Tanfield Lea Community Primary School

Teaching and Learning Policy

Opening Doors, Enriching Lives

Dated: September 2026

To be Reviewed: September 2027

At Tanfield Lea Community Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the notion that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. 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 success and lead happy and rewarding lives.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

This Teaching and Learning Policy is intended to promote consistency and high standards and the achievement of the school goal: 'Opening Doors, Enriching Lives'. At Tanfield Lea Community Primary School we aim to provide a caring, supportive and stimulating environment with high quality teaching to foster:

- A high level of Literacy and Numeracy and an enquiring mind which wants to learn more each day.
- Secure knowledge and skills in each subject of the National Curriculum.
- Independent young people who are confident, flexible and able to cooperate with others.
- Imagination and creative expression through a wide range of media.
- Conscientious young citizens of our multi-cultural society who are tolerant and respect others' values.
- Pride in achievement and a desire to succeed.
- Effective links between the school, the child's home and the community which promote aspiration and high expectations.
- Equality of opportunity for all.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING

We believe children learn effectively when the teacher provides:

- Quality teaching with clear explanations.
- Clear expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of the session.
- Shared learning objectives which are understood by the pupils.
- An atmosphere where children are prepared to take risks.
- Lessons where children's previous learning and interests are built upon, through purposeful application of knowledge to different situations.
- Support for the learning of pupils with differing prior attainment.
- Opportunities to review and reflect on the learning.
- Thinking time before answering questions.
- Developmental feedback and constructive criticism of pupil's work.
- An appropriate pace to the lesson.

This is outlined in **APPENDIX A**, which are the detailed criteria of 'What makes good teaching?'. This forms the basis of lesson observations.

EFFECTIVE LEARNING

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

- Direct instruction: 'I do, we do, you do'.
- Investigation and problem solving.
- Class, group, paired and individual work.
- Questioning.
- Research and finding out.
- Use of ICT.
- Field work and educational visits.
- Creative activities.
- Access to a range of media.

- Debates, role play and oral presentations.
- Designing and making things.
- Participation in physical activities.
- Reflecting on what has been learned.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Self-review and peer-review strategies are used to support this.

PLANNING

Planning has been adjusted to suit the needs of the children. All staff have been involved in developing a creative curriculum, which is available at https://www.tanfieldlea-primary.durham.sch.uk/our-curriculum/.

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP TEAM

Through termly monitoring of books, plans and lessons the leadership team recognise that:

- Effective planning is central to classroom practice and is a key professional skill.
- The feedback policy leads to feedback being shared in class to improve children's learning.
- The evaluation of one week's planning should inform the following week's plans.
- The use of data from formal assessment informs planning and target setting.
- The standardisation of writing and shared marking raises teachers' professional ability which leads to raised achievement in children.

ROLE OF GOVERNORS

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are effective in supporting successful teaching and learning.
- 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 teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include the headteacher's reports to governors and the work of the curriculum and school improvement committees.

ROLE OF PARENTS

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. As part of 'Meet the Teacher' parents are provided with important information and meet with class teachers. Parents can share any concerns they may have. They also receive information about helping their child with early literacy and numeracy skills, through 'Stay and Play' sessions, home learning and the organiser.

Parents receive a detailed school report in July. This outlines the child's achievements during the year, how they are achieving relative to expected levels and how they can improve and develop in the future. Parents may discuss any concerns they have with teachers.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly. Holidays during term time should be avoided as these interrupt the child's progress and they miss important

work and may fall behind. Parents are asked to inform the school of any absence on the first day and school will contact parents if this is not done.

Many parents offer some of their time to help in school. These offers are always welcome!

We strongly believe that a positive partnership between all members of a school community ensure that our children reach their potential.

APPENDIX A – 'What makes good teaching?'.

Planning – This lesson and the Big Picture (GTT Element 4, especially 4.1 and 4.5)

Description
Knowledge matters. Lessons should focus on knowledge (both factual knowledge and skills) and take into consideration the importance of memory. This includes children committing knowledge to longer term memory and freeing up working memory.

Well planned learning, based upon prior assessment, has a logical sequence which takes children on a learning journey enabling them to revisit facts, vocabulary, concepts and procedures before focusing on new learning. This revisiting happens at the start of the learning through the starter or prior to tasks that require children to use such knowledge.

Why is it important?
Without knowledge, children will not be able to approach the learning we give them: it is the foundation of thinking, application and skill. Revisiting can help us strengthen the connections between what has been learnt and new learning. The frequent revisiting of previous learning can help us recall facts, vocabulary, concepts and procedures effortlessly and automatically when we need this material to solve problems or to understand new material.

A well-planned learning sequence helps children to see the bigger picture so that they understand how the lesson fits in with prior and future lessons.

Top tips to help you succeed:
- **Revisiting:** Use this to secure knowledge. Spend approximately five minutes of a lesson reviewing previous content that will support children later in the lesson/s.
- **Teach both new and previously learnt knowledge:** Secure previous knowledge before application to more complex thinking or skills.
- **Objective-driven learning:** Plan tasks that address the learning objective and build on each other to support the progress in lesson/s. Do you have an effective sequence of learning which is not simply doing 'interesting tasks'?

Evaluation	Description
Not Used	**Revisiting** – Prior knowledge is not revisited at the beginning of the lesson or tasks selected are disconnected from the learning of the lesson/s. **Teach both new and previously learnt knowledge** – No new or previously taught knowledge is used in the lesson. **Objective-driven learning** – The tasks planned by the teacher are not connected or sequenced and do not address the lesson objective.
Partially Used	**Revisiting** - Revisiting is planned, but it doesn't link to prior knowledge or the learning of the lesson/s. **Teach both new and previously learnt knowledge** - There is some new or previously taught knowledge in the lesson, but it is either not secure before the independent practice or disconnected from the activities. **Objective-driven learning** – Some of the tasks are linked to the objective though time is wasted on superfluous tasks or activities that are a means to themselves rather than supporting the lesson objective.

Consistently Used	**Revisiting** – Revisiting is planned, which links to prior knowledge or the learning of the lesson/s. **Teach both new and previously learnt knowledge** – There is new and previously taught knowledge in the lesson used to support children in independent activities. **Objective-driven learning** – Tasks are linked to the objective and are well-sequenced to support success for children.
Fully Embedded	**Revisiting** – Revisiting is a bridge between prior knowledge and new learning in the lesson/s and gives children the building blocks to be successful. **Teach both new and previously learnt knowledge** – There is a balance of new and previously taught knowledge which is secured in the lesson/s and is used to support children in independent activities. **Objective-driven learning** – Tasks are well-chosen to meet the learning objective, are thoughtfully sequenced and not a moment of the lesson is wasted.

High expectations and positive learning environment (GTT Element 2 and 3)

Description
In a school characterised by high expectations and a positive learning-environment, children are typically proactive and engaged in their learning. This means a strong classroom culture must be established by the teacher and other staff.

Why is it important?
Having high expectations means having a both a clear goal for your class and a clear approach to achieving that goal. A positive learning environment is one where appropriate praise is focused on the effort of children not the outcome.

Top Tips to help you succeed
- **Positive Praise:** Celebrate effort and success from children. This is essential in developing a growth mindset in our classrooms.
- **Culture of Learning:** In effective classrooms, adults have built mutual trust and respect with the children. Teachers are able to embrace learning opportunities whilst also steering the class towards a planned goal.
- **Modelling behaviours:** The behaviour we model towards children shapes the classroom environment. Use the behaviour policy of the school to help you, but be aware that sometimes you will need to go above and beyond with individuals to keep them on track.

Evaluation	Description
Not Used	**Positive Praise** - Praise, when used, is not conducive to creating a growth mindset. Praise often focuses on outcome rather than effort. **Culture of learning** - Learning is variable and often dependent upon individual motivations rather than class culture. **Modelling behaviours** - The teacher and other adults model some good behaviours although this is inconsistent.
Partially Used	**Positive Praise** - Praise often focuses on effort rather than on outcome. **Culture of learning** - Most children learn well and are proactive in their learning. Off task behaviour is addressed by adults in the classroom. **Modelling behaviours** - The teacher and other adults model some good behaviours.

