including SEND and EAL
- ✓ ensuring progress for all children
- ✓ focus on appropriate skills
- ✓ setting appropriate challenges and offering necessary support
- ✓ directing focused adult support
- ✓ creating and resourcing tiered scaffolds
- ✓ identifying effective questions using Bloom's Taxonomy

Learning Environment

The learning environment (which includes classroom spaces, shared areas, and outside spaces i.e. courtyards and the quiet area) will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning:

- Whole class teaching
- Group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. positive learning relationships, interest, friendship, etc.) n.b. apart from phonics, we do not group children according to attainment levels as we believe there is a lot to learn from others and their learning journeys
- One to one teaching
- Collaborative learning in pairs or groups
- Independent learning

The learning environment will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. This may require flexibility in the organisation of furniture. Teachers are aware of a range of different methods to facilitate learning and try to incorporate these needs and preferences into their classroom set up:

- Curriculum resources are grouped according to curriculum area and reflect a range of perspectives and backgrounds
- Labels and posters should reflect the language diversity across the class/school.
- In the lower school, imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner.
- Pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

Environment Support

The Adult Development Team actively supports all teachers with improving their learning environment to ensure it is **accessible, supportive, challenging** and **appropriately stimulating**.

Record Keeping and Assessment

Formative assessment is used constantly in order to establish pupil understanding and to inform future planning.

Although pupils participate in all statutory tests, we do not otherwise test our children. Assessments are always made as a result of understanding each child, what they know and what they need next.

Resources:

- Quads and subject leads have freedom over their own budgets to provide the resources and books appropriate to the learning and the age range. Specialist resources are stored in the Quad cupboards and are regularly audited by Quad Leads. Consumables are initially provided from the whole school budget and replenished using the Quad budget. Staff may contact Quad Leads/Curriculum leaders with suggestions for specialist materials that may need ordering.
- Pupils must be taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with care and respect and with regard for Health and Safety and waste.
- Care is also taken to ensure that resources reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society, and that all pupils have equality of access.

Responsibilities

In order for children to be successful in their Learning at Ainslie Wood Primary School, we expect stakeholders in our school to engage with the following responsibilities.

Parents' Role:

Parents are a child's first teacher and have a vital role to play in helping their child to succeed. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning by:

- Ensuring that their child arrives at school punctually and regularly
- Ensuring that their child comes to school feeling confident and positive
- Sharing with the teacher any problems in school that their child is experiencing
- Download Class Dojo/Tapestry and engage with messages and learning updates from the teacher
- Supporting their child wherever possible by attending project outcomes, events and other meetings
- Supporting their child and the teacher by becoming actively involved in any Special Educational Needs processes.
- Be positive – turn 'can'ts' into 'cans' and 'won'ts' into 'wills'
- Encourage their child to find ways to keep trying when things get challenging
- Break down tasks into smaller bits to help them succeed
- Encourage their child to improve on their personal bests
- If things go wrong, talk about why and what can be learnt for next time
- Encourage their child to share things they are proud of with other members of the family.
- Engage in Home Learning opportunities with their child

Governors' Role:

It is the Governors' role to monitor and review the policy and its practice through:

- Regular visits to oversee the delivery of specific areas of the curriculum
- Reporting to the Head Teacher and teachers where appropriate.
- Reporting their findings to the Full Governing Body

In addition Governors have the opportunity:

- To receive reports from the Head teacher.
- To attend INSET
- To promote and ensure at all times equity in relation to all areas where disproportionality could be a factor.
- To promote and ensure at all times the practice of giving value and respect for all cultures and faiths.

Community Role:

The community is invited to support the school by:

- Contributing to activities, such as assemblies, artistic events, specialist outings, and clubs.
- Presenting themselves as positive role models to be emulated.
- Guiding pupils' behaviour as they play around the school, and providing positive role models with regards to behaviour.
- Organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Supporting school events
- Voluntarily helping in the classroom

The School's Role:

In relation to each of the above areas the school will:

- Respond to all offers of support as far as it is able
- Respect all information given in confidence
- Give clear information on the aims and objectives of the curriculum and school procedures.
- Set up curriculum meetings
- Display the long term whole school curriculum plan, schemes of work and medium term plans
- Work in collaboration with individuals and groups in order to strengthen community ties

"The object of teaching a child is to enable him to get along without a teacher."

ELBERT HUBBARD