



Homer First School and Nursery

Teaching and Learning Policy

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Create an environment where pupils learn effectively and develop strong foundational knowledge and skills.
- Ensure teaching prioritises essential early development, including language, reading, writing and mathematics.
- Promote high expectations focused on securing foundational learning before introducing greater complexity.
- Engage parents and the wider community in supporting pupils' early learning and wider development.

Guiding Principles

The school's vision— *"When we work hard and we are kind, amazing things happen"*—and our core values of **Ready, Respect, Safe** underpin our approach to teaching and learning. These values shape the environment in which pupils feel safe, supported and motivated to succeed.

How Pupils Learn Best

Pupils learn most effectively when they:

- Have their basic physical needs met.
- Feel secure, safe and valued.
- Experience a strong sense of belonging.
- Are engaged, motivated and curious about their work.
- Understand the relevance, purpose and intended outcomes of their learning.
- Have access to suitable space, tools and learning materials.
- Work free from unnecessary disruption or distraction.
- Collaborate with others or work independently as appropriate.
- Have regular opportunities to practise and consolidate learning.
- Apply knowledge and skills in both familiar and new contexts.
- Make connections with prior learning and experiences.
- Persevere when learning is challenging.
- Manage their emotions when things go wrong.
- Recognise that mistakes are part of the learning process.
- Receive clear explanations, modelling and scaffolded support when needed.
- Experience adaptive teaching that responds to their individual needs.

Our Approach to Teaching

High-quality teaching at Homer ensures that:

- Learning is carefully sequenced to build essential early knowledge, particularly in language, reading, early mathematics and writing.
- Routines, expectations and learning behaviours are explicitly taught, practised and

- reinforced.
- Pupils engage in structured practice to develop fluency in foundational skills.
- Oral rehearsal supports writing development, with handwriting and spelling given appropriate priority.
- Curriculum content avoids cognitive overload by focusing first on core, essential knowledge.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers

Teachers will:

- Meet the professional expectations outlined in the Teachers' Standards.
- Provide high-quality teaching grounded in a clear and coherent curriculum.
- Engage parents/carers in their child's learning through Homer News, the school website, letters and clear communication about home learning.
- Provide updates on pupil progress during Parents' Evenings and through an annual written report.
- Model themselves as learners and promote a growth mindset.
- Meet the expectations of the Behaviour Policy and the Marking and Feedback Policy.

Support Staff

Support staff will:

- Use adaptive approaches that meet pupils' developmental needs.
- Model high-quality language interactions.
- Reinforce routines and behaviour expectations that support readiness to learn.
- Support teaching and learning flexibly and resourcefully.
- Use agreed assessment for learning strategies.
- Provide effective marking and feedback as required.
- Contribute to engaging lessons and learning opportunities.
- Share observations of pupils with teachers promptly.
- Ask questions to ensure pupils understand expectations.
- Identify and use suitable resources to support learning.
- Maintain high expectations and celebrate achievement.
- Model themselves as learners.
- Meet expectations outlined in the Behaviour Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

Subject Leaders

Subject leaders will:

- Develop well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum plans.
- Support teachers in sequencing lessons to ensure progress from pupils' starting points.
- Use their budget effectively to resource the subject.
- Drive improvement and support staff in addressing challenges.
- Monitor progress using a range of qualitative and quantitative data.
- Address identified weaknesses through action planning.
- Set and communicate clear intentions for their subject.
- Encourage collaboration, sharing of resources and good practice.
- Meet expectations set out in the Behaviour Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy.

Senior Leaders

Senior leaders will:

- Provide a clear, ambitious vision for high-quality, inclusive education.
- Celebrate success and maintain high expectations for all.
- Hold staff and pupils to account for teaching and learning.
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure strong teaching and learning consistently.
- Manage resources effectively to support high-quality provision.

- Coach, mentor and guide staff.
- Monitor the effectiveness and impact of CPD.
- Promote teamwork, including structured peer support.
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly.

Pupils

Pupils will:

- Take responsibility for their own learning and support the learning of others.
- Meet expectations for positive behaviour for learning.
- Be curious, ambitious, confident and engaged.
- Understand their next steps and how to improve.
- Put maximum effort into their work.
- Complete home learning as required.
- Follow the school's Behaviour Policy.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will:

- Value learning and encourage their child as a learner.
- Ensure their child is ready for school and able to learn each day.
- Support good attendance.
- Participate in discussions about their child's progress.
- Communicate information promptly with the school.
- Provide resources as required.
- Support home learning and encourage responsibility.

Governors

Governors will:

- Ensure resources and funding support high-quality teaching and learning.
- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning on pupil progress and attainment.
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Ensure other policies promote and uphold high-quality teaching.

Planning

Our curriculum planning reflects our vision of preparing pupils for lifelong learning through a rich, ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum. Our curriculum develops knowledge, skills and understanding that support success in school and beyond.

- Lessons will be well planned to ensure good short-, medium- and long-term progress.
- Planning will build on prior learning and secure progression of knowledge and skills.

Schemes used include:

- **Art:** Kapow
- **Computing:** Purple Mash
- **Design Technology:** Kapow
- **English (Writing):** Talk for Writing
- **English (Phonics):** Little Wandle Letters & Sounds Revised
- **French:** Kapow
- **Geography:** Kapow
- **History:** Kapow
- **Mathematics:** White Rose & NCETM Maths Mastery
- **Music:** Sing Up
- **PSHE:** 1Decision
- **PE:** Get Set PE
- **RE:** ODBE Pan-Berkshire SACRE (Oxford Diocese)
- **Science:** Plymouth Science

See the EYFS Policy for details of provision in Early Years.

Learning Environment

Our learning environments:

- Provide purposeful opportunities for practice through structured areas.
- Are kept tidy and organised to ensure safe and prompt access to resources.
- Minimise distraction and support readiness to learn.
- Displays will be backed in neutral tones and natural materials
- Use displays to reinforce current and foundational learning without overload.
- Consistently include Zones of Regulation, My Happy Minds and WalkThrus.

Adaptive Teaching

Our approach to adaptive teaching:

- Responds to developmental stages and individual needs.
- Avoids introducing complex tasks before foundational knowledge is secure.
- Provides scaffolds that gradually decrease as independence increases.

Homework

Homework supports pupils in connecting school learning to the wider world. It is most effective when completed in a calm, supportive environment.

See the Homework Policy for more information.

Marking and Feedback

Feedback helps pupils understand what they are doing well and what they need to improve.

Feedback may be verbal or written.

See the Marking and Feedback Policy for more details.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment is purposeful and identifies misconceptions early.
- It ensures foundational knowledge is secure before moving on.
- Statutory assessments are used appropriately.

Statutory assessments include:

- Reception Baseline Assessment (within first 6 weeks)
- Year 1 Phonics Screening Check
- Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check

We provide regular next steps for pupils and termly updates for parents. All pupils receive an annual written report.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Leaders monitor teaching and learning through:

- Learning walks
- Reviews of marking and feedback
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Planning reviews and subject leader meetings
- Book looks
- Appraisal processes

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher.

Links to Other Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives