Teaching & Assessment Policy

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Responsibilities

Policy Owner: Headmaster

Policy Overview: Assistant Head Quality of Education

Governors Committee: Curriculum and Standards

Audit Control

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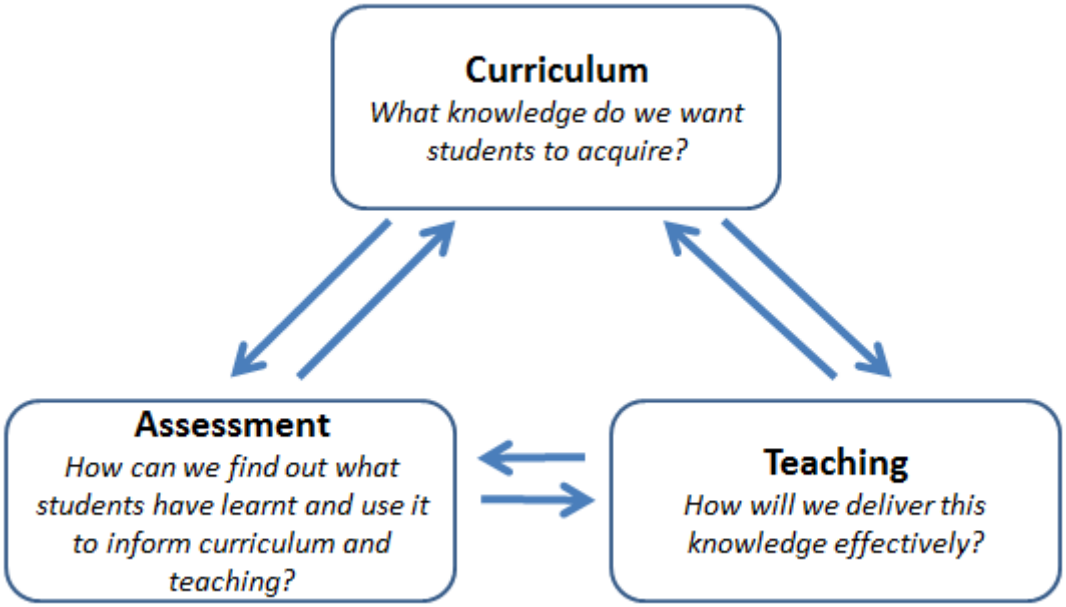
Version: 2.3

Teaching & Assessment Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy provides the framework that is used for making decisions in the school about teaching, learning and assessment. It is relevant to classroom teachers, Curriculum Leaders, Senior Leaders and a range of support staff in the school, including Governors.

1.2 When we talk about learning, we mean the retention and recall of knowledge so that it can be applied in different contexts. It should be durable and flexible. A well-sequenced curriculum is a pre-requisite for effective learning.



1.3 The overarching philosophy of this policy is subject-specific: we believe that effective pedagogy is driven by the curriculum content, so decisions about teaching and assessment should be considered by subject expert teams and, wherever possible, informed by educational research.

1.4 We expect all staff and students to uphold common behaviour principles and practices that ensure our classrooms are safe and respectful environments for learning in line with our school behaviour policies. In addition, we expect all our teachers to use the Principles of Expert Teaching at Reading School (see appendix A) to effectively facilitate learning. We advocate intra-departmental collaboration that prioritises staff wellbeing and ensures consistency of learning for an individual student's time studying any particular curriculum subject.

1.5 Senior Leaders will direct policy on teaching and learning where decisions need to be made that affect multiple departments, and where there may be competing needs across departments.

1.6 All teaching and learning will take place within the School's safeguarding framework. Staff must follow the School's safeguarding and child protection procedures and remain alert to safeguarding concerns that may arise through their interactions with students, including concerns arising through online activity

2. Teaching Methods

2.1 Teachers will meet the requirements of the Teachers' Standards issued by the Department for Education. The principles and expectations set out in this policy provide Reading School's framework for translating those professional standards into effective teaching, learning and assessment within the context of the School's curriculum. Teachers are expected to be:

- setting high expectations;
- promoting good progress;
- demonstrating good subject and curriculum knowledge;
- planning and teaching well-structured lessons;
- adapting teaching;
- making accurate and productive use of assessment;
- managing behaviour;
- wider professional responsibilities.

2.2 Curriculum Leaders work with their departments to design a set of common approaches for the teaching and assessment of their specific subject and record these in a departmental Curriculum Implementation Plan. This should be seen as a department's toolbox from which teachers can select the most appropriate practices for any particular class or topic.

2.3 Neither the Curriculum Implementation Plan nor Principles of Teaching should be interpreted as prescriptive or 'tick box' elements to be seen within any one lesson, but instead common features of a well-planned sequence of lessons implemented in a manner that is appropriate to the demands of the curriculum.

2.4 Each department's Curriculum Implementation Plan, like their curriculum, should remain a 'live' document that is constantly reflected upon, reviewed and amended in department meetings, according to evidence, experience and impact.

