

The Firs Lower School  
**Teaching and Learning Policy**



**Rationale**

At The Firs Lower School our mission statement is 'Working Together To Achieve Our Best'. To this end, teaching and learning is the business of the whole school. We believe in the concept of lifelong learning. All members of the school community, adults and children are learning and developing and we strongly promote a learning environment which caters for the needs of all learners.

We aim to make learning a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to achieve the five key goals of 'Every Child Matters' and lead happy and rewarding lives.

**Contents**

**Section 1**

- Aims

**Section 2**

- Ethos
- Equal Opportunities

**Section 3**

- Management of the School Day
- Class room management and organisation
- Planning
- Differentiation
- Target Setting and Pupil Progress
- Record-keeping and assessment
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Resources

**Section 4**

- Learning styles
- Teaching styles / strategies

**Section 5**

- The Role of the Governors
- The Role of Parents
- The Role of the Community
- The Role of the School

The Firs Lower School  
**Teaching and Learning Policy**



**Section 1**

**Aims:**

At The Firs Lower School we undertake to:

- Raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best
- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners, able to make informed choices.
- Foster a love of learning.
- Foster self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others.
- Facilitate considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school community.
- Ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, special needs and belief.
- Value and respect all cultures.
- Provide a safe and happy work place.
- Promote a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider environment.
- Enable children to understand their community and help them feel both a valued and productive part of this community
- Help children to grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens



## **Section 2**

### **Ethos:**

The ethos and atmosphere underpin the agreed aims of the school and create the correct conditions for learning. Teachers will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which will develop the skills, concepts and knowledge necessary for future learning. In the course of their daily work the staff will contribute to the development of this ethos through:

- Providing a calm and effective working environment at all times, in which each child can achieve his or her maximum potential.
- 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 'Behaviour Policy'.
- Maintaining purposeful and informative planning, record-keeping and assessment documents, in line with the school's record-keeping and assessment procedures.
- Effective management of their professional time.
- Developing links with the wider community.
- Providing children with meaningful, purposeful tasks, related to the National Curriculum programmes of study and Desirable Learning Outcomes and taken from appropriate schemes of work e.g. QCA
- Valuing and celebrating pupils' success and achievements.
- Reviewing personal and professional development by providing appropriate INSET, training and support from colleagues in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.
- Welcoming, supporting and teaching of teaching and non-teaching trainees.

### **Equal Opportunities:**

In accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy (see school policy folders), all children at The Firs Lower School must be given full access to the National Curriculum. Staff will endeavour to help all children to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, age or ability.



### Section 3

#### Management of the School Day:

##### I. The School Day

###### Key Stage 1 sessions

8:55 – 12:00 morning session	3 hours 5 minutes
1:20 – 3:30 afternoon session	2 hours 10 minutes
Total	5 hours 15 minutes per day
	= 26 hours 15 minutes per week

###### Key Stage 2 sessions

8:55 – 12:15 morning session	3 hours 20 minutes
1:20 – 3:30 afternoon session	2 hours 10 minutes
Total	5 hours 30 minutes per day
	=27 hours 30 minutes per week

###### Non teaching times

Daily play times	15 minutes morning playtime (KS1 additional 10 minutes play each afternoon)
Assembly	15 minutes daily
Registration	15 mins per day
Total	55 minutes for KS1 and 45 minutes for KS2 per day
	= 4 hrs 35 mins KS1 and 3 hours 45 minutes

KS2

###### Total teaching time

**Key Stage 1** – 26 hours and 15 minutes - 4 hrs 35 mins = **21 hrs 40 min**

**Key Stage 2** – 27 hours and 30 minutes - 3 hours 45 mins = **23 hrs 45 min**

(See 'School Hours' policy statement)

##### II. Time Allocation

Curriculum time can be planned as continuous study throughout the term, or as blocks of study. Teachers will follow the agreed Schemes of Work\* to ensure that programmes of study are effectively covered.

\*At The Firs Lower School we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2000, the National Literacy Strategy, the National Numeracy Strategy and where appropriate, follow the DfES/QCA Schemes of Work.

