ESTABLISHED 1906

Lord's Independent School

CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

Lord's Independent School

CONTENTS

Introduction

1.1 This policy takes the standpoint that curriculum, teaching (pedagogy) and assessment cannot be considered as separate entities but are interwoven elements which must be planned and developed as parts of an integrated system.

> *The curriculum – taught and untaught – represents the totality of the experience of the child within schooling (aims, content, pedagogy, assessment). It includes wider elements, including opportunities to acquire vital 'personal' and 'social' capitals.*
>
> Myatt, 2018, p. 17

2 Values, Vision and Aims

2.1 This policy supports:

2.1.1 Anglian Learning's values:

- Aspiration - We are ambitious for ourselves and all those in our community to be the best we can be.
- Community - We underpin our relationships with a culture of support, respect, and trust, recognising we are stronger together.
- Empowerment - We enable our academies, staff, and learners to embrace new ideas and think creatively.
- Inclusivity - We believe in equality of opportunity, celebrating everyone's differences and supporting learners of all abilities from all backgrounds.

2.1.2 Lord's School:

- Elevating Expectations

2.1.3 Lord's School values:

- Resilience
- Respect

2.2 The specific aims of this policy are to ensure:

- a coherent approach is taken towards curriculum, pedagogy and assessment;
- consistency and shared purpose between staff;
- excellent practice which is regularly reviewed and research-informed;

- signposting to further research and reading, as well as related policies.

PART 1: CURRICULUM

3 Culture and the hidden curriculum

3.1 Curriculum, teaching and assessment sit within the wider context of Lord's School culture. Myatt (2018 pp. 131-134) terms this '*the hidden curriculum* or *the way we do things here'* and suggests that this must be based on respect and trust between stakeholders in order for the organisation to be healthy and productive.

3.2 leaders take a proactive approach towards ensuring respect and trust underpin all aspects of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, and insist that all staff and volunteers do likewise.

3.3, By definition culture cannot be captured in policy as it is the lived daily expression of policy by all members of the community. However, Sherrington (2017, p. 152) suggests a set of seventeen *conditions* necessary for establishing an effective learning culture (see appendix 4).

3.4 Conditions for learning which all staff must prioritise include the following:

- Fostering positive, caring relationships (Sherrington, 2017, p. 161) – mutual respect and trust leading to a sense of worth and belonging. See also MPA's *Positive Behaviour Policy*.
- Joy, awe and wonder (p. 153) – intrinsic motivation and a love of learning must be prioritised as drivers and outcomes of children's everyday experience.
- Establishing routines for excellence (p. 163) – staff must regularly state, rehearse and reinforce consistent expectations.
- Teach to the top, rigour and the Pygmalion effect (pp. 156 - 161) – staff must expect the best and have high expectations of all children.

4 Curriculum Intent

4.1 **A Sense of Place**

4.1.1 Our curriculum is structured around the concept of building 'a sense of place'. This includes building children's sense of their place within the understanding of their rights and responsibilities; of global citizenship and sustainable development. It also includes an understanding of Marleigh as a new development and the stories of those who have

come to live there, but also the history of the locality and legacy of the Marshall airfield, on which land the development is built.

4.1.2 As part of our ‘Sense of Place’ curriculum, we plan to forge exciting links with local businesses and organisations, particularly in order to bring to life the application of STEM in our surrounding area.

4.2 STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths)

4.3 **Head, Heart and Hand**

4.3.1 Our curriculum is underpinned by a commitment to provide broad and balanced learning experiences which allow all children to engage systematically growing bodies of knowledge with opportunities for problem-solving and application. We want all children, regardless of background, experience or ability to achieve and feel academic and wider success. Our curriculum is designed to ensure children develop holistically, including the character traits necessary to be effective learners, such as resilience. Our rationale therefore includes the balanced development of head, heart and hand.

- Head: The secure and in-depth learning of subject-specific and interdisciplinary networks of knowledge.
- Heart: Character development, including resilience, respect, kindness and empathy.
- Hand: The ability to solve-problems; applying knowledge through creative thinking and collaboration.