Consistently Used	**Positive Praise** - Praise is used appropriately, frequently, and focused on effort leading to the development of a growth mindset approach in children. **Culture of learning** - Children are motivated to learn and are given some degree of freedom in their learning due to positive learning habits. **Modelling behaviours** - The teacher and other adults consistently model good behaviour.
Fully Embedded	**Positive Praise** - Praise is used effectively and focuses on effort. A growth mindset approach is clearly evident. **Culture of learning** - Children are highly motivated to learn and are given freedom of choice, where appropriate, as trust has clearly been built between class and teacher. **Modelling behaviours** - The teacher and other adults personify the qualities we would expect to see in children.

Effective Modelling (GTT Element 4.2, 4.3)

Description

Modelling is a process by which we deconstruct a task, activity or process and then reconstruct it for children to understand; it is how we explain it for understanding. Successful modelling is invariably intertwined with a range of questioning techniques.

Why is it important?

It is through effective modelling that teachers explore ideas and concepts with their class. Modelling isn't simply about 'getting it right' but about exploring misconceptions, hypothesising about outcomes and clarifying key points.

Top tips to help you succeed:

- **Language:** Economy and pace of language is crucial.
- **Questioning:** When modelling, pose questions to the class. Identify key points or suggest common misconceptions.
- **Chunk/Scaffold learning:** Strike the balance between modelling a whole process or concept to modelling part of it depending upon the class and complexity of what you are doing.

Consider:

- **Live modelling:** Plan to model in front of the class to support them to see the construction of writing or application of processes in front of them. This can be done collaboratively with the class using questions to co-create a model or with the teacher narrating their own thought processes. This can also be split into small manageable segments.
- **Provide pre-written models as worked examples:** Use great/poor examples of your own or children's work that you deconstruct together to elicit what makes them successful or where gaps in proficiency are.
- **Success criteria:** Provide or co-create success criteria linked to models so that children can use it to self-assess their own writing or independent work.

Evaluation	Description
Not Used	**Language** - Teacher talk is used but does not necessarily lead to effective learning. Explanations are too lengthy and do not drive the learning forward. **Questioning** - Questioning effectiveness is variable meaning that many children have misconceptions.

	Chunk/Scaffold learning - Prior learning has not been taken into account when planning the activity. Opportunities to model are not taken up or are of poor quality.
Partially Used	**Language** - Teacher talk when modelling, although lengthy, drives the learning in the class. **Questioning** - Questioning is used to drive learning forward although a wider range of questioning techniques could aid this. Misconceptions for some children remain. **Chunk/Scaffold learning** - Modelling is used to explore the application of knowledge but there is a lack of clarity and effectiveness in this model.
Consistently Used	**Language** - Teacher talk when modelling drives the learning in the class with language that is concise and rich in key words. **Questioning** - Questioning is used to drive learning forward. Misconceptions are used as learning opportunities. **Chunk/Scaffold learning** - Modelling builds on previous learning and effectively breaks down more challenging tasks.
Fully Embedded	**Language** - Teacher talk when modelling drives the learning in the class with language that is consistently concise and rich in key words across the curriculum. **Questioning** - A wide range of questioning techniques is used to drive learning. Misconceptions are embraced as learning opportunities. **Chunk/Scaffold learning** - A wide range of modelling techniques is used to build on previous learning and breaks down more challenging tasks. This prepares children to take on any further independent practice during this or future lessons.

Effective Questioning (GTT Element 4.3)

Description
Questioning is an essential tool used by teachers to check the children's understanding, probe misconceptions and stretch the children's thinking.

Why is it important?
Effective questioning is essential to ensure that children can understand and then use new knowledge or concepts. It can also drive and shape the direction of a lesson as the teacher assesses the understanding of the class and responds to the children accordingly. Questioning is the driver for children thinking hard.

