



Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

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Introduction

At Ashwood Spencer Academy pupils are supported and nurtured to ensure they reach their full potential as learners and positive contributors to society. We expect every pupil to follow our DREAM expectations to create a culture that has respect, resilience, aspiration, determination and positive relationships at its core. We offer a safe and enjoyable learning environment where excellence is promoted.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum Policy, Subject Specific Policies and the Inclusion Policy.

Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that we provide an aspirational learning experience that meets both the aims of our academy and is compliant with national requirements.

At Ashwood Spencer Academy, we are passionate about promoting equality for all of our pupils and strive to ensure that they leave our school ready for the next stage of their lives – aiming to open the door to a positive, successful and happy future. We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Through our teaching, we aim to equip children with the knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about important things in their lives. We believe that teaching and learning opportunities, filled with a wealth of experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

This policy guides what teachers and staff do, how time is managed, the organisation of the classroom and what our school does to create an effective learning environment.

School Aims

At Ashwood Spencer Academy we are dedicated to providing exemplary teaching and learning for all our children. Our DREAM curriculum ensures creativity is at its heart – encouraging oracy, tolerance and collaboration. Our aim is to develop respectful individuals, who aspire to follow their DREAMs.

The DREAM aims are evident in our ethos:

D Determined risk takers who want to succeed

R Resilient and respectful learners

E Expressive communicators

A Ambitious achievers, unafraid of mistakes

M Magic happens when you dream

Our ultimate goal is to develop conceptual thinkers. Conceptual thinking requires the ability to examine factual information critically, relate new learning to prior knowledge, see patterns and connections, draw out significant understandings, evaluate the truth based on evidence and most importantly, transfer these conceptual understandings across time or situation, and use the conceptual understanding to creatively solve a problem or invent a new product.

Conceptual thinkers:

- Think creatively – they are open minded and curious
- Think critically – they seek the truth and understanding, and are strategic and skeptical
- Think reflectively - metacognitive

We aspire to achieve these aims by ensuring that our curriculum is creative, with a book at its heart, creating a real passion and purpose for all learning. We aim to provide our children with a range of experiences and events whilst they are at school, as we hope to stand the children in good stead for their journeys later in life and in the world of work.

We aim to take account of individual needs and children's stages of development and build on knowledge and experience within a context of equality of opportunity for all regardless of class, race, creed, gender or ability.

Quality Assurance

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment at Ashwood Spencer Academy will be assured by:

- Ensuring that this policy is disseminated and adhered to
- Monitoring the impact of the policy
- Addressing any underperformance in a timely manner, whether it has come to light through the monitoring procedures outlined in this policy or as a result of other Academy quality assurance mechanisms.

Roles and Responsibilities

The delivery of quality teaching and learning, and the use of effective assessment is a collective responsibility. The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups within the academy.

The Governing Body

It is essential that Governors are informed about the effectiveness of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and how it impacts upon raising standards. The Principal will be responsible for reporting such information to the Governing Body on a regular basis.

Governors support, monitor and review the school policies on Teaching, Learning and Assessment. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy through the school's self-evaluation processes. These may include reports from subject leaders and the termly

Principal's report to governors, as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The Principal and Senior Leaders

The Principal and Senior Leaders will ensure that the Teaching, Learning and Assessment policy is disseminated and is implemented fully to ensure and sustain high quality Teaching and Learning throughout the Academy. In particular they will:

- ensure that they keep up to date with the latest research and recommendations in relation to teaching, learning and assessment
- ensure that the other policies that the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy links to are up to date and fully implemented
- report on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to the Governing Body in the Principal's report
- strive to provide suitable resources and training to support the aims of this policy
- ensure the curriculum intent and implementation is understood and adhered to by all and has a positive impact
- determine and set in place the whole school overview
- support teaching staff in carrying out their responsibilities and hold them to account
- review the teaching, learning and assessment provision at the academy and make any recommendations in a timely manner

Teaching and Support Staff

Teaching staff will ensure they:

- have familiarised themselves with all elements of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and understand what is required of them, including in terms of planning expectations, seeking clarification from Year Group Directors or Senior Leaders if they are unsure
- ask for support with carrying out their responsibilities in line with appropriate expectations set out in the Teachers Standards document
- make a contribution to their subject team regarding teaching, learning and Assessment.
- ensure that they keep up to date with the latest research and recommendations in relation to teaching, learning and assessment.