We are committed to raising standards of *Basic Skills* at The Firs Lower School. By *Basic Skills*, we mean the ability to read, write and speak in English and to use

The Firs Lower School  
**Teaching and Learning Policy**



mathematics and ICT at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general.

Teachers will encourage pupils to work within given time scales, and will facilitate the effective use of time through:

- The provision of appropriate resources
- Planning extension activities, which can be carried out by individuals or groups of pupils.

### **Classroom Management and Organisation:**

#### **I. Management**

The learning environment will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning, with particular regard to Special Educational Needs:

- Whole class teaching
- Group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. Ability, mixed ability, interest etc)
- One to one teaching
- Conferencing
- Collaborative learning in pairs or groups
- Independent learning

All areas of the learning environment will be planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate skills, concepts and knowledge.

Teaching assistants and external agencies will be employed / liaised with to support children with Special Educational Needs, as outlined on their Individual Education Plans.

#### **II. Behaviour Management**

The School's policies for equal opportunities, behaviour and race equality are an integral part of the planned teaching in the school and are promoted by all staff. The class teacher will establish a class code of conduct at the beginning of the academic year and high standards of behaviour will be expected in all classes at all times. Children will be encouraged to build positive attitudes to school and learning through the use of positive reinforcement, praise and rewards.

#### **III. Organisation**

The school organises pupils into mixed ability classes. The school aims to have two parallel classes per year, each containing children from a single year group. Fluctuations in pupil numbers however, mean that in some years, classes may contain pupils from two different year groups. When numbers dictate that year groups have to be mixed, the school will endeavour to maintain small classes of single year groups in key stage 1 and mixed Y3 and Y4 classes. Mixing children from two different key stages in the same class will always be avoided if possible.

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. This may require flexibility in the organisation of furniture.

The Firs Lower School  
**Teaching and Learning Policy**



- All staff and pupils will endeavour to maintain a tidy, clean and attractive environment.
- The resources in each area will be grouped logically (with pupil accessibility in mind) and will be clearly labelled.
- Writing resources will be available for use at all times, and will be centrally accessible.
- Book corners will be comfortable and attractive.
- Children's work will be displayed and valued. Display will also be seen as a teaching resource and will be used to contribute to the classroom as a learning environment. (See Display Policy)
- In Pine class (YR) areas for imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play, generating different forms of language and social interaction, which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner.
- Pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.
- Safety will be promoted by all staff, who will follow the guidelines in the individual subject related policies, as well as the 'Health and safety Policy' and agreed 'Firs Risk Assessments'.

**Planning:**

Planning will take place termly, with reference to the National Curriculum, Desirable Learning Outcomes and the Schemes of Work produced by the School and/or DfES/QCA.

Teachers will meet weekly in year group teams to plan. The agreed Planning documents will be submitted to the Head Teacher / co-ordinators each term to be monitored. Teachers will liaise with support staff to ensure they are informed. Support staff will be given copies of all planning documents.

Planning is objective led and the lesson objective (WALT – We Are Learning To) will be shared with the children at the start of each lesson. The school also considers it is good practice that children are informed about the success criteria for each lesson so that they know how to be successful in the lesson and what the teacher is looking for when he/she assesses their progress – (WILF – What I'm Looking For). For younger children this is not always written but is made clear to the children in other ways e.g. verbally.

**Differentiation:**

Teachers will differentiate the curriculum by:

- Task
- Outcome
- Teacher / adult support

Differentiated tasks will be detailed in planning. Children with special needs are planned for in the context of the targets and information contained in their Individual Education Plans. Extension tasks will be included where appropriate to develop the knowledge and skills – with a particular focus on developing the more able pupils. (Where a 2<sup>nd</sup> activity is consolidating knowledge and skills already encountered in the main task, this will be referred to in planning as a 'reinforcement' rather than 'extension'.)



### **Record-keeping and assessment:**

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish their level of attainment, and to inform future planning. Record-keeping and assessment procedures are defined in the Assessment Policy and Marking Policy.

- The progress of Reception pupils will be monitored/recorded using the E profile during the course of their time in Pine class
- Year Two pupils will be assessed for mathematics, reading and writing through a process of teacher assessment and using the Key Stage 1 Statutory Assessment Tests.
- Year Three and Four children will be assessed for Mathematics, reading and writing using the Optional QCA tests.

All results from these assessments will be analysed, reported to parents (and the LA where appropriate), used to inform future curriculum planning and to guide the formation of school priorities for improvement

- Assessment for Learning will be used as an integrated part of children's classroom experience. Children will be given an overview of their learning for a half term or term, so that individual lessons are placed in a learning context. In lessons, teachers will ensure that children know the learning objective and how they can be successful (see 'Planning' - page 6). Children will be encouraged to give feedback on their learning and that of their peers. Children will be given increasing opportunities to share in the learning process, entering into a dialogue with teachers about their targets, the evaluation of their progress and what their next learning steps are.

### **Target Setting and Pupil Progress**

Teaching will be characterised by high expectations and striving for the highest possible standards. To this end, pupils will be set an English, Maths and personal target. Pupils will be involved in discussions concerning their targets. They will be reviewed regularly and shared with parents at parent teacher consultation evenings as well as in the annual written report. (See Target Setting Protocols).

Children's progress will be reported to parents at the two formal consultation meetings each year (in October and late February/March) and in the annual written report in the summer term.

As detailed in the annual 'Target Monitoring Plan' pupils' numerical targets for the end of each year (e.g. level 2a, 3c etc.) are recorded and reviewed formally each term in discussion with the headteacher and appropriate action taken to support pupils in achieving them.

### **Monitoring and evaluation:**

- Teachers review and evaluate their teaching and record observations on their planning sheets. These are used to inform future planning.
- Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated as part of the annual 'School Monitoring Plan' in each of the curriculum areas by the Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Head Teacher.

The Firs Lower School  
**Teaching and Learning Policy**



- Curriculum Co-ordinators will monitor planning as part of the annual 'School Monitoring Plan'.
- Teaching will be observed by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators as part of the annual 'School Monitoring Plan'.
- Other information sources will aid the monitoring of teaching and learning e.g. learning walks, questionnaires, pupil and parent surveys and consultations etc. (See 'School Monitoring Plan').
- Feedback from monitoring activities will be given to individuals or groups as appropriate and whole school issues / findings will be communicated to the whole staff.

**Resources:**

Each classroom will be equipped with a basic set of resources and books appropriate to the age range. Specialist resources will be stored in the appropriate curriculum resource cupboard / area, and will be regularly audited by the Curriculum Co-ordinator. Centrally stored consumables will be replenished as necessary by the Co-ordinator liaising with the Bursar / School Secretary. Particular consumables used by only one year group will be ordered by staff in that year group. Staff will contact Curriculum Co-ordinators with suggestions for specialist materials which may need ordering.

Pupils will be taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with care and respect; and with regard for Health and Safety and waste.

Care will be taken to ensure that resources reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society, and that all pupils have equality of access.



## Section 4

### **Learning Styles:**

Children learn in a variety of different ways, and for this reason it is necessary to ensure that planning incorporates as many styles as possible. Howard Gardiner (psychologist) identifies seven main areas of intelligence. These are taken into account when planning learning experiences:

- Linguistic
- Logical / mathematical
- Visual / spatial
- Kinaesthetic
- Musical
- Interpersonal group working
- Interpersonal / reflective

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- Individual learning
- Collaborative learning in small groups, or pairs
- One to one learning with an adult
- Whole class
- Independent learning

### **Teaching Strategies:**

In order to ensure equality of access, and effective matching of tasks to needs, teachers will employ a variety of strategies:

- Home visits, to initiate contact and a relationship between parent, child and teacher in Pine class (YR).
- Provision of an integrated Foundation Stage curriculum both inside and outside the Reception classroom.
- The development of close links between Reception and the play groups.
- The involvement of subject co-ordinators in the development of individual curriculum areas, in order to ensure continuity and progression between Reception and Key Stage 1.
- Teacher observation
- Discussion and questioning (open and closed as appropriate)
- Previewing and reviewing work
- Didactic teaching
- **Interactive teaching**
- Conferencing
- Listening
- Thought showering
- Providing opportunities for reflection by pupils
- Demonstrating high expectations
- Providing opportunities for repetition / reinforcement
- Providing encouragement, positive reinforcement and praise
- Making judgements and responding to individual needs
- Intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to encourage development

The Firs Lower School  
**Teaching and Learning Policy**



- Providing all children with opportunities for success
- Using a range of communication strategies ~ verbal and non-verbal
- Using ICT
- Using fieldwork and educational visits/visitors
- Using investigative and problem solving processes
- Using drama, debates and presentations
- Using physical / creative activities

Teachers will use a range of strategies in any one session although the emphasis will be on approaches that engage the learner and allow them to participate actively in lessons.

Activities will show a balance in terms of individual, group and whole class work as appropriate. Teachers will design the structure of lessons with reference to the needs of the pupils, learning objective and activities to be undertaken.



### **Section 5**

#### **The Role of the Governors:**

It is the Governors' role to monitor and review this policy (and other key policies) by:

- Conducting regular visits to oversee the delivery of their linked subject. Reporting to the Head teacher and other governors.
- Receiving reports from the Head teacher and/or the Teacher Governor.
- Attending appropriate Governor training
- Ensuring that Governors on the Finance and Environment Committee receive reports from the Bursar or headteacher on relevant issues, in particular Health and Safety so that the school building and premises provide an appropriate learning environment.
- Allocating resources effectively in line with the needs expressed in the School Development Plan.
- Promoting equal opportunities in relation to race, gender, class and belief.
- Promoting and ensuring at all times the practice of giving value and respect for all cultures and faiths.
- Ensuring Governors on the Curriculum Committee monitor the delivery of the curriculum and pupil achievement.
- Ensuring Governors on the HR and Change Committee guarantee that staff are given appropriate access to professional development and training and that Performance Management procedures are in place and are undertaken appropriately.
- Ensuring that teaching and learning is scrutinised through the school monitoring process as recorded on the Ofsted Self Evaluation Form.

#### **The Role of Parents:**

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

- Ensuring that their child comes to school feeling confident and positive.
- Ensuring that their child arrives at school punctually and regularly.
- Ensuring that they promote a positive attitude towards school and learning.
- Sharing with the teacher any problems in school that their child is experiencing.
- Supporting their child by attending Open Evenings and other meetings.
- Supporting their child and the teacher by becoming actively involved in the operation of the Individual Education Plan, and any Special Educational Needs processes.
- Ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are correct.
- Ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing the correct P.E. kit.
- Agreeing to the terms of the 'Home School Agreement'.
- Agreeing to, and supporting, the school's homework policy.
- Welcoming staff at home-visiting times, before children begin in Reception.
- Attending medicals and health interviews when invited.
- Responding to letters sent home from school.
- Informing the school of reasons for their child's absence.
- Informing the school of any significant matters at home which may affect their child's progress, happiness or behaviour.
- Supporting extra-curricular activities e.g. visitors to school, concerts, fairs.



### **The Role of The Community:**

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.
- Organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Supporting school events and projects
- Voluntarily helping in the classroom.

### **The Role of The School:**

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

- Responding to all offers of support as far as it is able and welcoming parents as helpers / visitors in school.
- Respecting all information given in confidence.
- Giving clear information on the aims and objectives of the curriculum and school procedures.
- Setting up curriculum meetings.
- Communicating regularly with parents so they are appropriately informed about what children are learning and approaches and strategies being used.
- Supporting parents appropriately in helping children to complete homework tasks.
- Meeting termly with parents of those children with an Individual Educational Plan. (See IEP Annual Review Calendar).
- Giving reasonable / appropriate access to teaching staff as part of the 'Open Door' approach so that parents are able to approach school easily when they have a question or concern or are in need of support.
- Working in partnership with parents and guardians to ensure the success of their child, and encouraging parental involvement in working out the way forward for their child's educational future.