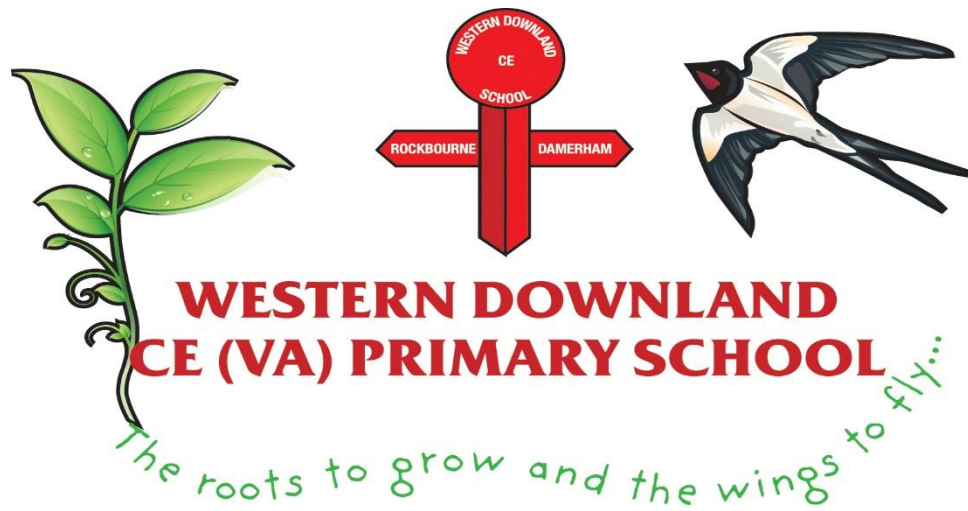




Teaching and learning Policy

Reviewed- September 2025

Next review- September 2027

Introduction

At Western Downland, through our Christian values, our aim is to support our children to flourish spiritually and academically. We want all children to become self-assured, articulate, and aspirational learners who have the “Wings to grow and the roots to fly.” In an ever-changing world, we want them to be resilient, hopeful, and resourceful.

We are committed to inclusion and celebrate the rich diversity of our school community. We believe that every child, regardless of background, need, or ability, has the right to thrive and succeed. Our inclusive approach ensures that all learners feel valued, respected, and supported in reaching their full potential.

This policy sets out the expectations for teaching and learning at Western Downland so that we have a shared understanding of good practice which will enable all staff and parents/carers involved to support the children in their journey throughout school, and to ensure high attainment for all children.

Aim (Intent) of this teaching and learning policy:

1. To ensure a clear and shared understanding of the three stages of the teaching cycle.
2. To ensure that high quality teaching is applied across the school so that there is a high level of achievement for all children.
3. To involve children, parents/carers and the wider school community in children's learning and development.

In order that there is excellent attainment, there needs to be the right classroom environment. At Western Downland, we believe that children learn best through the following:

- Have their basic physical needs met
- Feel secure, safe and valued
- Feel a sense of belonging to the group
- Are engaged and motivated
- Can see the relevance of what they are doing
- Know what outcome is intended
- Can link what they are doing to other experiences
- Understand the task
- Have the physical space and the tools needed
- Have access to necessary materials
- Are not disrupted or distracted by others
- Can work with others or on their own, depending on the task
- Are guided, taught or helped in appropriate ways at appropriate times
- Can practise what they are learning
- Can apply the learning in both familiar and new contexts
- Can persevere when learning is hard
- Can manage their emotions if things are not going well
- Recognise that all learners make mistakes and mistakes can help us learn

Roles and responsibilities

Teaching and learning at Western Downland is a shared responsibility, and everyone in our school community has an important role to play including parents. (Home/school agreement Fig 1 in appendix)

This is how we will create the above conditions for children's learning at all times:

Teachers

Teachers at Western Downland will:

- Have a clear understanding of the National Curriculum and its progression across the key stages so that they can plan effectively to meet the needs of all children.
- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the [Teachers' Standards](#)
- Actively engage parents/carers in their child's learning through providing Routes to Roots(Fig 2 in appendix) and home learning, including clearly communicating the purpose of home learning.
- Update parents/carers on children's progress at parent consultations and produce an annual written report on their child's progress
- Meet the expectations set out in curriculum agreements (Fig 3), behaviour policy, and marking and feedback policy.

