Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy Title	Teaching and Learning Policy
Policy Created / Amended	November 2024
Policy Ratified	
Policy Review Date	November 2026
Summary of changes	Aims, SAA Learning Routines, Feedback and marking

1. **Aims**

   Learning involves a lasting change in pupils' capabilities or understanding and is the foundation upon which all aspects of the school are built: curriculum, behaviour and culture, personal development, and inclusivity. Learning, and the pedagogy used to enhance it, therefore transects all subjects and all year groups.

   Cognitive psychology defines learning as an alteration in long-term memory: "If nothing has altered in long-term memory nothing has been learned." Progress, therefore, means knowing more (including knowing how to do more) and remembering more. When new knowledge and existing knowledge connect in learners' minds, this gives rise to understanding. A codified, consistent, and evidence informed approach to Teaching & Learning at the school is essential for the success of all students as they progress to their next destinations.

   Our ambitious, flexible and supportive curriculum is inclusive, where the provision of support to our most vulnerable students is at the forefront of everything we do. All pupils, including those eligible for Pupil Premium, lower prior attainers, and those with SEND are at the centre of this approach. High quality teaching and precise planning, ensure that pupils are able to know more and remember more and ensure delivery of 'Quality First Teaching', the first wave of any SEND support package. Teachers will be expected to teach to the top and scaffold work to ensure pupils get the most out of the curriculum without narrowing learning experiences.

   Teaching and Learning Policy Objectives

1. **Consistency in Practice**
   To ensure that every lesson across the school reflects a coherent approach to teaching and learning whilst promoting teacher autonomy, in order to cultivate the highest standards of pedagogy, aligned with our school's core values of 'kindness, respect, and courage'; along with USP's vision of 'making remarkable change happen.'

2. **Evidence-Based Pedagogy**
   To ground all teaching practices in current, reputable educational research, ensuring that teachers apply methods proven to be effective in enhancing student learning outcomes.

3. **Continuous Improvement of Teaching Standards**
   To foster a culture of professional growth where teachers are engaged in reflective practice, regular professional development and coaching, and are encouraged to innovate and refine their teaching strategies through managed autonomy.

4. **Inclusivity and Adaptive Teaching**
   To ensure that all lessons meet the diverse learning needs of our students, with appropriate adaptations and scaffolding, so that every student is supported to achieve their full potential.

5. **Student-Centred Learning**
   To promote a focus on student engagement, active learning, thinking hard, and the development of independent, critical thinking skills across all lessons.

6. **Use of Data to Inform Responsive Teaching**
   To ensure teachers incorporate formative assessment, data analysis, and real-time checking for understanding techniques effectively to inform teaching strategies, ensuring that lessons are responsive to student needs and progress.

7. **High Expectations for All Learners**
   To maintain high expectations for all students, encouraging resilience, challenge, and achievement through well-planned, ambitious lessons.
8. **Progression Model Aligned to Summative Assessments**
   To implement a structured progression curriculum model in which lessons and formative assessments are systematically designed to build students' knowledge and skills over time, culminating in their readiness for key milestone assessments. This ensures that students' learning is sequenced and scaffolded to support success in summative assessments.

Teaching and Learning Policy Principles

1. **Research-Driven Practice**
   Teaching should be informed by the latest educational research, including cognitive science such as Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory, spaced retrieval practice, and formative assessment strategies:
   - [Principles of Instruction: Research-Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know, by Barak Rosenshine; American Educator Vol. 36, No. 1, Spring 2012, AFT T](#)
   - https://my.chartered.college/impact_article/cognitive-load-theory-and-its-application-in-the-classroom/

2. **Reflective Practice and Professional Development**
   Teachers are encouraged to regularly engage in self-reflection, peer coaching, and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) to stay current with pedagogical advancements and apply them in their classrooms.
3. **Clear Learning Routines**
   Every lesson should be founded in the same evidence-based learning routines and teaching techniques to ensure parity of student experience. Lessons should include opportunities for retrieval, review, checking understanding, modelling and instruction, new material presented in small steps, guided practice, and independent practice.
4. **Active and Engaging Learning**
   Students should be actively involved in their learning, with lessons designed to encourage participation, collaboration, and inquiry. Teaching should move beyond passive reception to promote deeper conceptual understanding and disciplinary application of knowledge.
5. **Inclusive and Adaptive Teaching**
   Teachers should assess student understanding throughout the lesson, adapting their instruction to ensure all learners grasp key concepts. Adaptation should inform, and be embedded in, planning to cater to the varying needs and abilities of students.
6. **Focus on Mastery**
   Lessons should be structured to ensure depth of learning and mastery, with a focus on consolidating knowledge over time through revisiting and interleaving topics.
7. **Formative Assessment**
   Formative assessment should be integral to all lessons, guiding both teachers and students to understand progress and areas needing improvement. Feedback should be personalised, timely, and focused on advancing learning.
8. **Positive Learning Environment**
   A safe, supportive, and inclusive classroom environment is essential, where students feel confident to

contribute, make mistakes, and learn. High behavioural expectations should be consistently upheld through consistent behaviour routines to ensure a positive atmosphere conducive to learning.

2. SAA Learning Routines

All teaching and learning should be driven by the Sybil Andrews Learning Routines. These are an evidence informed amalgamation of the best available pedagogical research, contextualised to the school's context.

Teach Like A Champion 3.0 is to be used as a touchstone text for the granular techniques used by teachers during each lesson phase.

The pedagogical routines are the repertoire of teaching techniques the school believes underpin effective teaching & learning. However, they should not be interpreted as a chronological checklist, but rather a toolkit of techniques that should be deployed as appropriate across a lesson, or sequence of lessons. However, each element of these pedagogical routines should be evident in a fortnightly timetable cycle.

The school's behaviour routines are our non-negotiable mechanisms for transitioning through lesson phases. Every teacher using these routines ensures lessons are calm and purposeful environments for learning. (See Behaviour Policy).

In the academic year 24/25, there is a hybridised approach to the Learning Routines in Year 7 Geography and History lessons where the CUSP curriculum is in the first year of implementation. In these lessons, the SAA Learning Routines should still be deployed by teachers, however the language used during instruction and in lesson resources will be based on the CUSP pedagogical approach.

SAA Learning Routines

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Pedagoglcal Routines & Techniques

'Do N-' – Dally, WNkly, a Monthly ....

∨ Retrieval practise basedon priorlearning using: to-.v-stakes quizzing. defining terms-. mu'hple dmice questions.

Check for Understanclng

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'I Do' - Modelling N-MawlalhiSmal Steps

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Cold Call, Wait time, Turn & talk, no-opt out and 'stretch it' probing questionsare usedsimultaneously alongside tcache, explanations iro check *a* repl°esentativesample of the class's understanding (including SEND and PP).

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'YouDo' - Scllffoldod Ind-,.IMhfft Pl'ac'IIM • Exit Tull

Independent pracbse of skills, extended writing, or application of knowle ge to a task.

Teache<S attend to cogniti"ite loadin allstudents, but particularly students withSEND. by appropriately scaffolding independeot pracrice through sentence stems, vocabulary banks, K. JiffIge Organise,s, checklists, success criteria, etc. b..

Check for Understanding

Seffandpeer.assessment. circulating andoffering teacher feedback,Whole Class Feedback, etc.is used to inform future lesson planning

Behaviour Routines

aauroom Entry

- Teachers stand at their classroom doors and greet students r,,NWF), narrate ovr expectations andche<:k vniforrn.
- Students stand beh:nd chairsin anupright SLANT with their bags on desks
- Pupilsareinstructed to take out equipment andsit in SLANT
- Students comp1ete Do Now a • in silence, answering 'Yes Sir/ Miss' to the register in the first 10minutes
- If it's not right: Reset,R r0<:us. Reslart. 100%all the lin·.e every time.