4.4 **Knowledge-engaged problem-solving**

4.4.1 Our focus on *head, heart and hand* means we have a knowledge engaged approach to curriculum design and planning. This means we value powerful knowledge and ensure our curriculum is coherent and well sequenced in order to effectively develop children’s knowledge schemas, but then look for opportunities for children to actively apply this knowledge through varied problem-solving challenges.

4.4.2 In order to grow children’s schemas, we aim to introduce them to ‘sticky knowledge’ by linking units of work they encounter.

4.4.3 These links may be:

- Vertical: e.g., children apply their understanding of invaders learnt in one historical unit to one taught in a subsequent year.

- Horizontal: authentic opportunities to reinforce inter-disciplinary concepts, sometimes by applying learning to solve problems in another subject. (e.g., mathematical knowledge of decimals applied when solving six-figure grid-references in geography).
- Diagonal: subject specific knowledge taught in one year, is applied to another subject the next year.

4.5 **Outdoor learning**

4.5.1 The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom and Institute for Outdoor Learning have collated research evidence showing the value of outdoor learning as part of the curriculum. They both list the metaanalysis of Fiennes, et al. (2015 p.17) which states:

> *almost all [systematic reviews] report that the various outdoor learning activities have positive effects on all their various outcomes, e.g., attitudes, beliefs, interpersonal and social skills, academic skills, positive behaviour, re-offending rates and selfimage. …*
> *A review of 61 studies found evidence linking forest schools with improved social skills, self-control, self-confidence, language and communication (Gill (2011)).*
> *A recent SR (Davies et al, (2013)) looked at 58 studies of school-aged children and found that taking pupils out of the classroom and working outdoors for part of their school time can foster creative development. It found other evidence that creative learning environments can aid children and young people's emotional development and social skills.*

4.5.2 outdoor learning through the following:

- All ground-floor classrooms have direct access to the outdoor learning environment.

5 Planning a learning journey

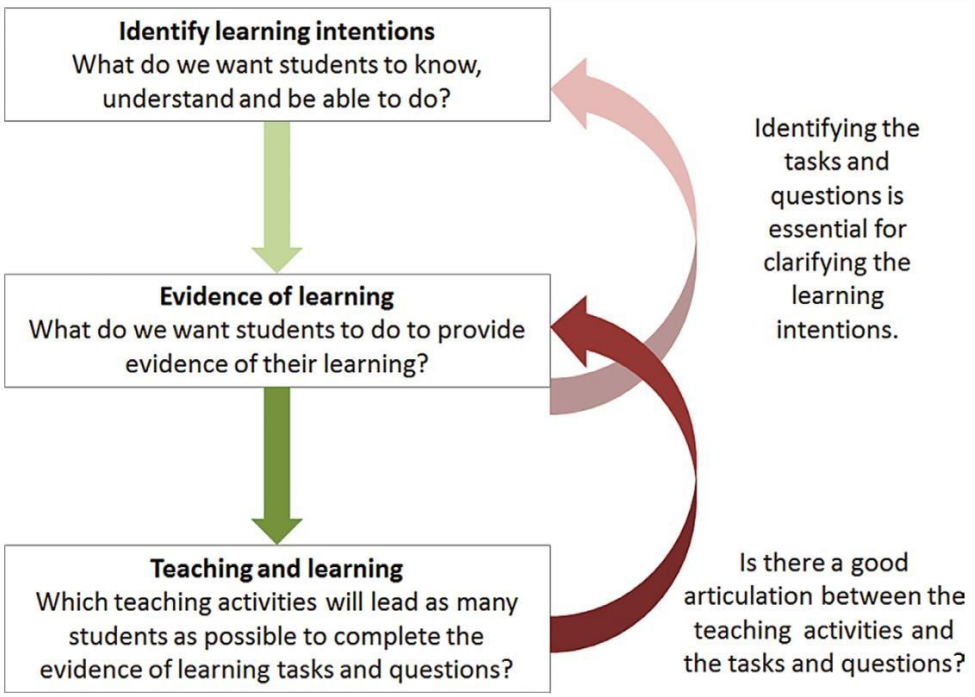
5.1 Teacher's medium-term planning across the curriculum must take account of aspects covered in the previous section. Questions to consider before embarking must include:

- How will the unit of work further children's sense of place; both in terms of their locality and their sense of global citizenship?
- Are there local links or opportunities which would further children's learning?
- What are the authentic opportunities for outdoor learning?
- What are the authentic opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning which will aid children's understanding in this or other subject areas?
- How will head, heart and hand be balanced?
- What is the key knowledge children should be bringing from previous learning (or have these been missed as the child has only recently joined MPA)?
- What is the key knowledge children need to develop during the unit (relate to knowledge organisers)?
- How will children be given the opportunity to apply and express their learning in new ways?
- Does the unit lend itself to the creation of an end-product and who will be the audience for this?

5.2 **Backward design**

5.2.1 Curriculum planning must follow a backward design process in order to ensure that planned activities are carefully chosen to achieve intended outcomes, and to ensure that assessment is authentic and embedded (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The three stages in the process of backward design based on the work of Wiggins and McTighe (2005) (Whitehouse, 2014, p. 100)



5.3 **Evidence of learning**

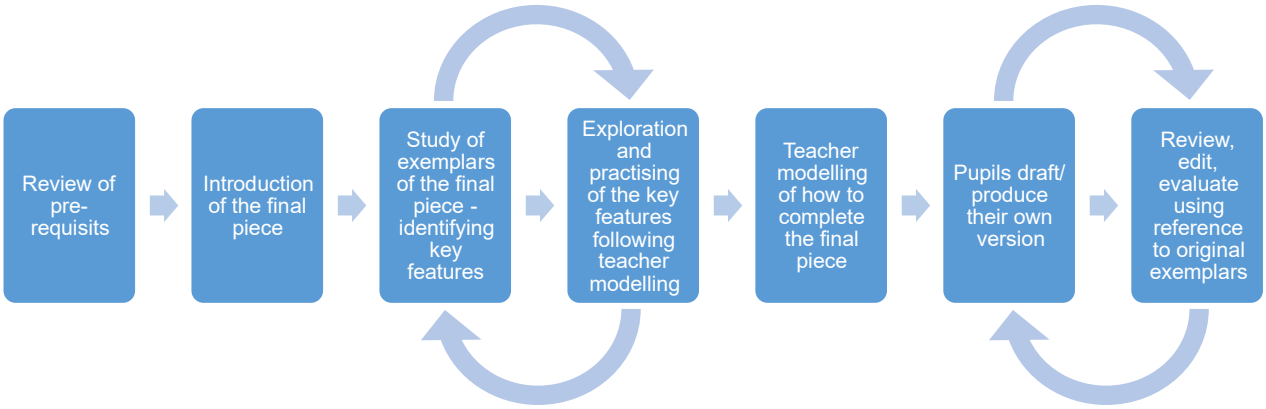
5.3.1 In order to demonstrate learning (as in Figure 1), children must be given opportunities to apply knowledge independently. This should sometimes involve 'curriculum products' such as a piece of writing, artifact or presentation (Myatt, 2018, p. 41; Turner, 2022, p. 127).

5.3.2 The desired curriculum product should be introduced to children early in a learning journey so that they know what they are working towards achieving. They should also be motivated by knowing who the audience for these products will be (e.g., display or online viewers, parents, another class, headteacher).

5.3.3 Curriculum products should be works of excellence. This means, as in the example of Austin's Butterfly: www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_6PskE3zfQ, that a learning journey will often involve building to a final product by expecting children to:

- analyse excellent examples;
- produce multiple drafts;
- apply feedback. (Thompson, 2022, ch. 3)

Figure 2: Sequencing of a unit with a final product (Turner, 2022, p. 128)



5.4 **Avoiding over-loading**

There is an expectation that all units on long term curriculum map will be fully taught. Therefore, teachers should aim to cover less in more depth and expect that planned units of work will be fully delivered with time for practice and assessment. It must be acknowledged that if a unit overruns this will have a knock-on effect for future units resulting in something not being taught. Therefore, if a unit is being planned for a 6-week half-term, it is better to only plan 5 lessons.

