



Perrott Hill Teaching and Learning Policy

Day-to-day responsibility for the governance of the school lies with the Board of Governors whilst the Chair of the Board of Directors holds ultimate responsibility.

This policy is written with the inclusion of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

1. Introduction/Rationale

At Perrott Hill, we believe that learning should be a rewarding and an enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed choices. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

This policy is designed to identify and reaffirm those practices and beliefs, which contribute towards high quality teaching and learning so that every teacher is clear about what should be included in her/his teaching.

2. School Aims

In preparing Perrott Hill children for a happy and successful future life, we aim to ...

- providing and supporting the best opportunities for academic, creative and extra-curricular learning and for pastoral development;
- promoting the development of enriching characteristics for life that will underpin an ability to successfully adapt to change, including curiosity and an open mind;
- developing the whole child - promoting independence, self-knowledge, moral and spiritual understanding, self-esteem and emotional literacy;
- developing the whole community – valuing empathy, and promoting a tangible sense of belonging and the desire to make a positive contribution.

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3. Effective Teaching

Planning

Teachers' planning should include (in no particular order):

1. Long-term, medium-term and short-term objectives and learning activities.
2. Be linked to or reflect ISEB schemes of work, or other relevant schemes of work as per the requirements of each subject Head of Department.
3. Differentiation, in order to cater for a range of abilities and experiences, including children with special needs, and gifted and talented children.
4. Relevant assessment information.
5. Appropriate assessment activities.
6. Be cross-curricular, in order to make learning more meaningful for the children and in order to cover several learning intentions with one activity.
7. The role of support staff.
8. A range of appropriate teaching strategies.
9. Details of the resources necessary.
10. Be focussed and concise.
11. Encompass a broad, balanced, relevant and stimulating curriculum.
12. Out-of-school experiences when appropriate.

Implementation

Each teacher should:

1. Organise her/his class into ability and mixed ability groups, according to the task.
2. Make explicit to the children the class rules and routines.
3. Organise and prepare resources prior to the start of the lesson.
4. Ensure that the learning intentions and success criteria for the lesson are made clear to the children.
5. Ensure that lessons follow the structure of the syllabuses prescribed by Heads of Departments.
6. Ensure that lessons include differentiation of support, and/or resources, and/or expected outcomes, according to differing levels of ability.
7. Manage the classroom environment effectively, minimising undue noise and movement.
8. Follow the school's Behaviour & Exclusion Policy, making judicious use of praise and sanctions, but emphasising the positive.
9. Incorporate enthusiasm and liveliness in her/his lessons in order to motivate, stimulate and enthuse the children.
10. Instruct, explain, question and support learners as necessary.



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11. Have high expectations of all children.
12. Ensure that her/his classroom environment is safe, stimulating, attractive, informative, well-resourced and organised to facilitate independent learning.
13. Incorporate independent and collaborative work and first hand experiences in their planning.

Assessment

We believe that assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The main purpose of assessment is to improve the quality of students' learning and the standards of achievement.

a) Assessment for Learning

Principles

Assessment for Learning [AfL] is also known as formative assessment. It is something that is embedded in a view of teaching and learning of which it is an essential part. It is a process that provides information about an individual student's experience and achievement. It identifies what the student knows, understands and is currently able to do and provides information that can be used to plan future learning and move the student further forward from their current position of understanding, thus raising standards and allowing each student to reach their potential.

It is underpinned by confidence that every student can improve, promoting success for all.

It involves both teachers and pupils reviewing and reflecting on assessment data. Teachers may make use of summative assessments and change these into formative assessments by reviewing questions and showing the children how to improve.

'Assessment for learning is a powerful way of raising pupils' achievement. It is based on the principle that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve this aim (known as closing the gap). It is not an add-on or a project, it is central to effective teaching and learning.' DCSF publication 'The Assessment for Learning Strategy'.

Assessment for Learning is adopted as a valuable tool and forms a part of the many strategies used within our teaching to promote academic standards amongst all our pupils.

Practice

The main elements of Assessment for Learning are:



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1. **LEARNING INTENTIONS** inform pupils about what they are going to learn, and why.
2. **SUCCESS CRITERIA** are the steps or key ingredients that are pertinent to the new learning. Pupils and teachers may negotiate these before the learning begins, and it is only these items that the pupils are measured against.
3. **FORMATIVE FEEDBACK** provides pupils with information on the successful areas of their learning performance as well as areas to improve next. Feedback should be based on the agreed success criteria.
4. **EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING** is about asking questions in a way that provides you with key information that you can use to determine where learning currently is, expand learning, and plan for future learning. It's also about encouraging more pupil questioning.
5. **PEER AND SELF-ASSESSMENT** and **SELF-EVALUATION** consider not only what they and their peers have learnt but also how they learn best.

AfL involves sharing learning goals with pupils. Children should be involved in initial consultation about where the topic is going and how the objectives fit in to this big picture. Objectives should be planned separately to the context to enable good understanding and transfer of skills across the curriculum.