Whole clanett.ntlon

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Countdowns• Sybil teache<s use countdowns all the time. Weuse countdowns to go ·*mo* SLANT ("On my next instruction of go - I want youin SLANT and trackiog *me:* 3.2,1 go."}, to *get* equipment.out (equipment out on the·g· of go: 3,2,1 go".), to start work (on my signal but not before, start writing: 3,2, 1 go.)

If it'snot right: Reset. Refocus, Restart. l00%all the time f!Yery time.

For sLt.tdenLs withSEND we offer takeup time,, use noil• verb.alcommunication, and follow scriptson OPP.

SLANT.. students sil 'Mith their aims folded on lhe table; they should have nothing in their hands. They should track the teacher or whatever else the :each.erasks them to track. Weuse SLANT to manage students' attention:

   Sit up straight
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- A.skandAM\ver ((ves.tions polilely
- NeverImerrupt
   Troele.rhe teacher or our work

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- We explain oor e,xpec1ations ol taskswilh students in SLANT and 'Reset, refocus, restart' if those expectations are not met
- Teachers use. the least invasive sl:ral<:gies while circulating to ensure pupils are engaged **and** on task at all times
- Teache,s usepositive framing lo hEghlight desirable learning behaviours and sanction privately where expectations are not met
- For Sludents witl\ SEND w offer task ch cldis:t:S, si,nplited instructions,.

Classroom Exit

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Students stand in anupright SLANT having paokeij away a()(Iwait to be dism·.ssed
- *TeacootS* dismiss students *one* row at a time (\WJF), checking uniform as theyleave and gu.ding towardi the corridor oneway system

Retrieval Practise: Daily, Weekly & Monthly Review

- Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned the students' pre-existing schema. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity. The germane effort involved in recalling recently-learned material encodes it in long-term memory. The more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.
- Retrieval practise is systematically spaced so that prior learning is recalled at intervals designed to harness the process of forgetting, so that learning is recalled at the point where it begins to be forgotten. [(Firth J (2018) The Application of Spacing and Interleaving Approaches in the Classroom.)](#)
- All lessons will begin with retrieval practise which requires all students to connect prior knowledge to forthcoming learning. This should be set up prior to students entering the classroom.
- In Year 7 CUSP History and Geography lessons, this phase of the lesson is known as 'Connect' and should activate prior learning in anticipation of connecting this schema to new up coming knowledge.
- *Techniques from TLAC to be deployed by teachers: 7, 16, 20, 34, 38, 47*

'I Do'/ Modelling

- The working memory is finite and easily overloaded, only handling small amounts of information at once. In order to avoid cognitive overload in students, teachers will attend to intrinsic, extraneous, and germane cognitive load when introducing new material:
  - **Intrinsic cognitive load** – teachers will use concise and precisely scripted explanations to make new abstract concepts more concrete for learners. Modelling, worked examples and teachers thinking out loud meta-cognitively help clarify the specific steps involved with applying new learning
  - **Extraneous cognitive load** – teachers will present resources in such a way as to avoid distracting from the core learning, foster learning environments that neutralise extraneous distraction arising from the environment or student behaviour
  - **Germane cognitive load** – teachers will optimise the germane load required to connect new learning with prior knowledge in order to optimally stimulate the working memory, without overloading it.
- Teachers will model to students what successful application of learning looks like to make abstract processes and concepts more concrete for learners. Teachers do this by 'thinking aloud' metacognitively during practical demonstrations, modelling writing and sentence craft, as well as evaluating and critiquing exemplars and non-examples - both pre-written teacher exemplars and marking up student work.
- Teachers use Explicit Vocabulary Instruction in order to move key terminology from pupils' receptive vocabularies into their expressive vocabularies using the following scripts:
  - Read, see, hear the word
  - Define the word
  - Connect the words to prior knowledge and other language
  - Apply and use the word
  - Analyse the word
- In Year 7 CUSP History and Geography lessons this phase of the lesson is known as the 'Explain' phase
- *Techniques from TLAC to be deployed by teachers: 1, 2, 21, 22*

Check for Understanding

- Teachers '*cannot assume students have understood simply because we've taught them; checking for understanding is the only way to make their thinking visible.*' – David Didau
- In order for instruction to be responsive, teachers frequently check students' understanding in real time. Teachers use techniques like cold call, thinking time, turn & talk, no-opt out, probing process questions, multiple choice questions, and hinge questions to gain a representative sample of all students' learning. This serves two purposes:

  1. Answering questions might cause students to elaborate on material they have learned and augment connections to schema in the long-term memory.
  2. It alerts the teacher to misconceptions and knowledge gaps in order to diagnose material to be retaught.