Top tips to help you succeed:
- **How teachers question:** Teachers use a variety of questioning techniques. Some may be open, closed, used to probe whilst others are used to clarify and apply.
- **Who teachers question:** When asking questions, teachers consider who they are questioning. They use their knowledge of the children to adapt questions accordingly. Questioning is used to target specific groups to assess their understanding.
- **When and what teachers question:** Teachers consider when questioning will be used from the planning stages. This will frequently be during modelling and explaining new learning and when addressing misconceptions. Questions are used to support children's learning in the lesson and are designed to make children think hard.

Evaluation	Description
Not Used	**How teachers question** - Questions are used although the impact on learning is limited. **Who teachers question** - Questions are asked but the children answering the question, their prior knowledge and understanding are not taken into consideration. **When and what teachers question** - The timing and sequence of questioning has not been considered.
Partially Used	**How teachers question** - Appropriate questions are asked but children would benefit from a greater variety of question types. **Who teachers question** - Some knowledge of children's current understanding and ability influences the questions which are asked and to whom. **When and what teachers question** - Questioning during teacher led input occurs but does not always strike a balance between probing for understanding, exploring misconceptions and maintaining the pace of the lesson.
Consistently Used	**How teachers question** - A variety of questioning techniques are used throughout the lesson. **Who teachers question** - Knowledge of children's current understanding and ability influences the questions which are asked and to whom. Questions are appropriately targeted and help clarify misconceptions. **When and what teachers question** - Questioning during teacher led input occurs. There is a balance between probing for deeper understanding, exploring misconceptions and maintaining the pace of the lesson. Teachers sometimes react with questioning to segments of the class at appropriate times to further their learning.
Fully Embedded	**How teachers question** - A variety of questioning techniques are used throughout the lesson. **Who teachers question** - Knowledge of children's current understanding and ability influences the questions which are asked and to whom. Questions are appropriately targeted and help clarify misconceptions. Questioning is specifically aimed at groups, rather than the whole class, to support their learning throughout the lesson. **When and what teachers question** - There is a balance between probing for deeper understanding, exploring misconceptions and maintaining the pace of the lesson. The timing of questioning is well-thought-out and occurs at times appropriate to the children's learning.

Scaffolding and Challenge (GTT Elements 4.1, 4.6)

Description
Including scaffolding and challenge in lessons means understanding children's current achievement and needs. Lessons need to be planned with these factors in mind, whilst maintaining high expectations of what children can achieve and learn. Teachers must think logically about how scaffolding and challenge will enable children to make progress and succeed.

Why is it important?
Scaffolding and challenge are essential to ensure children stay focussed and motivated to learn. Teachers must also take into consideration, when putting into place scaffolds, how

they might go about removing it to support children in their journey to become independent learners.

Top tips to help you succeed:

- **Scaffolding:** Select and give children high quality materials and texts and support them to access these resources. Does scaffolding support children to embed knowledge and apply this to tasks?
- **Challenge:** Ensure all children are provided with the opportunity to be challenged to enable them to think more deeply, broadly or differently about the task and help them move towards their next step in learning.
- **At Risk:** Do teachers know which children need support in their classroom? This could be any group of children (SEN, DA, Gender, Summer Born) or an individual child who is not on track to achieve their expected level of progress. Does scaffolding support these 'At Risk' children?

Evaluation	Description
Not Used	**Scaffolding -** The teacher uses no or few tools/techniques to scaffold children's learning. **Challenge -** Children are not given any opportunity to be challenged in the lesson and have little chance to stretch or deepen their knowledge and thinking. **At Risk -** 'At Risk' children are not identified by the teacher and in-class support is largely inappropriate.
Partially Used	**Scaffolding -** The teacher uses some tools/techniques to scaffold children's learning. **Challenge -** Some opportunities to be stretched and challenged are provided but they are not linked to deepening or stretching knowledge and thinking. **At Risk -** Some 'At Risk' children are identified by the teacher and in-class support has been put in place, however this may not be the most appropriate.
Consistently Used	**Scaffolding -** The teacher uses appropriate tools/techniques to scaffold children's learning to maximise these opportunities. **Challenge -** Children are provided with opportunities to be stretched and challenged in the lesson to deepen knowledge and thinking. **At Risk -** Most 'At Risk' children are identified by the teacher and appropriate in-class support has been put in place.
Fully Embedded	**Scaffolding -** The teacher uses the most appropriate tools/techniques to scaffold children's learning to maximise these opportunities. **Challenge -** Children are provided with opportunities to be stretched and challenged in the lesson to deepen knowledge and thinking. They develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things. **At Risk -** All 'At Risk' children are clearly identified by the teacher and highly appropriate in-class support has been put in place.

