



Teaching & Learning POLICY 2025

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

'One who learns in order to do will be given the opportunity to learn, teach, keep and do' (Pirkei Avot 4:6)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Simon Marks Jewish Primary School aims to ensure that the children at our school are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement.

Children learn through their total experience. Our policy guides what children do, what teachers do and how teaching and learning time is managed. It informs the organisation of the classroom and what the school as an institution does to create an effective and well-managed learning environment in which the individual needs of each child can be met and barriers to learning are addressed.

PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Our policy is based upon the fundamental principle that high self-esteem underpins high achievement. We believe children learn best when they:

- Are happy;
- Are interested and motivated;
- Achieve success and gain approval;
- Are given tasks which stretch their ability;
- Clearly understand the task;
- Are confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries;
- Are challenged and stimulated;
- have a sense of ownership over their learning
- are emotionally engaged by their learning
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We aim to develop children's cognitive, analytical and organisational skills whilst fostering their independence and confidence. To this end, children are given appropriate tasks to build confidence and learn about responsibility. We define teaching and learning in its broadest sense and regard all experiences in the school as opportunities to teach and learn including, therefore, those that take place outside of the classroom such as assemblies, playtimes and eating lunch.

In the classroom, when setting appropriate tasks for pupils, teachers should use formative assessments and professional judgement to create learning opportunities. Quality First teaching where all children learn in any given lesson is the basis of all pedagogical approaches.

STRATEGIES FOR GOOD LEARNING AND TEACHING

At Simon Marks we believe learning is fun and that the **best learning is active**, usually involving the learner taking part in an activity and then reflecting on that

activity. The more the adult is actively involved in the learning process with the pupil, the greater the chance that the learning experience will be positive. We recognise the importance, therefore, of the relationship between the pupils, the adults in the school and the parents/carers.

Talk is an important part of the learning process because it helps pupils to collaborate, clarify their thinking and listen to the ideas of others. Good and varied questioning can provoke thought and speculation; good learners not only respond to questions, but ask them of themselves and others.

Routines are important to help create an orderly and tidy learning environment, which will support good quality learning. We aim to make our classrooms places where everyone is aware of what is expected of them and routines make sense. Often these routines are documented through the establishment of things like classroom rules.

We work hard to ensure **all children can access the learning** opportunities presented in our classrooms. Sometimes this means active interventions by staff to ensure equality of opportunity. Our staff creates opportunities for learners with differing learning styles and we aim to vary teaching styles according to the needs of the learners. We use visual timetables to enhance pupils' awareness of and access to their learning day.

Metacognition has become an important concept in teaching and learning. It means the more the learner is aware of how best to learn, the easier it will be for the learner to manage their own learning thus increasing the opportunity for independent learning. Teachers use questioning self-evaluation opportunities to develop pupils ability to reflect on their own learning.

A positive classroom atmosphere depends on the **quality of the relationships** within that classroom. The more staff knows about the pupils in their care, the more they are able to support their learning; good quality pastoral care is essential to good quality learning. In our classrooms, we expect mutual respect between adults and children.

Assessment is used to assess prior learning and inform future planning. Through peer and self-assessment, staff and pupils build next steps for learning. Good quality teaching is achieved, therefore, through high quality planning combined with a constant awareness of the learners' needs.

As the world changes, so do the requirements of the learner. **ICT forms an integral part of learning and teaching** experiences.

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS

By promoting and celebrating pupils' achievements at class and whole school level, we aim to build on children's success and boost their self-esteem. Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on going process in all aspects of school life. These celebrations include:

- Verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, the Headteacher and parents and carers;
- Displays of work;
- Opportunities to perform or share;
- Class dojo awards

- Inclusion in *Newsletters*;
- Celebration assemblies – Golden Achievement.

Teachers should observe, assess, reflect and review achievements with each child on a regular basis. The pupil should be centrally involved in this process. Assessment, an integral part of the teaching and learning process, is covered in more detail in a separate policy.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Learning is the result of a range of complex factors a key one of which is the environment. These should be **organised flexibly, creatively and be imaginatively resourced** to ensure that all children have the opportunities to:

- Work individually, in groups and as a class;
- Make independent decisions;
- Work co-operatively;
- Solve problems;
- Be creative;
- Discuss their ideas;
- Develop social skills;
- Develop independence;
- Use initiative;
- Receptive support;
- Achieve academically.

To support and develop our pupils' learning, teachers should aim to create environments which:

- Make learning accessible and inclusive;
- Are stimulating and challenging;
- Are peaceful and calm;
- Are happy and caring;
- Are well organised;
- Are well resourced;
- Are encouraging and appreciative;
- Are welcoming;
- Celebrate achievements;
- Provide equal opportunities;
- Provide a working atmosphere.