- Instruction at all levels is accompanied simultaneously with checking for understanding strategies to ensure that no pupil is left behind. When left on their own, many students make errors in the process of constructing knowledge because learners' pre-existing schemata is fragile and incomplete; because these errors and misconceptions are a natural part of learning, teachers will check understanding frequently throughout instruction to prevent misconceptions becoming embedded.
- *Techniques from TLAC to be deployed by teachers: 6, 16, 17, 21, 33, 34, 43*

Guided Practise

- *'Memory is the residue of thought'* – Daniel Willingham – Teachers introduce new material in small steps through worked examples and chunked tasks which allow students to 'think hard' about new material without intrinsic or germane cognitive overload.
- Teachers structure guided practise so that students are able to rehearse their learning by rephrasing, synthesising, evaluating, summarising, and categorising new material so that it can be more effectively encoded into the long-term memory.
- Teachers extended Explicit Vocabulary Instruction to guided practise by creating generative, 'thinking hard' activities designed to move key vocabulary from pupils' receptive vocabularies into their expressive vocabularies and better encode key terminology in the long term memory
- Pupils' knowledge and curricula is communicated through words and language, therefore teachers use prosodic reading techniques to develop reading fluency in order to enhance text comprehension and understanding.
- In Year 7 Geography and History lessons, this phase of the 'Attempt' phase of the lesson and will involve generative learning and thinking hard technques
- *Techniques from TLAC to be deployed by teachers: 1, 2, 3, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 41*

Independent Practise

- Overlearning and repeated independent practise is needed in order to become fluent and automatic in a skill. When material is overlearned, it can be recalled automatically and doesn't take up any space in working memory. When students become automatic in an area, they can then devote more of their attention to comprehension and application.
- Teachers provide frequent opportunities for students to apply their learning independently and in an extended way, once a high success rate has been achieved through guided practise.

- Teachers provide students with temporary supports and scaffolds to assist them when they apply difficult concepts independently through techniques like writing frames, vocabulary banks, dual coding, partially completed examples
- In Year 7 CUSP Geography and History lessons, this phase is broken into the 'Apply' and 'Challenge' phases
- *Techniques from TLAC to be deployed by teachers: 2, 3, 4, 9, 18, 21, 25, 38, 39, 40,*

Inclusive and Adaptive teaching

- Inclusive and adaptive teaching is central to the principles of quality first teaching and our school's Teach and Learning principles.
- Inclusive and adaptive teaching is embedded within our evidence-based teaching practice, as well as evidence based, bespoke and targeted interventions. EEF's '5-a-day' is embedded with SAA Learning Routines (explicit instruction, cognitive/ metacognitive strategies, scaffolding, flexible grouping, technology).
- Teachers interweave inclusive and adaptive practice from Suffolk Mainstream Inclusion Framework into their teaching pedagogy, for example:
  - o For pupils with cognition and learning needs, teachers activate prior knowledge and ensure pupils overlearn as part of the spiral curriculum, scaffold and chunk tasks, and use concise explicit instruction techniques to minimise extraneous load in the format and presentation of lesson resources.
  - o For pupils with communication and interaction needs, teachers plan opportunities for language development. Key vocabulary is taught explicitly, and teachers encourage pupils to explore the meanings and origins of words.
  - o For pupils with SEMH needs, the school's behaviour routines are explicitly taught and teachers use scripts to signal these routines in a warm, welcoming, and friendly way that uses positive framing and adheres to pupils' one-page profiles.
  - o For pupils with sensory and physical needs, teachers adapt lesson resources and activities so that all pupils can access and are included in learning.
- *Techniques from TLAC to be deployed by teachers*: 3, 6, 19, 27, 28, 48, 50, 54, 62

Behaviour Routines

- Routines '*hack the attention economy in the classroom and help pupils learn hard things faster*' – Peps Mccrea - Attention is the gatekeeper to working memory since students can only learn and process what they attend to. The school's Behaviour Routines develop strong habits of attention and help minimise extraneous cognitive load by building automaticity around students' behaviours so that working memory is not wasted on operational procedure.
- Teachers' roles and responsibilities in using behaviour routines is described in detail in the school's Behaviour Policy
- Teachers will teach and uphold consistent routines for classroom entry, including line-ups, use countdowns to signal transitions, and insist on students using SLANT for whole class attention.
- *Techniques from TLAC to be deployed by teachers*: 36, 47, 48, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62

4. Learner Expectations

Students' role in their classroom community is set out in detail in the school's Behaviour Policy. However, in addition to this, students will engage in lessons, activities, and classroom discussions in the following ways:
- Every lesson should begin with the date and a title, both underlined using a ruler.

- Do Now retrieval activities should be completed in silence at the start of lessons
- Diagrams, graphs, and drawings should be completed using a pencil, while written work should be completed in pen.
- Students use SLANT to maximise attention during teacher explanations
- Students offer responses to questions and tasks (both verbal and written) using SHAPE

5. Feedback and marking

Feedback should:

- Promote pupil progress: Feedback helps pupils understand how they are performing, highlighting areas of strength and areas that need improvement. It serves to close the gap between their current understanding and the learning objectives/ journey.
- Encourage reflection and improvement: It provides pupils with strategies and actionable steps to improve their work. By reflecting on feedback, pupils can better engage in the learning process and take responsibility for their progress.
- Support effective learning: Feedback ensures that pupils are actively involved in their learning journey. It fosters a dialogue between teachers and pupils, allowing for deeper understanding and more personalized guidance.
- Enhance presentation and literacy skills: Feedback also focuses on promoting pride in the presentation of work, correcting literacy and vocabulary errors, and encouraging pupils to refine their communication skills.

Forms of feedback:

- Verbal feedback: This is the most frequent and often the most immediate form of feedback, given during lessons. It is particularly valued by vulnerable pupils as it allows for real-time adjustments and guidance. This should be seen in every lesson, particularly in the explain phase of the lesson.
- Personalised feedback: Typically provided on key pieces of work, personalised feedback involves detailed comments on pupils' strengths and areas for improvement. It often includes targeted suggestions for further development. This should be seen at least twice per half-term.
- Peer feedback: Pupils provide feedback to one another, offering insights and critiques of their peers' work. This encourages collaboration and helps pupils learn from different perspectives. Peer-led work should be seen with regularity in Key Stage IV lessons.
- Self-assessment: Pupils review their own work, reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses. This form of feedback promotes independent learning and self-reflection. Regular self-assessment should take place in Key Stage III lessons.

After receiving feedback, pupils should be able to articulate:

- Identify their strengths: They should know what they did well and the areas where they demonstrated understanding or mastery of the content. All pupils should be able to articulate at least one strength from a recent piece of work.
- Understand areas for improvement: Pupils should clearly recognise where they need to improve, whether it's related to content knowledge, skills, or presentation. These areas of development need to be personalised to the pupil.

- Explain how to improve: They should be able to articulate the next steps they need to take to improve their work, based on the specific personalised feedback provided. This is a key part of the mastery framework within the curriculum.
- Reflect on their learning: Pupils should be able to reflect on the feedback and understand how it will help them progress toward their learning goals. They may do this through peer-led activities, within lesson time and following a feedback component within a lesson.

Feedback should have coverage of issues with vocabulary (Tier 1, 2 and 3):

- Identifying misused or incorrect vocabulary: Feedback can highlight words that are used incorrectly or inappropriately within the context of the subject matter, guiding pupils to replace them with more accurate terms.
- Suggesting alternative or more advanced vocabulary: Teachers can provide suggestions for more sophisticated or subject-specific vocabulary to improve the quality of the pupil's writing, encouraging them to expand their word choice.
- Focused literacy feedback: Personalised feedback can specifically focus on improving vocabulary by correcting spelling or word choice errors and encouraging pupils to use more precise language.
- Vocabulary exercises in feedback: Feedback can include tasks or exercises to reinforce correct vocabulary use, such as rewriting sentences using a provided word bank or revisiting key terms from the lesson.
- Explicit vocabulary instruction should be seen with high regularity across all subjects in the school. Vocabulary will directly impact a pupils' ability to address misconceptions and correct errors.

What does this look like in school?

- Frequency: Personalised feedback should occur twice per half-term. The form it takes is department specific, to suit the teacher and the pupils. However, evidence of this taking place should be clear and evident within books, folders or pupil work.
- Green sheet: Whole class feedback is an established mechanism at the school which provides pupils with feedback on recent learning. Provided this mechanism meets the requirement of personalised feedback, it can be used by departments as a distribution of feedback mechanism.
- Marking for explicit vocabulary instruction: Evidence of marking for correct use of spelling, contextual use of vocabulary, grammatical choices and use of punctuation is a fundamental part of ensuring pupils develop good habits. This should form part of the personalised feedback within the school.
- Extended writing in response to feedback: Pupil books should show evidence of extended writing in response to the feedback (relative to the subject's requirements). Pupils will use purple pen to think hard about their feedback.

6. Monitoring

The Quality of Education at Sybil Andrews Academy will need constant monitoring and systematic evaluation on a regular basis in order to:

- Make secure judgements of teaching and learning across the school

- Make secure judgements about the implementation of curricula across the school
- Monitor and evaluate the progress of students during a lesson and over time
- Evaluate the performance of individual teachers against the Teacher Standards and check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained
- Identify group and individual training needs across teaching and support staff and drive the CPD programme
- Offer frequent developmental feedback that promotes excellent practice

Role of the Head of School:

- To hold all senior leaders to account
- To monitor the effectiveness of the academy as a whole
- Overarching strategic direction

Role of the Senior Leadership Team:

- To monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning across the school and provide leadership in areas they line manage
- To evaluate and lead on change where required
- To provide support to those they line manage
- To report to the Headteacher on a regular basis on the effectiveness of respective areas

Role of the Quality of Education Deputy Headteacher:

- To ensure an effective curriculum, built on evidence informed pedagogy, is in place across the academy
- To review and monitor the curriculum with the senior leadership team
- To ensure appropriate systems are in place that facilitate the success of the curriculum and therefore quality of education
- To monitor (with the Assistant Headteacher for Teaching and Learning) the effectiveness of lessons across the academy
- To provide the Headteacher and/ or Governors with an up-to-date perspective on the effectiveness of the quality of education within the academy

Role of the Assistant Headteacher for Teaching and Learning:

- Working alongside the DHT: Quality of Education, monitor the effectiveness of lessons across the academy
- Develop and implement an effective coaching model
- Lead on implementation of CPD which improves the quality of education

Role of the Head of Department:

- To act as an expert in the subject field they teach
- To stay up-to-date on any subject related developments
- To monitor the effectiveness of how their curriculum is being delivered
- To hold those they line manage to account
- To lead on the construction of subject reviews
- To ensure adequate subject specific CPD is regularly taking place

Role of the Classroom Teacher (regardless of hierarchical position)
- To follow the aims outlined in this policy
- To deploy the SAA Learning Routines effectively in lessons
- To deliver the curriculum as planned, personalising and adapting to students as appropriate
- To engage in peer coaching
- To ensure subject specific and wider pedagogical CPD is regularly partook in

8. Policy Review

The landscape of Teaching and Learning is constantly developing, changing and evolving as the evidence on which the profession is built is constantly evolving. This is either through research-led, evidence-based developments or wider national policy changes by regulators, examination boards or the Government.

Therefore, this policy may need to be reviewed and/ or change at more regular intervals to maintain its effectiveness in order to ensure the quality of students' education is always central to the Sybil Andrews Academy improvement plan.