Children

Our children must:

- remember to use and display the DREAM expectations when learning

Parents/Carers

We would like our parents and carers to have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. As a school, we believe that when parents and schoolwork together, for the good of their child, we see positive outcomes for both behaviour and learning.

Parents are informed about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding regular consultation evenings in which the progress made by each child, and his/her next steps learning, are explained and discussed
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework
- providing parents with information to explain the work covered and the strategies and methods taught to the children
- sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the learning areas and topics that the children will be covering that term (knowledge organisers)
- ensuring our website is kept up to date with any changes to the curriculum

- keeping parents informed of a pupil's progress on a more regular basis if appropriate.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- have a positive attitude towards school and learning, supporting and working with school
- make sure that their child has the best attendance record possible
- make sure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and P.E. kit
- inform the school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's learning or behaviour at school
- attend parent evenings
- support the school's expectations with regard to behaviour and attitude

We expect all members of the school community, including parents, to:

- support a positive school environment
- work as a team, motivating, supporting and encouraging each other
- offer equal opportunities in all aspects of school life
- provide an environment in which everyone can feel safe, secure and valued and have high expectations of behaviour
- promote positive relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community

Procedures

Teaching and Learning at Ashwood Spencer Academy

Our curriculum is organised under global themes, that are a thread throughout the school. Teaching and learning are planned for under these global themes. Each individual global theme is a conceptual lens. Information for each subject has been carefully organised and prioritised to deepen the understanding of the concepts. The global themes are a 'coat hanger' on which to hang new knowledge. The conceptual lens uses an idea or concept to bring focus and depth to a topic, facilitating the transfer of understanding and ensuring that connected thinking between being able to know, do and understand. Students develop their skills and knowledge by linking and thinking deeply about the relationship it has to the global theme. The conceptual lens allows the children to bring to the learning, their previous knowledge and understanding of the global theme, so we are not starting from scratch every time. It happens on purpose; we are not hoping it will happen by accident.

The Creative Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum is planned specifically for developing a conceptual understanding. Lessons are deliberately designed so that students construct their own understandings. This requires higher-level thinking from children and the integration of ideas. Research shows that it also results in children personalising and better retaining their understandings. Students develop a deeper understanding when they are given the opportunity to do the cognitive work themselves.

We aim for children to learn through inquiry during the Creative Curriculum. We want to ignite the curiosity within the children. Inquiry is both a natural and spontaneous state when we are engaged as learners seeking meaning.

There are two types of inquiry:

- **Structured Inquiry**: the questions and factual information are decided by the teacher; however, the children are responsible for conducting the analysis and drawing their own conceptual understandings. Teacher's guiding questions help the students bridge their thinking from the facts and skills to the generalisation. Misconceptions will be unpicked and overcome.
- **Guided Inquiry**: the teacher determines the wider topic, but both the children and the teacher shape the direction of the inquiry. This means that children have a greater choice of context, the processes they will use, and how they present findings.

English and Mathematics

Both the teaching of English and Mathematics have a set structure. These are outlined in the Ashwood Approaches for reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers deliver the learning in a set sequence, ensuring that all of the children's needs are met, and that the pace is appropriate.

Mathematics teaching is following the White Rose sequence and the recently released government 'Ready-to-progress' guidance as a supplement to support.

Writing opportunities are carefully planned across the curriculum to allow children to apply their skills in a cross-curricular manner.

Toolkits

Learning experiences across the curriculum begin with a learning question. It is the aim that by the end of the lesson, the children are able to answer 'Our Learning Question' which is linked to the learning intention. Toolkits, outlining 'Tools for Success' may be used in reading, writing, mathematics and Creative Curriculum lessons, in order to provide focus and support for the children. Toolkits may be co-constructed with children, where appropriate, in order to demonstrate independent learning.

Planning

Teachers are given a full planning day each half term to creatively map out learning to ensure coverage of specified learning objectives. They use the National Curriculum to identify relevant objectives. At Ashwood Spencer Academy, we have our Creative Curriculum mapped out clearly detailing what the children need to know, be able to do and understand, within each subject and topic. Teachers use this to plan creative, engaging lessons.

Long term planning is done before the start of the year. Medium term planning is done half termly. Individual lesson plans do not have a set proforma. We expect that Smart Notebook slides are detailed enough to allow effective teaching across the year group.

Year groups have their weekly planning sessions as a team to enable them to be collaborate, discuss and meet the needs of all learners.

Active Learning

Children are given opportunities to be involved in the learning throughout the lesson. A range of strategies are used and there will be an appropriate balance of adult/pupil talk, dependent upon activity. Opportunities are planned to enable children to develop and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum, including:

- use of IT including visual images, film, interactive teaching resources etc.
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest – when covid regulations permit.
- guest visitors and performances
- creative activities
- debates, discussions, oral presentations and other speaking and listening strategies
- drama techniques
- designing and making things
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- setting challenges for themselves

Questioning

Questions will be asked to assess learning, challenge and to deepen thinking and understanding.

- The range will include factual, conceptual and debatable questions.
- Questions will be asked to provide challenge for different learners.

- Opportunities will be planned for children to develop their own questions and questioning e.g. during reading sessions, at the start of topics, during science investigations, etc.

Online learning

At Ashwood Spencer Academy, we believe that children should have the opportunity to continue their learning journey outside of school in the following ways:

- Ensuring pupils have access to a range of online platforms which support their learning in key curriculum areas (see table of online learning platforms below);
- Enabling teachers, pupils and parents/carers to communicate regularly during times of school closure, or periods of extended leave;
- Through online learning, providing rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- Encouraging all pupils to maintain a positive attitude towards their learning with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;
- Allowing all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being and by developing children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively.

If the need arises, teachers will endeavor to:

- Provide a clear and accessible means of working for all pupils, using a range of online learning platforms which the children have accessed in school and are comfortable navigating;
- Create and disseminate work packs to children for term time learning that would be missed. These packs should be designed to support the academic progress of the pupil and pitched to the expected level for the year group. Teachers should be mindful of the amount of printing that these packs require);
- Teachers should check their work emails daily and support other year groups by adding resources and activities which have worked well, on the shared google drive platform and
- In addition to work packs, teachers will communicate daily using the class dojo. This can be used to signpost pupils to online learning content/activities, a video of the teacher reading a story, a short challenge, or an activity for out-door learning. (please see an example of this below).

A table to show the different online learning platforms available to pupils at Ashwood Spencer Academy:

Online Platform	Web address
TT Rockstars	https://trockstars.com
Hegarty Maths	https://hegartymaths.com
Reading Plus	https://login.readingplus.com
Prodigy Maths	https://www.prodigygame.com
Purple Mash	https://www.purplemash.com/sch/osmaston-de24

Homework

Children are given weekly spellings to learn at home following the taught 'Sounds and Syllables approach'. Children are also encouraged to read on a regular basis and have this recorded in their reading diary by an adult.

In both KS1 and KS2, home learning challenges are given out at the start of a half term and are linked to the topic and book that is being studied. Children are encouraged to complete as many as they can and are rewarded as a consequence.

When appropriate, pre or post teaching materials may be given as homework to support the learning in the classroom. This can be on Seesaw or paper based.

