

Amble Links First School
Policy for Teaching, Learning and Assessment



Date Written: November 2018
By: Paul Heeley/Linda Buller/Teaching Staff
Responsible Governor: Strategic Policy and Direction Committee
Adopted by Governors: November 2018
Date for Review: November 2020

1. In line with the school's vision, the principles of teaching, learning and assessment at Amble Links First School will focus on the provision of a school and class environment that is intellectually, socially and physically supportive of learning. These principles will assist whole-school planning and individual classroom practice. This policy will support the essential need to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the school principles across the school community and that there is a collaborative effort to implement these principles in ways appropriate to the specific school cohort.

Appendix 1 sets out more specific details about our school approaches that lead to effective teaching and learning.

2. The learning environment created at Amble Links will be supportive and productive in promoting independence, interdependence and self-motivation. Teachers will build positive relationships with, and value each pupil. Through teacher modelling and classroom strategies based on cooperation and mutual support, an environment will be created where pupils feel comfortable to pursue inquiries and express themselves. Pupils will follow the schools guiding principles of Respect, Reasoning, Resourcefulness, Responsibility, Resilience and Reflectiveness which incorporates taking responsibility for their learning and being prepared to pursue and try out new ideas.

3. We strongly encourage our pupils to be independent at all opportunities in order for them to develop resilience. Where pupils are unsure of something they are consistently encouraged to follow the 5 B's approach (Brain, Board, Book, Buddy, Boss) as a strategy to solve problems for themselves.

4. Teacher questioning will be open-ended and designed to promote depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding. Teachers will provide pupils with questions or challenges as the impetus for learning and encourage and support pupils to construct their own responses to such questions. **Appendix 2** gives further guidance on this.

5. Teaching will develop not only knowledge but ways of reasoning with evidence and the skills needed to successfully solve problems. Challenging tasks using the Bloom's Revised Taxonomy guidelines and principles will be considered when planning activities to allow for multiple entry points and to develop higher order thinking skills such as synthesis, interpretation, analysis, evaluation etc. (**Appendix 3**)

6. A judgement about whether teaching is effective will be checked against Teacher Standards and the progress being made by pupils.

7. At Amble Links it is expected that teachers have a deep knowledge of the curriculum they teach. As well as a strong understanding of the material being taught, teachers are also expected to understand the ways pupils' think about the content, evaluate the thinking behind pupils' own methods, and identify pupils' common misconceptions. Teachers will understand that pupils develop at different rates and also learn new ideas more or less quickly and that they should be provided with the time, conditions and encouragement they need to learn in stimulating ways, and be discouraged from superficial learning that gives the impression of keeping pace at the expense of long-term and sustained learning.

8. Planning indicates the learning objective for each lesson. The learning objective makes it clear the knowledge and skill to be mastered within the lesson. This objective will usually be shown on a sticker at the top of each pupil's work.

To develop mastery, pupils will be expected to acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned. Pupils will develop not only the component skills and knowledge necessary to perform complex tasks, they will also practice combining and integrating them to develop greater fluency and automaticity. Pupils will be challenged and supported to develop deep levels of thinking and application. Learning tasks will be designed to encourage and support pupils to move beyond their current understanding and think more deeply about ideas and practice. Activities will be consistent with pupils' maturity and are designed to engage both their interest and challenge them to succeed. It will be made clear to pupils what is expected of them, what they are trying to learn and why. Teachers will enhance motivation and purposeful learning by making clear to pupils the long-term outcomes expected from their learning by explicitly naming the subject they are learning (eg. History) and discussing jobs/roles that could be linked to the subject.

9. At Amble Links First School it is acknowledged that assessment practices are an integral part of teaching and learning. The primary purpose for assessment is to improve learning. Assessment provides all learners with the capacity to demonstrate what they know, understand, apply and value and provides teachers with information that will improve learning. One of the principal functions of our assessment system is to identify pupils at risk of falling behind in terms of achievement.