2.5 Teachers will use digital technologies appropriately to enhance teaching, learning and independent study. Microsoft Teams, OneNote and other digital platforms may be used to provide resources, communicate instructions, support collaboration and facilitate the submission and review of students' work. In KS5, digital learning will be a fundamental aspect of the teaching approach, as digital devices are required for all students in KS5 and teaching should reflect this.

3. Supporting Students Through Reasonable Adjustments

3.1 Reading School will meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, and will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. The School will provide appropriate support and adaptations to enable students with SEND and other additional needs to access the curriculum and make progress.

3.2 A well-planned, logical and coherent curriculum is inherently inclusive. Reading School believes that a teacher understanding the needs of each individual student is crucial for appropriate and therefore effective support. Teachers should understand the needs of individual students and adapt teaching appropriately so that students with SEND, disabilities, English as an additional language, disadvantaged backgrounds or other barriers to learning can access the curriculum and make appropriate progress

3.3 Teachers at Reading School will ensure that the classroom environment in the school is one in which all students have the opportunity to access and learn the subject they are being taught making adaptations to support the learning of all.

4. Homework

4.1 Purposeful and well-sequenced homework can be a valuable opportunity to reinforce and extend what has been learnt in lessons, in particular when is it is followed up on by teachers with feedback, sanctions and rewards to ensure it has achieved its objective.

4.2 The quantity, duration and type of homework set in each subject is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leader and will be reviewed on a regular basis within a department's Curriculum Implementation Plan. Pastoral Leaders will monitor workload where appropriate and work with Curriculum Leaders to ensure that students are able to maintain a healthy balance between academic work, rest and wider school and family life.

4.3 Students should expect to receive a variety of homework types (online / written / reading / revision / research), all of which will be appropriate to the students' age, stage of learning and any SEND accessibility issues. Students should record homework tasks and deadlines in their planners, except in KS5. Full instructions and supporting resources will normally be provided through Microsoft Teams where appropriate.

5. Assessment

All assessment should:

5.1 Enable students to usefully gauge the effectiveness of their learning through specific, timely and meaningful feedback;

5.2 Enable teachers to make relevant short and long-term adjustments to the pace, depth and breadth of their planned curriculum;

5.3 Use a variety of methods, both formative and summative, in a timely way that considers staff workload throughout the year;

5.4 Be planned into a well-sequenced curriculum at times appropriate for the content;

5.5 Be recognised as a feature of the curriculum, rather than driving the curriculum itself and is designed accordingly to avoid 'teaching to the test'.

5.6 Support teachers in making accurate and productive use of assessment to identify students' knowledge, understanding and misconceptions and to inform subsequent teaching.

5.7 Statutory assessments and assessments leading to external qualifications will be administered in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements, awarding organisation regulations and the School's examination and assessment procedures.

6. Supporting our Teachers

6.1 Reading School is committed to helping teachers improve their practice throughout their careers, with a focus on timely, collaborative and appropriate support. Internal, local network and external opportunities are offered to meet individual, subject-specific and whole school priorities, so that teaching staff are supported to understand how best to implement the Teaching Approaches.

6.2 All evaluation of teaching is undertaken with the intention of helping a teacher improve their practice in order to improve student outcomes. Evaluation of teaching is undertaken through triangulation of evidence from different sources using a variety of methods.

6.3 Senior Leaders will support Curriculum Leaders to review their department's Curriculum Implementation Plan with their team on a regular basis.

7. Curriculum

7.1 Teaching and assessment are designed to support the effective implementation of the Reading School curriculum and, where applicable, the relevant National Curriculum programmes of study and statutory assessment requirements. See Curriculum Policy for more detail.

Policy approved by Curriculum & Standards Committee, 21st September 2026.

To be reviewed September 2027

Appendix 1

The Principles of Expert Teaching at Reading School

Aim: Students should be engaging in deliberate practice, which is intentional, based on previous learning and fed back on by teachers who are role models for high quality learning. Teachers should be adaptive in their approach to teaching to ensure all students can engage with the curriculum.

- Challenge: our curriculum sets high standards and drives high expectations of what students can achieve.
- Subject Knowledge: teachers' subject knowledge is essential for all aspects of high-quality teaching and curriculum planning.
- Modelling and Explanation: concepts and/or processes are broken down into smaller steps so that students can more easily acquire new knowledge and skills. Modelling sets the academic standard within the classroom. Explanations explicitly address common subject-specific misconceptions.
- Questioning: questioning needs to be varied (mix of 'cold-call', 'warm' and hands up) and purposeful so that all students are made to think hard about the breadth, depth and accuracy of their knowledge.
- Feedback: feedback needs to be meaningful, specific and accurate so that students further develop their knowledge and skills, and this development is reflected in the improved complexity of subsequent work.
- Classroom Climate: classroom climate is founded on consistently high-quality and respectful interactions between teacher and students.
- Metacognition: teachers give students strategies to help them plan, justify, monitor and evaluate their learning more explicitly.
- Language use: teachers are intentional in their language use, so it is planned for, frequent and high quality. It enables students to understand and use subject-specific and academic language in reading, writing and speaking.