Learning Environments

A well-organised tidy classroom that promotes communication friendly spaces and independent use of resources sets the climate for learning and this is what we expect at Ashwood Spencer Academy. Our displays are backed using natural patterns and colours in order to prevent cognitive overload.

Displays might be used to:

- celebrate success
- support class organisation - visual timetables, clearly labelled resources
- promote Independence by providing prompts - questions, support for when children are stuck
- support learning - working walls, presentation examples, interactive & challenging
- reflect the current topic/themes/ learning

Specified displays in classrooms include:

- English working wall, which includes Rainbow Grammar and key vocabulary
- Maths working wall
- Science display
- 'Magical Moments' for celebration
- Creative Curriculum

Assessment

At Ashwood Spencer Academy we believe that the feedback provided to pupils is an integral part of a successful teaching and learning process: its sole purpose is to further children's learning. This is why we refer to marking and feedback as 'feeding-forward'.

The Education Endowment Foundation has recently evidenced that effective feedback should:

- Redirect or refocus either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a goal
- Be specific, accurate and clear
- Encourage and support further effort
- Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- Provide specific guidance on how to improve and not just tell students when they are wrong

In light of this, our guiding principles are as follows:

- The sole focus of feeding-forward and assessment should be to further children's learning.
- Evidence of feeding-forward is incidental to the process - we do not provide additional evidence for external verification.
- Written comments should only be used where they are accessible to students according to age and ability.
- Feeding-forward advice is delivered closest to the point of action is most effective, and, as such, feedback delivered in lessons is more effective than comments provided after the fact.
- Feeding-forward guidance is provided both to teachers and pupils as part of assessment processes in the classroom and takes many forms other than written comments.
- Feeding-forward is a part of the school's wider assessment processes which aim to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.
- All pupils' work should be reviewed by teachers at the earliest appropriate opportunity so that it impacts on future learning. When work is reviewed, it should be acknowledged in books. This will be a highlight of wither green or orange.
- Feeding-forward ensures that children are provided with timely and purposeful feedback that furthers their learning, and teachers are able to gather feedback and assessments that enables them to adjust their teaching both within and across a sequence of lessons.
- Any assessment opportunities undertaken – planned or otherwise - are done so with the primary purpose of identifying progress and achievement.

Feeding forward

We provide advice and guidance to children in order to move their learning on. This is the sole purpose for

any response to their learning. At Ashwood, we are going to shift from feeding back to children once the moment has passed, and feed forward as much as possible, during a lesson. Toolkits may be highlighted post lesson as an assessment tool, in order for the teacher to pick up misconceptions and move learning on in the following lesson. Live marking and verbal feedback have proven to make the most difference to children's progress.

What does feeding-forward look like for us?

- Feedback and highlighting in books are the responsibility of both the teacher and the TA. Both will work directly with children, circulating or with a group, providing guidance against the tools for success.
- Toolkits are used in to provide the focus for live feedback and next steps within reading, writing, mathematics and creative curriculum lessons. The tools for success are outlined on these.
- Lessons that are applying tools taught, such as independent writing, the children will have a blank toolkit to select the tools they need to be successful. This may be progressive as the year goes on. Our aim is to develop independent learners.
- On cross curricular writing, for example in science, they will have a combination of science and writing tools. They will be given the science tools, but will choose their own writing tools, to match the writing genre.
- Written feedback is not expected in books. Live verbal feedback and highlighting is the aim. An adult may complete a worked example in a child's book during the lesson, but it is not expected afterwards. For example, the adult may model the correct formation of a 2 if it's a common misconception for a child, or how to complete column addition.
- Adults can highlight toolkits during the lesson, when you can see the children have achieved. Research suggests that an 80% success rate shows that something is achieved.
- Adults are highlighting against the tools for success. Green – where it is met and orange where work needed. Both can be done during the lesson.
- Writing non negotiables – a scan down the page to see 80% accurate is highlighted green. It is not necessary to highlight all capital letters etc. (although this may be the case in KS1 where this is an actual objective).
- Math non negotiables – more as a prompt for children, not for us to highlight. They can highlight themselves to check off that they've done it.
- In mathematics, children may peer and self-assess. Children can mark their own calculations throughout the lesson and at the end.
- Mathematics - a green/orange dot next to the answer indicated right/wrong.
- Children respond to any advice or guidance from the teacher in purple pen, as they do now.
- Overall the TA or teacher indicates overall success in relation to the learning question by highlighting the I/S/G/VF either green or orange.
- 3 spellings, maximum, will be picked out for children to work on (highlighted in yellow). These words will be high frequency, or those using the spelling patterns they should know. Teacher or TA to model them underneath using sounds and syllables approach.