Support staff

Support staff at Western Downland will:

- Know children well
- Follow lesson plans (see Fig 4 appendix) devised by the teacher using agreed planning proforma
- Use agreed assessment for learning strategies
- Use effective marking and feedback as required
- Engage in providing inspiring lessons and learning opportunities
- Feedback observations of children to teachers
- Ask questions to make sure they have understood expectations for learning
- Identify and use resources to support learning
- Have high expectations and celebrate achievement
- Demonstrate and model themselves as learners

Subject leaders

Subject leaders at Western Downland will:

- Help to create well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum plans that build knowledge and skills.
- Ensure their subject/s at all key stages contain opportunities for teaching about equality and diversity
- Drive improvement in their subject, working with teachers to identify any challenges.
- Moderate progress across their subject by using the monitoring proformas for their curriculum responsibility. ()
- Improve weaknesses identified in their monitoring activities. (See subject leader proformas)
- Create and share clear intentions for their subject
- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice

Senior leaders

Senior leaders will:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all children
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone
- Promote equality of opportunity and diversity
- Hold staff and children to account for their teaching and learning
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across the school
- Manage resources to support high-quality teaching and learning
- Provide support and guidance to other staff through coaching and mentoring
- Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Promote team working at all levels, for example by buddying teachers up to support one another where appropriate
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly

Children

Children will:

- Take responsibility for their own learning and support the learning of others
- Meet expectations for good behaviour for learning at all times, respecting the rights of others to learn
- Be ready to learn, with any necessary equipment for the lesson
- Be curious, ambitious, engaged and confident learners
- Put maximum effort and focus into their work
- Complete home learning activities as required

Parents and carers

Parents and carers of children at our school will:

- Make sure that my child goes to school regularly, arrives on time and is properly equipped, wearing the school uniform (or PE kit on the appropriate day).
- Respect the confidentiality of each child.
- Support the school's communication policy.
- Support the school's Christian ethos and values by encouraging my child to develop positive attitude towards every member of the school community and beyond.
- Reinforce the online safety messages provided to learners in school.
- Support the school's rules and encourage my child to be ready for learning, respectful and safe.
- Make the school aware of any concerns or problems that might affect my child's work or behaviour.
- Support the school's behaviour policy and code of conduct.
- Support my child in completing their home learning
- Attend parents' evenings and support school events, where possible
- Work in partnership with the school.

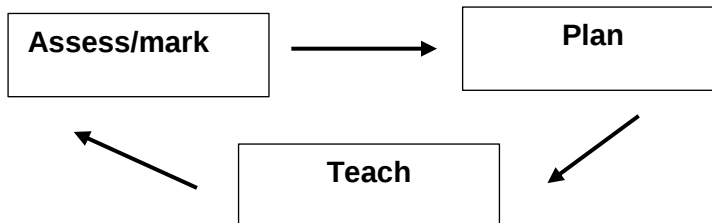
Governors

Governors at our school will:

- Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to teaching and learning
- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies on children's progress and attainment
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Make sure other school policies promote high-quality teaching, and that these are being implemented

Implementation

Mark; plan; teach is part of a continuous cycle



Mark/ Assess

It is imperative that teachers have a clear understanding of starting points for children and must have a secure overview of the starting points, progression and context of learning for all subjects and children.

