**North Westminster Federation**

**Hallfield Primary School**

***Growing, Learning, Achieving Together***

# Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy

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## Policy aims

This policy aims to embed a consistent approach to the teaching and learning at Hallfield that is supported by a broad and balanced spiral curriculum. It describes the theory and practices underpinning:

- What we teach (curriculum and personal development)
- How we teach (teaching styles and practices)
- How children engage with the teaching (learning)

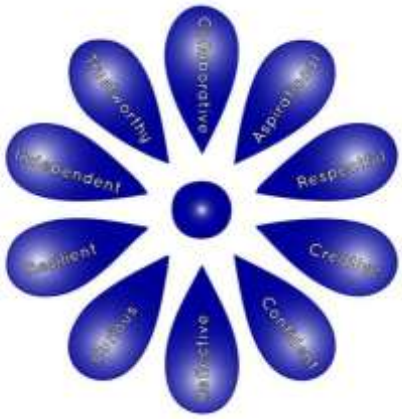
## School vision and values

Hallfield is committed to its mission statement: Growing, Learning, Achieving Together. The core aim is for Hallfield to become a quality 'first choice' school at the heart of our local community.

Our vision for Hallfield is to build a community that:

- Places our children firmly at the heart of everything we do;
- Instils a love of learning, which lasts a life time;
- Personalises the learning journey for all children, enabling individuals to be: collaborative, confident, independent, creative, trustworthy, curious, resilient, reflective, respectful and aspirational.

Above all else, we strive to ensure that every child has a true sense of belonging and a voice to make a real difference by sharing in our overarching Hallfield community values:



## Our curriculum aims

A curriculum is the totality of planned student experiences that occur during their time at Hallfield. This is informed by the mandated National Curriculum (2014), specifically the individual subject programmes of study. Our Hallfield curriculum aims to contextualise learning and provide relevance for children whilst enhancing their cultural capital. As a school community, we reflected on the holistic development essentials we believe will engender this. By keeping our shared values at the forefront of curriculum development, we chose the following essentials for children to leave Hallfield with. These can also be found at the beginning of each curriculum document.

**Spiritual and moral well-being**

*As a balance to the material values of the school community, Hallfield believes in the importance of giving children opportunity to express their feelings and have them acknowledged. Opportunity to*

*explore issues and the concepts of right and wrong alongside our values are given both explicitly and through the contexts of delivering curriculum objectives.*

**Confident communication**

*In our school more than 60 languages are spoken. Therefore, it is important that children learn to accurately, skilfully and sensitively express themselves and actively listen to others.*

**Creativity**

*We celebrate diversity across all subjects by exploring and promoting talent, experience and providing a wide range of opportunities to use different skills with independence, ingenuity and flair. Our curriculum is designed to allow wider curriculum opportunities and a balance of learning across all subjects.*

**Enquiry**

*Learning to ask questions and analyse data or information is key to lifelong learning if we want children to be individual learners and to build on strengths as well as tackle challenges. Children should learn to evaluate and understand the world, including the social world to make informed choices in life.*

**Sport, sportsmanship and health**

*In Westminster and Central London, 40% of children are overweight or obese by Year 6. 70% of obese children grow to be obese as adults. Teaching children to be active and eat well gives them better chances at a full and healthy life. Competition and sportsmanship develop confidence and allow children to learn the value of team work.*

**Environmental awareness**

*Living in a large city with one of the most famous parks close by, it is important for children to respect their immediate environment. We believe that all children should learn to care about creating a sustainable future for themselves, in their immediate and global environments.*

**Geographical understanding**

*Much of our Hallfield community has dual heritage or have moved from other areas of the world. It is important to celebrate the similarities and differences of our heritage by understanding the geographical location of the community and where it has come from.*

The curriculum offer at Hallfield is designed to incorporate these essentials across a child's time at Hallfield, ensuring they leave with key knowledge and skills. The curriculum is designed to be spiral, revisiting skills, knowledge and attitudes at appropriate points to ensure retention and deepen knowledge and understanding.

**Tailoring the curriculum**

Despite our curriculum outlining specific outcomes for children at key points in their school career, we recognise that there are children who may face additional barriers and whose curriculum may be more individually designed. Children's learning is designed to match the needs and cognitive ability of the child.

## Learning with longevity

At Hallfield, we want all our children to understand themselves as learners and to have the skills of self-regulation, self-awareness and resilience to enjoy being a learner. We believe that intelligence is not a simple thing but a compound of influences such as tactics, existing knowledge base and experience as well as children's aptitude. Therefore, we employ the principles of metacognition, experiential learning and resilience to teaching and learning at Hallfield.

Children are taught to understand how they learn best through planning, monitoring and evaluating their own learning. They become familiar with their own strengths and areas for development through timely teacher feedback and reflection. Children develop cognitive and metacognitive strategies both for general approaches to learning and around the specific concepts being taught.

Teaching staff use approaches and resources to help children assimilate new knowledge into long term memory and make connections for enduring understanding. Lessons present a challenge that engages and motivates children whilst not overloading their cognitive processes. Therefore, learning is broken into small steps so that children's working memory is not encumbered by processing too much content. Where possible, extraneous load is reduced through techniques such as signalling and careful presentation of new information.

To ensure learning is impactful and children can apply this in a spiral curriculum, lessons and topics begin with explicit links to prior learning. Retrieval practice has shown to have significant benefits to securing learning. It ensures learning has moved to the long term memory and supports understanding as well as recall. The school additionally uses effective assessments across the academic year to practise children's ability to retrieve information and ensure gaps in learning are filled (see the assessment policy).

## Quality First Teaching

Quality First Teaching emphasises high quality, inclusive teaching for all children in a class. It includes differentiated learning, effective pedagogical strategies, including those to support children with SEND and on-going formative assessment. Alongside this, we take a mastery approach to teaching and learning in all subjects, keeping ambitious outcomes fixed for individuals with carefully planned scaffolding and challenge for each child to achieve this.

Metacognition is an embedded part of our teaching activities. Teachers explicitly instruct children in metacognitive and cognitive strategies relevant to the task (appendix 1). Sequences of teaching are planned around a series of steps, beginning with activating prior knowledge and leading to independent practice before ending in structured reflection to consolidate, challenge and deepen understanding. Children are an active part in planning and evaluating their own learning. To support children's thinking and strategy building, adults model thinking by verbalising how they first approach a task and how they work through it. In many cases this is context specific. Such modelling develops children's cognitive and metacognitive skills supporting them to articulate their understanding whilst not requiring too many demands of their mental resources.

**Learning objectives** are clear and purposeful providing a focus for the lesson which enables children to self-assess against as well as receive targeted feedback. These differ from the broader aims of the learning by being measurable. We view the aims for the learning as the overall strategy towards a

broader goal and the objective for the lesson as one tactic in a sequence to achieve these overall aims. Therefore, children should see the point of the learning for the lesson as well as a part of the bigger picture. These must be fully explained and understood by children.

Teachers are clear about the outcomes for the children leading to the most appropriate verb choices, evaluating what level they want children to gain new knowledge and understanding, skills or attitudes. These should be active verbs rather than 'To know' or 'To understand' and should progress in the degree of fluency, depth and independence required (appendix 2).

*Learning objective verb examples*

| Knowledge and understanding | Skills (more active verbs) | Attitude |
|---|---|---|
| Recite / recall<br>Identify<br>Classify<br>Infer<br>Explain<br>Review<br>Compare<br>Define<br>Estimate<br>Discuss<br>Analyse<br>Describe<br>Interpret<br>Name<br>Select<br>Evaluate<br>Solve<br>Calculate<br>Label<br>Plan<br>Group<br>Record<br>List<br>Match<br>Give examples | Demonstrate<br>Use<br>Enact<br>Compute<br>Design<br>Assemble<br>Adjust<br>Draw<br>Practise<br>Locate<br>Collect<br>Measure<br>Operate<br>Organise<br>Illustrate<br>Perform<br>Employ<br>Establish<br>Rearrange<br>Imitate | Collaborate<br>Influence<br>Challenge<br>Accept<br>Evaluate<br>Model<br>Specify<br>Adopt<br>Characterise<br>Formulate<br>Persuade<br>Value<br>Advocate<br>Choose<br>Judge<br>Recommend<br>Approve<br>Criticise<br>Justify<br>Resolve<br>Empathise<br>Assess<br>Defend<br>Manage<br>Select |

**Success criteria** are provided or developed with children to support them in working towards the learning objectives. These are a set of features that should be seen in the children's work with. They present increasing cognitive challenge but also encourage children to think carefully about how they plan their work and reflect on how well they have achieved in that lesson.

### Learning groups

There is no fixed grouping for subjects of lessons mandated at Hallfield. Research suggests that there is value to flexibility in grouping. We do not set or stream at Hallfield as this has been evidenced to have little impact. However, children may be seated and grouped each lesson for differing reasons outlined here:

- A shared gap in learning
  A teacher may identify a common area for development and group children for targeted attention based on this.
- Mixed attainment
  Groups may be formed by mixing children with different attainment levels for that subject
- Attainment
  Children may sometimes have tasks with differing scaffolds according to their attainment stage and grouping is matched to this.

### Targeted teaching

A part of what makes Quality First Teaching effective are the 'waves of intervention' that the teacher and the school put in place to ensure all children are learning effectively. Timely interventions include daily scaffolds and differentiation for children within lessons as a universal provision. Some children may require additional interventions to close gaps in learning or to meet individual needs. These additional interventions are planned for and provided within the teaching team for that year group, within the lesson or in appropriate times outside of the classroom. We also provide a third tier of specialist intervention that targets specific and more complex need that require evidence based programs or specialist training to deliver. More details can be found in our SEND policy and Local offer on the website.




## Classroom environment

There is plenty of evidence around the importance of creating a language-rich environment for children to learn in. Our work with speech and language specialists, as well as support around 'Attachment Theory' and using a 'Trauma Informed Approach' has led to the development of guidance for communication friendly and calm classrooms. This guidance ensures the environment is a tool for learning and self-regulation that does not over stimulate and is flexible enough to meet the needs of individual lessons and children.

## The Roles of the Hallfield community

Governors

Governors have a key role in reviewing the school's teaching, learning and curriculum policy and statutory obligations in relation to the National Curriculum. The Governors are concerned with

monitoring school, local and national performance data, in order to evaluate achievement and analyse the performance of different pupil groups and subjects taught in school. Where the school receives special grants to support teaching and learning, governors are responsible for monitoring their effectiveness.

Senior Leadership

The senior leadership must ensure the teaching and learning is ambitious and offers all learners the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. This is achieved through rigorous monitoring and timely support at all stages of the teaching cycle. It is their responsibility to ensure teachers receive timely and appropriate professional development as required.

Subject Leader

The subject leader role is to ensure teachers have sound subject knowledge and provide effective support where necessary to confidently teach all areas of the curriculum. This is achieved through a rigorous monitoring and support cycle as well as their own subject expertise.

Teacher

Deliver a coherent and sequenced curriculum, assessing learners' understanding to provide feedback and inform their teaching.

Parents

Contribute to the extensive parental engagement program to enhance parents' ability to engage with their child's learning such as topic launches, lesson observations, subject specific presentations and parents evening. Support the children in accessing home learning via Microsoft Teams and/or the school website.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Teaching and learning is monitored and moderated regularly by Senior Leadership Team. A termly review of learning is facilitated with teachers in the form of Pupil Progress Review meetings. A variety of planned monitoring arrangements take place throughout the year to provide a snapshot of the quality of teaching and learning overtime. The Appraisal cycle informs learning and teaching.

## Relevant policies

Assessment policy

Behaviour policy

Extended Learning Policy

Reading policy

Most Able policy

SEND policy

SEN local offer

Equalities Objectives

# Appendix 1 Cognitive and Metacognitve strategy examples

| Strategy | How to Use | When to Use | What is it for? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Skim/Survey | Search for headings, highlighted words, previews, and summaries. | Before you read a long piece of text. | Gives an overview of the key concepts, helps you to focus on the important points. |
| Slow Down | Stop, read and think about information. | When information seems important. If you realize you don't understand what you have just read. | Improves your focus on important information. |
| Activate Prior Knowledge | Stop and think about what you already know about a topic. | Before you read something or do an unfamiliar task. | Makes new information easier to remember and allows you to see links between subjects. Information is less daunting if you already know something about the topic. |
| Fit Ideas Together | Relate main ideas to one another. Look for themes that connect the main ideas, or a conclusion. | When thinking about complex information, when deep understanding is needed. | Once you know how ideas are related they are easier to remember than learning as if they are separate facts. Also helps to understand them more deeply. |
| Draw Diagrams | Identify main ideas, connect them, classify ideas, decide which information is most important and which is supporting | When there is a lot of factual information that is interrelated. | Helps to identify main ideas and organize them into categories. Reduces memory load. May be easier to visualize. |

- Self-questioning
- Reflection (consciously reviewing)
- Identifying of strengths and weaknesses
- Mnemonic aids
- Thinking aloud
- Graphic organisers e.g. flow charts, mind-maps, spider diagrams
- Checklists (success criteria?)
- Reciprocal teaching (summarising, questioning each other to ensure comprehension)
- A journal / planner

    - to record ideas from a lesson, film, presentation, etc.
    - to make predictions about what will happen next
    - to record questions
    - to summarise and restate the main ideas of a book, film, etc.
    - to reflect upon and connect the ideas presented to other domains of knowledge.

## Appendix 2 Working towards mastery and greater depth

| Cognitive domain | Type of thinking | Types of activities | Predominant type of teaching |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Basic** | Low level cognitive demand. Involves following instructions. | Name, describe, follow instructions or methods, complete tasks, recall information, ask basic questions, use, match, report, measure, list, illustrate, label, recognise, tell, repeat, arrange, define, memorise. | Modelling<br>Steps to success. |
| **Advancing** | Higher-level cognitive demand beyond recall. Requires application involving some degree of decision making. | Apply skills to solve problems, explain methods, classify, infer, categorise, identify patterns, organise, modify, predict, interpret, summarise, make observations, estimate, compare. | Application led lessons<br>Review. |
| **Deep** | Cognitive demand involves non-standard, non-routine, inter-connected, multi-step thinking in problems with more than one possible solution. Requires reasoning and justification. | Solve non-routine problems, appraise, explain concepts, hypothesise, investigate, cite evidence, design, create, prove. | Coaching<br>Reasoning, debate and justification. |