10. Our assessments are clearly linked to target setting for individual pupils, groups and cohorts. Although pupils leave Amble Links at the end of Year 4 school we acknowledge the need to ensure that pupils are on track to reach at least the national standard by the end of Key Stage 2. We are therefore working towards the target that at least 85% of pupils will attain 100+ score at the end of KS2.

11. To achieve this, assessment will contribute to planning at a number of levels. Monitoring of pupils' learning will be continuous and encompass a variety of aspects of understanding and practice. Assessment criteria will be explicit and feedback designed to support pupils' further learning and encourage them to monitor and take responsibility for their own learning. We have a separate policy for feedback and marking.

12. The assessment system will enable teachers and school leaders to understand current and past pupil achievement levels, be explicit about targets for improvement and be explicit about how progress towards those targets will be monitored. School-wide evaluation processes will enable school leaders and teachers to use all assessment information to better understand and improve pupils' learning.

13. At Amble Links we value the partnership role our parents have within the wider lifelong learning arena. Assessments will ensure that pupil progress and attainment is reported to parents in a useful and meaningful way that allows parents to play a full part in their children's learning; this includes the effective use of homework.

14. Assessments will arise naturally out of the teaching and intended learning of the curriculum (see paragraph 7 above). They will be carefully constructed to enable judgements to be made about pupils' progress in ways that contribute to on-going learning.

15. How assessment information is collected, when it is collected and how it is recorded:

Formative Assessment

As a matter of course, teachers assess pupils' learning throughout all lessons. This is done in a range of ways including observation, discussion with pupils, questioning, marking, quizzes and scanning of work. This helps pupils to measure their learning and understanding against learning objective and identify where they need to target their next efforts to improve. It allows teachers to understand pupils' performance on a continuing basis; to identify pupils who are struggling and when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress. This allows teachers to provide appropriate support or extension as necessary. Formative assessment also enables teachers to evaluate their own teaching of particular topics or concepts and to plan future lessons accordingly. These assessments are completed on an ongoing basis and may be seen through annotated teacher planning, observation notes, feedback in pupils' books and through self/peer marking. 'Cold' Writing tasks are used at the start of English units of work and specifically designed tests at the start and end of maths units of work are used to identify individual and class areas for improvement.

Summative Assessment

National standardised summative assessment includes the National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1. These assessments provide pupils with information about how well they have learned and understood a topic taught over time and can be used to provide feedback on how they can improve. It enables teachers to evaluate pupil learning at the end of a unit of work and the impact of their own teaching and will help teachers plan for subsequent learning. In-school summative assessments will also allow school staff and leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts and identify where interventions may be required to ensure pupils make sufficient progress and expected attainment. Summative assessments can also be used to report to parents about achievement and progress.

The school will collect summative data on a termly basis using assessment information from testing in the form of 'Rising Stars' and school designed maths tests as well as evidence collated from ongoing teacher assessments. This data is analysed and will allow for early identification of groups or individuals that may be at risk of falling behind their peers. Teachers analyse the data at group and question level allowing them to plan more effectively in addressing areas identified as being weaker.

On a termly basis, teachers submit a predicted level for each child as to whether they are expected to reach an working towards, expected or greater depth level of attainment against the age appropriate curriculum at the end of the academic year.

Nationally standardised summative assessments provide information on how pupils, and the school, are performing in comparison to pupils and other schools nationally. This allows the school to understand national expectations and assess performance in a broader context. At Amble Links First School these assessments are completed by all Year 2 pupils in the form of National Curriculum Teacher Assessments at the End of Key Stage 1, Year 1 Phonics test and Early Years Profile scores.

16. Pupils will have the opportunity to engage as fully as possible in the teaching, learning and assessment process, learners need to be able to connect new experiences to what they already know and can do. Therefore, learning experiences will be meaningful and involve pupils in both *doing* and *reflecting*. As part of the reflective process, pupils will be helped to make connections between apparently unrelated ideas and experiences and different areas of knowledge. They will learn to carry out relevant actions (do, imitate, plan, experiment, test, create, rehearse, make, choose, try alternatives) and reflect upon and make sense of the results of those actions (What does this mean? Why did that happen? Am I surprised by this answer? Does it make sense? How is this problem like others I have seen before? What worked? Why? How does this connect with other learning? Are these ideas related?). Teachers will emphasise the interconnectedness of knowledge, skills and values, both within and across different learning areas.

Moderation of teacher judgements

17. Moderation of teacher judgements will be an important component of our assessment system. There will be two broad purposes of moderation, 'Moderation for Learning' and 'Moderation for Reporting'. The two purposes of moderation will be complementary and one can be used to support the other.

- *Moderation for Learning* will support teachers within and across school/schools in developing a shared understanding of pupils' learning and shared expectations of pupil performance. It is closely aligned with the formative purposes of assessment.
- *Moderation for Reporting* will enable teachers to develop consistent judgements of pupil performance and will be closely aligned with the summative purposes of assessment.

Moderation for learning will focus on teachers working together to reach an in-depth understanding of their pupils' learning relative to a broader group of pupils. This broader group may be pupils who are in the same year or pupils from across year groups. Focussing the moderation process on learning will support teachers in refining their understandings of what their pupils know and what they need to learn next. Because moderation for learning is concerned with understanding learning at different depths of knowledge and understanding, it will be very difficult

to ensure teachers' judgements are highly comparable therefore teacher time will be used in analysing the different features of pupils' work and what that means for learning.

Moderation for reporting will focus on those aspects of assessment where the school is required to be accountable for performance e.g. attainment at the end of the early years, phonics and end of Key Stage 1 and year on year progress. In order to accurately measure this progress it is important that teacher judgements are comparable. When undertaking moderation for reporting purposes, the emphasis is on broad classifications of pupil performance (e.g. reporting performance in terms of achieving the standard), and ensuring teachers have consistent interpretations of these broad classification. At Amble Links First School as well as clear reference to 'The interim teacher assessment frameworks the end of Key Stage 1' use will be made of the Chris Quigley 'Essential Milestones' to support judgements.

Regular in-school moderation of pupils' work will take place. This will give teachers opportunities for professional discussion around the judgements that they have made about pupils' learning against the current curriculum they are working on for their age. Accurate judgements on whether children are demonstrating basic, secure or deep understanding of the curriculum can be made by scrutinising and comparing pupils' work as well as comparing other evidence. Whole school foundation subject portfolios of work are also used to collate evidence of assessments made in these subjects.

Moderation will take place between schools in the Coquet Partnership with a specific focus on a given area of the curriculum. Other moderation will take place with other partner schools using a similar system of assessment; this may include moderation of examples of work given one particular 'grade' by teachers eg. Year 2 place value work where a child has been graded to have 'deep' understanding.

APPENDIX 1

What does good teaching look like at Amble Links?

At Amble Links all staff aim to ensure that their teaching includes appropriate combinations of the following elements to ensure that all learners make good progress:

- Planning that is appropriate to the needs of all pupils and is amended to meet the ever changing needs of the class in response to ongoing assessment
- High expectations of all pupils regardless of their ability
- Clear explanations
- Vigorous pace
- Varied and flexible teaching styles, dependent on the task and the individual needs of the learner (Visual-Auditory-Kinaesthetic)
- Teachers show secure subject knowledge across all areas
- An exciting, enthusiastic approach to learning which inspires, motivates and engages our children
- Clear focus through explicit learning intentions and success criteria, which identify what learners' need to understand and be able to do in order to achieve
- Good use of teaching assistants and resources to support the children's learning.
- Positive behaviour management strategies that motivate and encourage pupils to respond appropriately and help create a climate for learning
- Opportunities for self-evaluation and reflection throughout the session
- A consistent approach in line with whole school policies and procedures
- Each and every child makes good progress in their learning, regardless of ability
- A relaxed yet purposeful learning environment
- Learning is linked to pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding
- The effective use of a range of effective questioning e.g. open and closed questions.
- Pupils encouraged to generate their own questions
- Information presented in short chunks, enabling pupils to maintain their concentration
- Good interaction and communication between children as well as adults and children
- Creative ideas are valued and actively encouraged
- High quality marking and feedback in a variety of forms ensures all children know how to improve their work further
- Appropriate, well prepared resources that engage the children in their learning

What does good learning look like at Amble Links?