> *We need to ringfence time within our curriculum design and structure to allow for mastery. To do this we need to allow time for practice. … We can allow 'wriggle room' in our curriculum planning by deliberately underfilling our weeks and days to allow time for responsive practice and revisiting, or we can deliberately write into our curriculum documents specific points at which we will revisit, review and practise the key elements for each subject.* Turner (2022, p. 44)

5.5 **Enrichment, hooks & special days**

5.5.1 Any special days or events that take time away from the curriculum must be carefully evaluated in terms of their value. These must be limited, well spread-out and agreed by staff well in advance.

5.5.2 Curriculum hooks and enrichment (such as Wow! Days, dressing-up days, visits and visitors) are often memorable, engaging and motivating. However, they must be carefully considered in terms of content and placing within a learning journey to ensure they add significant value to children's learning.

6 Subject timetabling

6.1 A agreed amounts of time to be spent on each subject, If these timings prove unachievable, teachers should bring this to the attention of the headteacher and/or subject leader for discussion as soon as possible.

PART 2: TEACHING

7 Cognitive science

7.1 Cognitive science principles of learning can have a real impact on rates of learning in the classroom. There is value in teachers having working knowledge of cognitive science principles. EEF (2021)

7.2 Appendix 5 gives an overview of the seven cognitive science principles recommended in the 2021 EEF report, which teachers must consider in their teaching.

8 Rosenshine's Principles

8.1 Barak Rosenshine's 'Principles of Instruction' provide a practical means of engaging with cognitive science in the classroom. Teachers should ensure their practice demonstrates excellence and effectiveness across the principles:

- Daily review.
- Present new material using small steps.
- Ask questions.
- Provide models.
- Guide student practice.
- Check for student understanding.
- Obtain a high success rate.
- Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks.
- Independent practice.
- Weekly and monthly review.

8.2 Further reading: Sherrington, T. (2019). *Rosenshine's Principles in Action*. Woodbridge: John Catt.

9 Mastery and Adaptive teaching

9.1 Mastery could be defined as having a secure enough grasp of an area of study to be able to apply that knowledge independently when solving problems in new areas (Myatt, 2018, pp. 78-81). This is a priority aim at MPA and one which should be considered possible for all children.

9.2 Adaptive teaching is defined as being responsive to the needs of pupils by providing targeted support leading to successful outcomes. Adapting teaching and task approaches:

- will more likely lead to mastery and high expectations;

- are unlikely to place a ceiling on learners;
- reduce workload by avoiding differentiated resources;
- include flexible grouping;
- depend on teachers knowing children well.

PART 3: ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

10 **Responsive teaching** (Assessment for Learning & formative assessment)

10.1 Responsive teaching has been defined as ‘tight feedback loops – requir[ing] teachers to continually engage students in activities that tell them where they are and then, absolutely crucially, to adjust their teaching in response so that students’ learning is advanced’ (Sherrington, 2017, p. 129).

10.2 Responsive teaching includes:

- clarifying learning intentions, e.g., devising success criteria as a class;
- eliciting evidence of learning, e.g., whole class responses & quizzes;
- collaborative learning, e.g., peer assessment & partner talk;
- self-assessment, e.g., against success criteria;
- feedback based on trusting relationships.

11 Feedback for excellence

11.1 ‘After students have had a taste of excellence, they’re never quite satisfied with less; they’re always hungry,’ Berger (2003), cited in Sherrington (2017, p. 133).

11.2 The most important form of assessment includes feedback moving children towards excellence. This means giving clarity about:

- where they are currently;
- what their next steps are;
- what excellence eventually looks like.

12 Verbal feedback

12.1 Verbal feedback (for individuals, groups and the whole class) must be prioritised and will generally be structured in line with the previous bullet points. This growth-mindset oriented approach is immediate and embedded within the learning process, allowing misconceptions to be addressed and immediate improvements to be made.

12.2 Whilst teachers may find it useful to indicate in children’s books when verbal feedback has been given (VF), there is no expectation that this coding should be regularly used as the evidence should be seen in the subsequent improvements made by children. (Sherrington, 2017, p. 209).