This knowledge can be obtained in a variety of ways:

- For foundation subjects, through the use of assessment grids which identify particular strengths and weaknesses of the cohort or specific children. These are then used to inform planning of the following units of learning.
- Creating pre-topic assessments which help to identify next steps in learning or where gaps in knowledge are evident.
- Having a clear knowledge of the National Curriculum so that prior knowledge is considered.
- Using formative assessments including live marking and subject reviews.
- Looking at data on Insight which is updated twice a year.
- Analysing data from Sandwell, Vernon or Reading Fluency tests.
- **Marking must be regular and timely, identify misconceptions and be used to apply next steps in learning.**
- The schools marking code must be used.

More detailed information and expectations can be found in our assessment and marking policy. T:\Assessment\Assessment Vision & Policy

Plan

Planning is a process and not a product. Good teaching may see planning changed, if required, as it should enable high quality delivery which meets the needs of all students. Through a sound knowledge of the National Curriculum and small steps in learning, teachers need to be clear about the precise disciplinary and substantive knowledge that they want to deliver: what they want children to learn rather than what they want the children to do. At Western Downland we talk about long term planning, medium and short-term planning. Requirements for each subject are set out in the *Curriculum Policy*

- Planning should be broken down into smaller steps.
- Planning should include both disciplinary and substantive knowledge to be covered as well as activities that will be undertaken.
- Planning should be differentiated, as required, to meet the needs of children.
- Planning must include review opportunities.
- Planning should be stored on the school system in the agreed files.

See our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy for more details on our school's teaching and learning in the early years.

Teaching

Great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. At Western Downland it is expected that teachers and learning support assistants follow the principles of high-quality teaching suggested by EEF and Rosenshine.

High quality teaching will include the following elements and will be seen in classrooms:

- A review of previous learning.
- New material is delivered in small steps to avoid cognitive overload.
- Teachers use effective questioning to ensure that they are able to identify individual need within the classroom.
- Talk partners are used to articulate responses.
- Teachers provide modelled explanations which demonstrate teacher thinking.
- Children practice new learning which offers the teacher the opportunity to identify misconceptions and address these.
- White boards and other strategies are used to ensure that there is not an "opt-out" culture.
- Teachers use effective questioning throughout the lesson to identify misconceptions.
- Scaffolding is used to support learning which maybe challenging or new.
- Independent practice includes overlearning.
- Weekly and monthly reviews are used to support the connection between prior and new knowledge.

Differentiation

Teaching and learning at our school will take the backgrounds, needs and abilities of all children into account. We will differentiate or adapt learning to cater to the needs of all of our children, including:

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Children with English as an additional language (EAL)
- Disadvantaged children
- Children who may be working at a level beyond the expectation for their age

We will achieve this through the following:

- Ensure that teachers understand the needs of children and plan effectively for small steps in learning.
- Direct support staff effectively using the agreed daily planner to provide extra support if necessary.
- Working with our SEN co-ordinator (SENCO), our children with SEND, and their parents/carers to establish the appropriate level of material to support these children to make good progress
- Using ability groupings for certain subjects where appropriate
- Providing writing frames and word banks
- Provide well planned targeted support

Learning environment

When children are at school, learning will take place in classrooms, outdoor spaces, halls, music rooms and smaller learning spaces.

These spaces will be kept safe, clean and ready for children to use them.

They will be arranged to promote learning through:

- Clearly labelled, comfortable and attractive zones such as reading corners and quiet areas where there is the space is available.
- Posters of material children have previously learned about and can identify
- Accessible resources for learning such as books, worksheets and other equipment
- A seating layout that allows everyone to see the board and participate
- Displays that celebrate and support children's learning

Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour policy
- Curriculum policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking, feedback and assessment policy
- Home-school agreement
- Equality and inclusion

Appendix

Fig 1 Home school agreements - O:\New Entrants Information

Fig 2 Routes to Roots T:\Curriculum\Routes2Roots

Fig 3 Non-negotiables T:\Curriculum\Curriculum non-negotiables

Fig 4 Daily TA planning sheet -T:\Planning

Fig 5 Subject Leader Documents T:\Curriculum\Subject Leadership\Subject Leader documents