Display throughout the school should be used to create an attractive and stimulating environment. Work of a high standard should be displayed – teachers should try to ensure that throughout the school year every child's work is displayed. The displays should be frequently added to or changed, using a both 2D and 3D media. Display work should reflect the broad curriculum at Simon Marks, particularly work developed in the Creative Links lessons. Quality displays should stimulate discussion and may be accompanied by pupils' questions and answers. Where possible, displays may be interactive using new technologies.

Routines and rules of the classroom contribute to a healthy learning environment. Teachers should establish daily activities as part of the pupil's classroom routine with which all the children are familiar. To be most effective classroom rules should be:

- Shared with the children and clearly understood by them;
- Fair and consistent;
- Realistic and positive;
- Kept to a minimum but enforced.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Lessons should be carefully planned and well informed by knowledge of the children to ensure there is a range of activities suited to the needs of both individuals and groups. Where appropriate, activities should be differentiated to meet specific learning needs in liaison with the SENCO and teaching assistants.

Time management is crucial to successful classroom management and an essential element of careful planning. Lessons should begin promptly and be well paced. Pupils should be clear what is expected of them as soon as they enter the room and once an activity is completed they should know what to do next. Extension work should be planned to ensure the most able are sufficiently challenged should they finish a task sooner than anticipated. Greater depth thinking opportunities will be provided for all ability groups.

Teaching and learning strategies are reviewed regularly at departmental, key phase and whole school meetings where best practice is shared. Such strategies include traffic light cups in KS2 whereby paper cups sit on each pupil's table in red, green and yellow. When a child is keeping up and following the work, they keep the green cup on top; yellow is placed on top to indicate they are slowing down in their understanding; red on top means they have stopped understanding and need help. Other strategies include: '*no hands up*' questions where the teacher directs questions at specific pupils to avoid scenarios where only a handful of the quickest and most confident pupils have the chance to answer; *Class of the Week* where individual achievements are collected on behalf of the whole class – the winning class each week is rewarded collectively with a non-uniform day.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Although classroom teachers are responsible for the teaching and learning in their lessons this can be in conjunction with other adults including **teaching assistants, student teachers and volunteer helpers**. It is expected that pupils show equal respect for all adults in the classroom and that they understand and value the contribution these adults make to their learning. Likewise, voluntary helpers, teaching assistants and student teachers have a responsibility to work closely with the class teacher to ensure consistency of approach and shared understandings of the needs of the children.

When absences are planned, to ensure continuity, teachers are expected to provide written guidance and suggested activities for **cover teachers** to deliver. The teacher's planning file will be available showing lesson plans and timetables.

RESOURCES

In addition to the school's most valuable resources – its staff and its pupils – each classroom should be well equipped with a range of good quality consumable resources to support children's learning. Where possible, materials should be near appropriate working areas and stock should be checked and replenished regularly.

Pupils should be taught awareness that consumable resources are finite and that every member of the school community has a duty to care for equipment and not to misuse, damage or waste it.

Relevant textbooks should be available in each classroom and each class library should be stocked with a wide range of stimulating and age appropriate reading material including reference books such as dictionaries, thesauri and atlases.

MONITORING

This policy will be kept under review during October/November each academic year.

MARKING GUIDELINES– September 2025

- All work (inc. homework) must be at least acknowledgement marked, with ticks, a stamp and a comment where appropriate.
- MyMaths homework must be tracked and acknowledged.
- Marking should be related to the learning objective and quality marking should invite comments or scaffold next steps e.g. now try to think of five words to describe...or challenge: can you try these...
- Use questions to encourage a dialogue.
- Use LI (learning intention) and SC (success criteria or steps to success) which should be shared and displayed throughout the lesson.
- When marking English work or written work, spelling corrections should pick up on specific skills e.g. families of words, tricky words and editing skills. For KS2 when quality marking, underline the incorrectly spelt word and write sp in the margin. Write the correct spelling under the work and x 5 so the children can practice these when they get their books back.
- Every child should expect at least one piece of written work (in any subject area) to be quality marked every week. – **including next steps.**
- The greater the dialogue, the more meaningful the feedback.
- Quality marking might include 2 stars and a wish, a scaffolded next steps statement and a note that feedback has been given orally (O).
- From time to time in any unit of work, a plenary lesson will give children the opportunity to spend some time rehearsing improvement skills.
- The quality of dialogue will be evident in a work scrutiny.
- Feedback and marking will be given in green/black (pupil comments in the juniors will use a coloured pen, see table below). Peer assessment and self-assessment will be done in the same colour, but with letters PA or SA written before the comment.
- Teachers may use highlighters to emphasise excellent examples of work.

- Where an LSA has supported learning, they may mark 'S' in the margin to evidence supported work.
- Practical tasks or displayed work should be evidenced with date, LO, SC and explanation of where work is displayed. This may also include photos of work samples.