13 Written feedback

13.1 There is a growing body of research suggesting that written feedback (marking) is of limited benefit to children's learning, in part due to the significant investment of teachers' time it represents; taking them away from other potentially more useful activities, and/or of detriment to their wellbeing (Churches, et al., 2022).

13.2 Written feedback must therefore be kept to a minimum and only used if its impact on learning can be demonstrated by teachers. Where used it should be limited to the agreed marking code in appendix 6.

14 Whole-class feedback

14.1 Whole-class feedback, such as with a visualiser, should be regularly considered as a more immediate and effective form of feedback. Time must be built into lesson planning to make room for such activities, along with time for children to act on feedback, making corrections and/or improvements.

15 Low stakes testing

15.1 Quizzes, especially multiple-choice quizzes (Sherrington, 2017, p. 205), should be used regularly as a form of responsive teaching, feedback and also retrieval practice.

15.2 Resilience and a growth-mindset should be actively encouraged through such, so that children appreciate that mistakes are OK, challenge is good, and making progress is what is important. The self-esteem of all learners must be considered and protected throughout, although this may be challenged in the short-term.

16 Summative assessment

16.1 Purpose

Summative assessment is necessary in order to check whether children are making progress against age-related mile-stones, and for teachers and leaders to be able to report and act on this.

16.2 Data usage

Data generated through summative assessment will be used in the following ways:

- To provide individual reports for parents detailing their child's attainment against year-group expectations. Individual pupil data may also be used to evidence the need for additional learning support.

- To provide class and year-group analyses, giving teachers and leaders evidence of strengths and areas for development within subjects and across the academy. This will inform Academy Improvement Planning, training needs and resource deployment.

16.3 Authenticity

Summative assessment must be an authentic expression of what children have learnt over a period of time. This is often best demonstrated when children are able to show evidence of their learning by applying it independently, possibly in another subject area (see paragraph 5.3).

16.4 Backward design (again)

Opportunities for authentic summative assessment must be planned and made time for as part of the learning journey (see paragraph 5.2).

16.5 Summative assessment schedule

In order to ensure a shared understanding of when summative assessments need to take place throughout the year, teachers will follow the schedule set out in appendix 7.

PART 4: THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

17 Shared expectations

17.1 Every member of staff is accountable for maintaining the environment to a high standard. It must demonstrate our elevated expectations and standards, enticing children to learn and reach high.

17.2 The building infrastructure and furniture must be protected.

This includes:

- not attaching anything to painted walls;
- not stapling etc. into woodwork;
- taking care to avoid spills (e.g., paint) on carpets;
- avoiding dirt being brought into classrooms on shoes.

18 Resources

18.1 All members are expected to respect and take pride in resources, actively teaching and modelling children to do likewise. This includes keeping all areas of the academy tidy, putting items away in their proper locations (and not expecting others to do so); expecting and challenging children to do likewise.

18.2 If the correct storage location for resources is unknown, they must not be left but must be given to a member of staff with responsibility, or to the headteacher.

19 Display

19.1 Quality and purposeful displays serve the following functions:

- Celebrating achievement and raising self-esteem for all.
- Creating a sense of pride in learning, encouraging high expectations and good behaviour.
- Acting as a focal point for learning, providing a wider audience for children's creativity, reaffirming the value of their work.
- As prompts and scaffolds for learning, helping children make new connections between ideas.
- Stimulating interest and discussion to challenge children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

19.2 Quality of work put on display

- All children should have work on display at times, even if they find presentation difficult.
- Displayed work (especially handwritten) should be of children's best quality, including handwriting, presentation and spelling. Time in class needs to be planned in for this purpose.

19.3 Labelling on displays

- A display should be labelled clearly to express the learning that has been undertaken and showcased.

19.4 Borders and backing

- No backing paper is required on felt display boards.
- Colours of borders should create an overall calming, thoughtful and cohesive effect. They must be kept looking neat, replaced or repaired when necessary.