Marking Symbols

Symbol	Meaning
○	Misuse of capital letter, formation or punctuation.
^	Missing word.
→	Improvement needed here.

Summative Assessment

At Ashwood Spencer Academy we use summative assessment termly. This takes place towards the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. For this periodic review, we use PIRA, PUMA and GAPS assessments, where outcomes are standardised. At statutory assessment points, previous papers may be used. The standardised score of these assessments is recorded on Google Drive.

Statutory assessments are:

- Phonics check near the end of Year 1, with the requirement to repeat it in Y2 if pupils do not meet the required standard.
- SATs (Standardised Attainment Tasks) in Year 2 and Year 6 in Reading, Maths, Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar (optional in Year 2) which, in Year 6, are marked externally.
- Writing is assessed internally, across a range of independent pieces of work, and this may be moderated externally (at least every four years).
- EYFS Profile (Early Years Foundation Stage) Early learning Goals

Ashwood Aspire weekly Pupil Progress meetings allow a professional dialogue between the Principal, Vice Principal, Year Group Directors, class teachers and TAs to discuss the expectations and needs of the children in their class. Ashwood Aspire intervention sheets are used to identify which children require additional input and support.

For reading, writing and maths, each child is assessed against the expectations for their year group, or lower, to determine where in the curriculum they are currently working. Teachers use summative and formative assessments to assess whether a child is entering, developing or secure within each year group and subject curriculum. Each term, this is updated and recorded in order to capture the progress of all children throughout their Ashwood journey. These checklists are used to monitor standards, and any areas for development are translated into individual targets and fed back into planning to ensure that learning is personalised and all children make progress.

Moderation throughout school is regular and part of standard practice. Assessment – particularly in writing – is validated both within and between year groups, to ensure consistency and agreement in what constitutes ARE, GDS and WTS.

Moderation of children's work also takes place across the Spencer Academies Trust (SAT) schools at Phase Moderation meetings, Subject Lead meetings and Heads' meetings in Writing, Maths and Science.

All staff are expected to provide up-to-date data, information and confidence levels on the children in their class.

This confidence level data is recorded on the SAT data sheet and reviewed/updated on a three-weekly cycle. The RAG document will prioritise children for intervention but will change on a regular basis. As a result, the interventions put in place need to be flexible, not fixed for the entire year, and should respond strategically to changes. Teachers assess children on a 1-4 scale using the following coding:

- 1: Children who are securely on track to reach either the expected standard (EXS) or Greater Depth (GDS) or a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of the year through normal quality first teaching
- 2: Children who are likely to reach either EXS, GDS or GLD by the end of the year through normal quality first teaching and small amount of attention. As a guide, the teacher has at least 80% confidence in that outcomes
- 3: Children who have less but some chance of reaching either EXS, GDS or GLD by the end of the year but who will require considerable additional support beyond their classroom practice. As a minimum, confidence levels at the start of each term should be: 25%+ autumn term, 50%+ spring term and 75%+ summer term
- 4: Children who are not expected to reach EXS/GDS this year, or where confidence is below the levels set for a '3'. These children should have bespoke intervention, which will continue to improve their progress within that subject. It is likely that children who are scoring below 85 on standardised tests at the end of the summer term will start as a '4' in the next academic year.