Live Feedback to Improve (GTT Element 4.4)

Description

Feedback and addressing misconceptions is about how well a teacher ascertains the understanding of the children in the lesson and then responds appropriately.

Why is this important?
Without live feedback teachers cannot be responsive to any misconceptions or support children in making progress. Effective lessons happen when a teacher knows how their children are doing and is not afraid to redirect, correct and reteach as necessary.

Top tips to help you to succeed:

- **Plan to address misconceptions:** When planning, consider what misconceptions children might have and build ways to address this in your teaching. Base this on your knowledge of the children and their previous learning.
- **Regularly check for misconceptions and error:** Check for misconceptions at key points of the lesson using a variety of approaches. Hinge questions (GTT) are a good way to check that children can move on to the next step of their learning.
- **Live feedback:** Respond to children's misconceptions as they occur to enable them to make immediate progress.

Evaluation	Description
Not Used	**Plan to address misconceptions** - The lesson has not taken into account prior knowledge so misconceptions inhibit progress **Regularly check for misconceptions** - The teacher does not check for misconceptions. **Live feedback** - The teacher makes no or few responses to children's misconceptions and they are allowed to make mistakes without correction.
Partially Used	**Plan to address misconceptions** - The lesson has taken into account prior knowledge but there are still some obvious misconceptions that need to be addressed. **Regularly check for misconceptions** - The teacher takes some opportunities in the lesson to check for misconceptions but these are not used effectively to support children. **Live feedback** - Children's misconceptions are sometimes addressed, however this is not consistent.
Consistently Used	**Plan to address misconceptions** - The lesson is planned with clear consideration of the children's prior knowledge or the misconceptions they might have. **Regularly check for misconceptions** - Regular checking of children's learning takes place so that misconceptions and errors can be addressed. **Live feedback** - Live feedback addresses children's misconceptions in the lesson to enable them to make progress.
Fully Embedded	**Plan to address misconceptions** - Thorough consideration of children's prior knowledge and performance takes place so that the lesson directly addresses misconceptions. **Regularly check for misconceptions** - Children are monitored effectively during independent learning so that misconceptions can be addressed immediately. **Live feedback** - Live feedback motivates children and addresses misconceptions in the lesson to enable them to make immediate progress.

Marking and Presentation (GTT Element 4.4)

Description
Children's work must be neat, marked in line with school policy and where appropriate, responded to by the child.

Why is it important?
Feedback, and subsequent children's responses to feedback, is consistently identified as one of the most effective ways teachers can support children to improve.

Top Tips to help you succeed:

- **Consistency:** Feedback practices and procedures should be in keeping with the school feedback policy. Feedback should be linked to learning objectives/ expected outcomes.
- **Developmental:** Feedback must ensure that children make progress, by knowing their achievements and what they need to do next. Children should be given specific time to read, reflect and respond to marking and feedback.
- **Presentation:** High teacher expectations mean that children take pride in their work. Presentation is in line with the handwriting scheme.

Evaluation	Description
Not Used	**Consistency** - Books are not marked according to the marking policy. **Developmental** - No evidence of marking to support progress. **Presentation** - Presentation in books is generally poor.
Partially Used	**Consistency** - Books are, at times, marked according to the policy. **Developmental** - There is some evidence of marking to support progress. Inconsistent evidence of children responding to this. **Presentation** - Some children take pride in their work. However, this is inconsistent.
Consistently Used	**Consistency** - Books are marked according to the policy. **Developmental** - Marking usually supports progress and children often show progress in their responses. **Presentation** - Most children take pride in their work.
Fully Embedded	**Consistency** - Books are consistently marked according to the policy with feedback clearly supporting progress. **Developmental** - Marking supports progress with feedback being acted upon consistently by children. **Presentation** - All children take pride in their work.