19.5 Layout and mounting

- Work on display should not overlap the border, unless as an intentional design element, as children's work should be thoughtfully positioned and spaced.
- Children's work should be presented with care and consideration to its purpose. All work must be single mounted (avoid double to reduce workload and paper-usage) with colours which complement the chosen backing colour.
- Work is to be trimmed and mounted evenly and straight (unless intentionally otherwise).
- The use of shelves, tables and the area around the display is encouraged.

19.6 Timescales

- Display boards should be changed at least termly. Responsibility for corridor displays will be assigned together termly.
- Classroom displays must represent current or recent learning.

References

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Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High Quality Units*. Virginia: Alexandria.

Planning

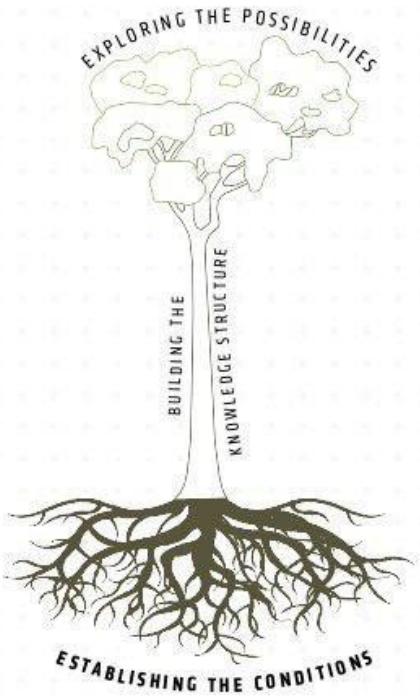
Teachers are free to use a planning format which best suits their way of working. This includes making direct use of PowerPoint.

The learning journey must be made explicit, with links to prior/future learning. This could be in the form of an initial slide detailing the sequence of lessons & vocab. etc.

Appendix 4: Establishing the conditions (Sherrington, 2017, p. 152)

ESTABLISHING THE CONDITIONS

CHAPTER 7



ATTITUDES HABITS FOR EXCELLENCE

- C 1 JOY, AWE AND WONDER
- C 2 TEACH TO THE TOP
- C 3 RIGOUR
- C 4 PITCH IT UP
- C 5 PYGMALION

RELATIONSHIPS AND BEHAVIOUR

- C 6 FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS: POSITIVE, CARING AND DEFINED
- C 7 ESTABLISH ROUTINES FOR EXCELLENCE
- C 8 SIGNAL, PAUSE, INSIST
- C 9 POSITIVE FRAMING
- C 10 USE THE SYSTEM AS A LEVER, NOT A WEAPON
- C 11 SILENCE IS GOLDEN
- C 12 KEEP PERSPECTIVE

PLANNING THE CURRICULUM

- C 13 BIG PICTURE, SMALL PICTURE
- C 14 PLAN THE STEPS
- C 15 SPECIFY THE KNOWLEDGE
- C 16 OBJECTIVES v TASKS
- C 17 SCAFFOLDS AND STABILISERS
- C 18 SKILLS AND DRILLS
- C 19 BUILD THE WORDS, PLAN THE READING
- C 20 BUILD A TIMELINE

Appendix 5: Cognitive Science Approaches

Appendix 6: Marking Code

See also section 13: Written feedback

- Use '**Sp**' in margin to indicate to child a spelling error on that line. Depending on the age and stage of the child, further guidance may be given (e.g., part or all of the misspelt word underlined) but the aim is for children to be able to find and correct errors with increasing independence. Only a limited number of Sp's (max 3 per page) should be given; not all errors need to be indicated. Children should give the correct spelling, at least once, either in the margin or at the bottom of the page.
- Teachers may use a limited range of similar punctuation codes as appropriate and as they explain to children.
- As much work as possible should be marked by children and/or teachers in real time so that children can immediately see and correct their errors during the lesson. Neat **ticks** should be used to indicate correct answers. A **dot** should be used (by children or teachers) where an answer needs correcting. This can then be turned into a **tick** later.
- 'Purple Polishing Pens' can be used by children when up-levelling writing, to make their improvements clear.

There is no expectation that all pieces of work will receive written feedback and no expectation that verbal feedback need be indicated.