Teachers will tell children what they are going to learn by using a mechanism such as Learning objectives, learning intentions, or Walt (We are learning to...).

AfL aims to help pupils to know and recognise the standards they are aiming for. These are the success criteria and may be worked out with the children or listed as Wilf (What I am looking for...). Teachers may make use of previous work to model a good example or ask children to mark this previous work so that they have an understanding of what to aim for – a model of good practice.

Teachers will also use effective questioning as a tool for assessment and to move the children on in their learning. They might employ strategies such as Bloom's taxonomy or the use of more open questions using other strategies such as

No hands:

- Give a thinking time (e.g. 1 minute) and allow no hands to go up till then.
- Use talking partner discussions with questions turned into controversial statements for discussion.
- Jot ideas on whiteboards and then either use 'show me' or 'discuss' at that point.
- Choose a child at random to answer.



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- All children should actively be involved in questioning.

These ideas can be expanded to allow children to teach others because this is a higher order skill and one that retains information far better than other teaching techniques.

Examples for this include;

- 'Think, Pair, Share' where children start off individually and think of ideas, then pair up and discuss and finally go to groups of four or so to come up with a consensus to the question.
- 'Jigsaw learning' – each child is given a number and all the 1's learn one aspect of the study, all the 2's another, etc... Then they come back to mixed groups and become the experts teaching their groups to produce a group piece of work or response.
- Statement cards can be given to discuss.

Dr Edward de Bono's 'Thinking Hats' are a way of giving children a question and asking them to respond in different ways or perspectives. Children should be encouraged to develop their own questioning and questions should be used to deepen learning rather than establish prior learning.

Children need a secure environment to answer in confidence without fear of a put down. So a teacher needs to gather a collection of answers, or continue to delve deeper if a wrong answer is given to find out where the misconception lies. It is also a good technique to come back to a 'wrong child' and allow them a chance to have another go and change their minds after further discussion.

AfL provides feedback which leads to pupils recognising their next steps and how to take them. This feedback may be oral or written and time is given for the child to make use of that feedback and improve their work.

Feedback about presentation [handwriting/ neatness] is only used if relevant to the task, e.g. for lower years a handwriting exercise or map drawing in geography.

Handwriting, presentation, proof reading and spelling remain important and may be specific learning intentions in their own right or added to the learning intention for that lesson.

When marking, it is important to show successes and areas for improvement. This could be achieved by writing a lengthy paragraph but teacher time is used more effectively with the use of a highlighter, using one colour to highlight where the success criteria have been met and a different colour to show areas for development, perhaps with a 'closing the gap' prompt. [Examples include 'two stars and a wish' or 'tickled pink and green for go'.]



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We also promote effective feedback by the use of rubber stamps to highlight 'WWW' (what went well) and 'EBI' (even better if) – Not all departments use these stamps, as each subject may differ in how they assess and feedback to pupils. Staff may use other stamps as well e.g. 'verbal feedback given', 'peer assessed' or 'self-assessed'.

Prompts may be

- reminders to reinforce the learning intention
- scaffolds to suggest what could be written
- examples to model a useful point

Research has shown that 'comment only' marking is the most effective and teachers will adopt this when possible. However, it is recognised that in some cases, marks and grades are necessary e.g. in mental maths tests and CE marking and this will continue to be used as appropriate.

In-depth marking may occur for a focus group only or for the whole class for every third or fourth piece of marking, for example. It is not anticipated that every single piece of work will be marked at length as this becomes unmanageable. Aids such as comment marking grids may be used and work may be discussed orally with pupils in order to facilitate AfL on a realistic basis.

AfL involves pupils in self-assessment. Pupils may use a scheme such as HOT (H = help, O = OK, T = teach it to someone else; i.e. confident) or Traffic Lights (red = help, orange = OK, green = confident) in order to assess how they feel they have done in a lesson or demonstrate understanding. This may also be used for peer assessment, or equally, the children may be trained in procedures such as 'two stars and a wish' to comment on others' work.

Teachers will make use of a range of strategies over the course of their lessons to move the children's learning on and provide information to support future planning.

b) Assessment of Learning

Principles

Assessment of Learning describes and labels past learning. It is a summary judgement about what has been learned at a specific point in time.

Practice

Effective assessment of learning involves:

- Monitoring performance and, in particular, identifying those students at risk of underachievement;



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- Identifying gaps in students' knowledge and understanding which can be used by teachers as they plan for individual students and cohorts;
- Providing information which can be used by parents or carers to understand their child's strengths, weaknesses and progress;
- Providing information which can be used by other interested parties;
- Providing information which can be used to evaluate a school's performance against its own previous attainment over time and/or against national standards;
- Setting targets for individual and school performance;
- Providing accurate information for governors, ISI, ISC and other appropriate bodies.