We challenge and encourage all of our staff and pupils to be good learners. A good learner is someone who:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Asks questions | • Co- operates with others |
| • Is interested | • Takes a risk and 'has a go' |
| • Joins in | • Doesn't shout out or butt in |
| • Doesn't give up if it is too difficult | • Enjoys learning |
| • Has excited eyes | • Checks they have understood |
| • Gives others a chance to talk | • Can explain their thinking |
| • Is kind and helps others | • Listens and respects what others think |
| • Appropriately asks for help | • Shares ideas |
| • Tries different ways to solve a problem | • Works hard |
| • Takes pride in their work | • Finds learning fun |
| • Understands that everyone makes mistakes some times | |

We expect excellent presentation of all pupils' work and have a separate policy for this.

The Learning Environment

At Amble Links we know that a positive learning environment sets the climate for learning and enables all children to access the curriculum. It is our aim that every space in school should:

- Be welcoming and inviting to children and adults by encouraging interaction and providing opportunities for good communication between home and school
- Be vocabulary rich with effective use of Learning Walls.
- Reflect cultural and racial diversity
- Support and challenge learning by ensuring appropriate resources are accessible for the children, encouraging them to be independent in different areas of learning, including ICT
- Remind children that they are working towards personal goals and targets in their learning
- Celebrate achievement and value effort in the display and presentation of children's current learning across the curriculum.
- Help raise self-esteem and confidence and encourage independence through the use of the 5 B's.
- Be stimulating and thought provoking with the use of interactive displays and resources and different zones within each classroom, which encourage children to explore, investigate and play
- Be warm, comfortable and clean with the provision of suitable, functional furniture and fittings
- Create an environment where children feel they belong and can foster a sense of pride within it
- Be safe and hazard free, both emotionally and physically
- Encourage co-operative and collaborative learning and good working relationships, through the flexible use of space and the ability to adapt to whole class, group and individual learning
- Promote an appropriate atmosphere for learning that reflects the school's vision and policies for Marking and Feedback; Display; and Behaviour
- Be well organised and uncluttered, using available space to best advantage

Effective Teaching and Learning

In order to facilitate good teaching and learning as a school we commit to:

- Getting to know, value and have consistent high expectations of every pupil, irrespective of ability, race, gender, age or achievement
- Having a good understanding of the school curriculum- the skills, concepts, knowledge and attitudes which are the goals of the learning process
- Using a suitable range of organisational strategies and teaching methods to establish a positive learning environment
- Maintaining good discipline based on mutual respect, in line with our School Vision and Behaviour Policy
- Using a cross curricular approach to broaden and deepen learning
- Using long term curriculum plans to guide our teaching that detail what is to be taught in each year group
- Ensuring our medium and short term planning:
 - follows the agreed school format
 - is shared with the Teaching Assistants linked to each class
 - includes information about tasks to be set, resources needed, the way children will be grouped;
 - is evaluated to inform future planning.
- Having clear learning intentions which are shared with and understood by the children (learning/success criteria)
- Using a range of organisational strategies and teaching methods to suit
- Employing a range of different learning styles e.g. visual, auditory and kinaesthetic (VAK)
- Organising human and physical resources effectively;
- Making sure that the activities we provide for the children extend their knowledge, skills and understanding
- Being reflective, reviewing the effectiveness of our teaching and monitoring children's progress

Appendix 2

DEVELOPING THE DEPTH OF QUESTIONING

	Complexity >>>>>>>>>>>>						
	<i>Is? Does? Present</i>	<i>Did? Has? Was? Past</i>	<i>Can? Possibility</i>	<i>Should? Opinion</i>	<i>Would? Could? Probability</i>	<i>Will? Prediction</i>	<i>Might? Imagination</i>
<i>What? Event</i>							
<i>Where? Place</i>							
<i>When? Time</i>							
<i>Which? Choice</i>							
<i>Who? Person</i>							
<i>Why ? Reason</i>							
<i>How? Meaning</i>							

Appendix 3