Each teacher should be committed to:

1. Providing equality of educational opportunities.
2. Catering for all needs – special, individual, talented and gifted.
3. Fulfilling the needs of the whole child – educational, physical, emotional and social.
4. Establishing a positive relationship with every child.
5. Establishing a working partnership with parents.
6. On-going professional development.
7. Fulfilling professional duties.
8. Being aware of and following all school policies.
9. Working within and contributing towards a team.
10. Liaising with other agencies.

When teaching is at its most effective, the following are common factors:

- Classroom Management is clear to the children and promotes independent learning;
- The classroom/school ethos is strong and promotes a happy and enjoyable learning environment;
- The teacher has good subject knowledge;
- There are clear learning intentions;
- Planning is clearly differentiated and tasks match the children's ability;
- Assessment informs the next step of learning;
- Children's targets are appropriate, clear to the children and manageable for the teacher.

4. Effective Teachers

Effective teachers should be...

- flexible;
- inspirational;
- co-operative;
- respectful;
- able to self-evaluate;



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- good communicators;
- risk takers;
- have a sense of humour.

5. Styles of Teaching/Effective Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. We take this into account when planning teaching and learning styles. We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- Investigation and problem solving;
- Research and finding out;
- Group work;
- Paired work;
- Independent work;
- Whole class work;
- Asking and answering questions;
- Use of ICT;
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- Watching television and responding to musical or taped/recorded material;
- Debates, role plays and oral presentations;
- Designing and making things;
- Participating in athletic or physical activity.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn.

6. The Learning Environment

We believe that the classroom, which is the primary place of learning, is paramount to good teaching and learning. The following points are essential:

- The classroom is a happy place where the children feel relaxed and at home;
- The classroom is a safe place;
- Display encourages children to learn - it should be bright, lively and, at times, interactive;
- The classroom should be well resourced and these resources should be accessible for the children when appropriate.

7. Professional Development and Review (see separate policy on PD&R in conjunction with this section)

At Perrott Hill we have a commitment to Professional Development for all



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our staff for the following reasons:

- We believe that high standards in teaching and learning depend upon relevant, focussed and effective professional development opportunities for teachers;
- Becoming and remaining a good teacher, keeping knowledge of curriculum subjects up-to-date and being able to make the most of new technology all require continuous professional development;
- Teachers who are involved in, and have enthusiasm for, lifelong learning, themselves are excellent role models to pupils;
- A commitment to the development of staff members leads to greater self-esteem, self-confidence and enthusiasm, better quality teaching and a substantially greater capacity in the school as a whole for continuous self-improvement.

8. The Role of the Headmaster

It is the responsibility of the Headmaster, in conjunction with the Director of Studies and other members of the SMT, to facilitate good teaching and learning. In order to achieve this, they must:

- Have a clear vision of what good teaching and learning looks like;
- Be inspirational;
- Monitor, advise and support;
- Be at the heart of the ethos of the whole school;
- Celebrate all achievements and challenge where necessary;
- Assist staff with their professional development;
- Provide staff with the resources they need to carry out the job.

9. The Role of the Governors

The Governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- Support the staff by allocating resources effectively;
- Ensure that the school building and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning and that they conform to health and safety regulations;
- Monitor, through the Educational & Pastoral committee, how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school through the school self-review process.



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10. The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning, by:

- Having parent/tutor meetings to inform them of the content (academic and other) of the academic year ahead;
- Sending reports to parents once every term in which we explain the progress made by their child;
- Holding parents evenings where their child's work can be reviewed and their progress discussed.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. This can be done by:

- Discussing the home/school agreement regularly with their children;
- Ensuring the children have the best attendance record possible;
- Ensuring that their child is equipped for school with the appropriate stationery, uniform and Games kit;
- Informing school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect the child's performance or behaviour;
- Promoting a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

11. Monitoring and Review

We are aware of the need to review the school's teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes in the physical environment of the school.

The quality of learning and teaching will be supportively monitored in a number of ways. Staff will then receive feedback via:

- Lesson observations: These are carried out by the HoD and a member of the SMT as part of the teacher's P,D&R process. Formal feedback will be given in written and verbal reports. This is part of the ongoing review of teaching to ensure high standards are met.
- Work scrutiny: Each HoD will perform a work scrutiny of every member of their department twice a year. It is within the HoD's discretion as to which Year group he/she scrutinises at what time; however, the scrutiny is often linked with the observation. SMT will perform work scrutiny throughout the year to ensure all teachers are following the 'Marking & Feedback policy'.



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- Learning Walks: Staff are encouraged to use 'learning walks' as a way of developing their own teaching and helping the development of the colleagues' teaching, while watching colleagues they would not normally observe. This is an informal way of sharing good practice by the observer and teacher being observed. Staff are then encouraged to have an informal/non-minuted meeting to share what positive teaching strategies they have seen. The Director of Studies, along with other members of the SMT, will take 'Learning Walks' to support and share good practice throughout the school.

When planning a lesson or completing a lesson observation or during a 'learning walk' it is useful think about the National Teaching Standards:

1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
4. Plan and teach well-structured lessons
5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
6. Make accurate and productive use of assessment
7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities