

**Outcomes  
First  
Group.**

# **Teaching and Learning Policy**



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## **School Ethos & Values**

Medway Green School aims to meet the social, emotional and educational needs of our pupils and aspire to provide opportunities that are needed to develop their full potential. We ensure that we develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. We promote the fundamental British values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty and Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We are a 'Rights Respecting School' where our children are nurtured and helped to interact with others, displaying the qualities outlined above.

Medway Green School is a Trauma Informed Practise school and therefore we value the fundamental beliefs around Connect, Co-Regulate and Co-Reflect within our learning environment.

## **Vision statement**

To create a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where the curriculum is creative, inspirational and relevant to the children's present needs and future aspirations.

## **Aims**

- Ensure all students have equitable access to learning and understand that everyone can excel and flourish in their learning.
- Foster a love of learning through a variety of approaches, including multi-sensory learning, differentiated instruction, and practical experiences.
- Promote independence, confidence, resilience and self-esteem.
- Develop life skills that prepare students for future education, employment, and independent living.
- Nurture through respect, honesty and tolerance in a safe and challenging educational environment
- Involve children, parents, teachers, governors and the community to ensure that everyone is working in partnership
- Quality teaching to help all children achieve their potential

## **Values**

*'From little acorns, **mighty oaks** grow'*

- Motivation
- Inspirations
- Growth
- Honesty
- Trust
- Unique
- Optimism
- Ambition
- Kindness

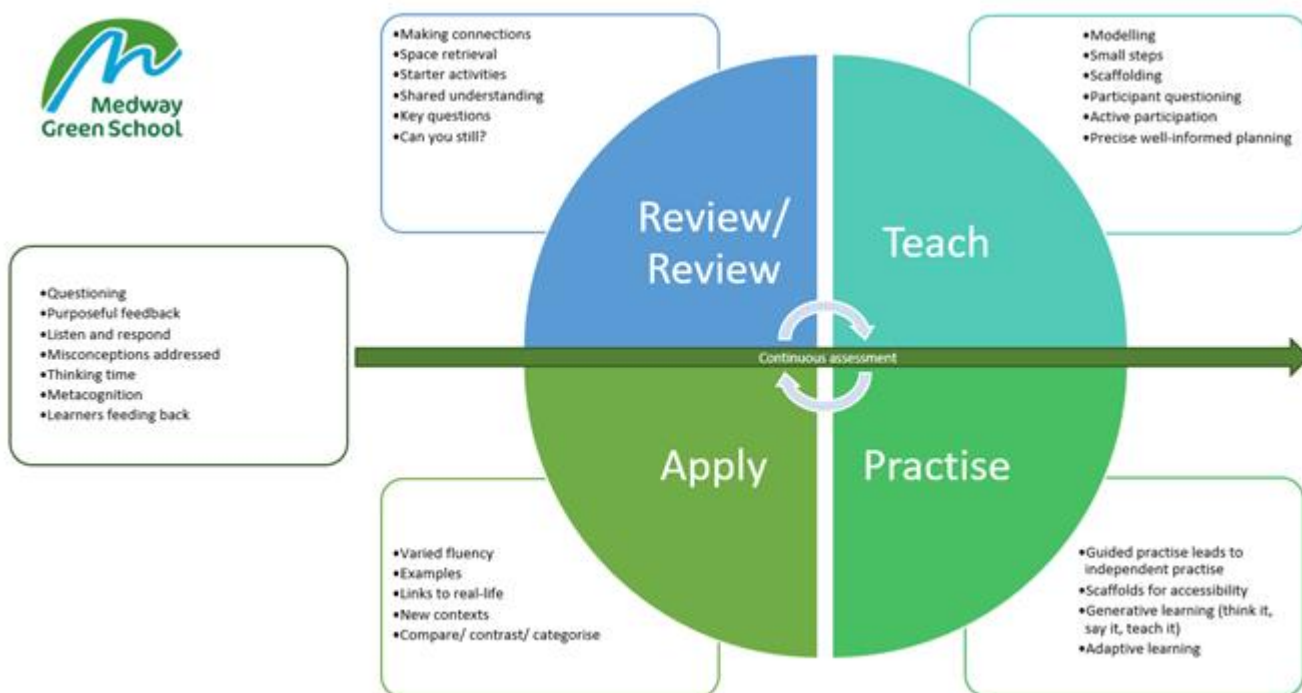
## Purpose of this policy

At Medway Green School, we recognise that our children will need different approaches to teaching in order to learn. However, this policy promotes best practice and establishes consistency in Teaching and Learning across the whole school. It aims to ensure that all children are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to improved student attitude to learning, and good progress being made by all children.

## Introduction

One of the principles underlying Medway Green School's approach is the belief that students' self-esteem, confidence, and emotional stability can be greatly improved through a strong balance of academic achievement and personal development. Students are encouraged and supported to achieve in terms that they recognise as success. As the school grows, the curriculum will continue to be a major area for development. The underlying belief that governs developments is that learning should be useful, relevant and enjoyable. We seek to gain accreditation for the courses the student's study during key stages 3 and 4 having built firm foundations in the Lower School. We fundamentally believe that any academic achievements will increase our students' chances of living a happy life as independent, responsible members of society.

We believe that pupils learn best when Teachers following the Revisit/ Review, Teach, Practise and Apply method in every lesson.



## Planning

At Medway Green School, our children learn best when learning activities are planned, structured and well-sequenced across a period of time. Weekly, medium-term and long-term planning ensures that children make progress at their stage – following clear objectives linked to the National Curriculum. As a school, we understand that our children may have gaps in their learning. Teachers

should plan to address these gaps during planned interventions so that children are best able to make progress.

As a result of effective planning, children will be able to gauge a good understanding of the curriculum and progress will be seen in books, in the learning environment and through conversations with the children.

Our children benefit from opportunities for active and outdoor learning, therefore, class teachers will be planning these experiences for the children so that they are best able to make progress in the curriculum, as well as developing their confidence and self-esteem.

Teachers will have their planning uploaded to the shared system termly, so that it can be shared with class and subject teams to prepare for the week.

Long-term planning is in place to provide a broad and balanced curriculum within every year group. Children are taught at their stage rather than age. Medium-planning provides a breakdown for the curriculum objectives which teachers refer to when planning their lessons, as well as weekly sequencing of schemes of work. Teachers use agreed schemes for Maths and English to facilitate teaching and learning.

Within each lesson, teachers will plan in effective starters, main activities and plenaries. Starters should challenge children with previous learning to ensure that they are embedding this knowledge into their long-term memory. Whilst plenaries should summarise and assess the learning from the current lesson.

## **Principles of Teaching and Learning**

- **Inclusive Practice:** Every student, regardless of ability, has the right to access meaningful, challenging, and enjoyable learning experiences.
- **Personalisation:** Teaching strategies should be flexible and adapted to meet the individual needs, abilities, and learning styles of students. AT MGS we have introduced the TREKS model to promote this within the classroom.
- **High Expectations:** Teachers should have high expectations for all students, with appropriate goals and achievements based on their specific needs and potential.
- **Functional Learning:** Focus on practical, real-world skills that enables students to become more independent in everyday life. At MGS we have introduced 'I do, We do, You do' within the lessons.
- **Active Engagement:** Students should be actively engaged in their learning, where possible, with opportunities to participate in discussions, and hands on activities.

## **Adaptive Teaching**

Adaptive Teaching is characterised by the Early Career Framework as:

- Adapting lessons, whilst maintaining high expectations for all, so that all pupils have the opportunity to meet expectations.
- Balancing input of new content so that pupils master important concepts.
- Making effective use of teaching assistants.

At MGS all of our pupils require adaptive teaching styles to support them in accessing a full curriculum. There are different needs and experiences within every classroom and we pride ourselves on getting to know every individual learner, so that we can provide them with the best possible education. While we know that our students do have these needs and experiences, we still aim to challenge them academically so they are able to achieve their full potential. This is why our curriculum has been planned to prepare learners for KS4, where they will all be able to access some level of qualification/ work experience/ award.

Learning is sequenced carefully to build on foundational knowledge, once this is secure students will be introduced to progressive skills in order to support their mastery. A great example of this is the use of White Rose Small Steps to introduce new learning slowly so that students are able to grasp concepts and built up to more challenging skills.

At MGS we understand that we are dealing with a group of diverse individuals and have adapted our teaching to ensure that all of them have access to learn. This is an on-going and flexible process which not only profiles students initially but also recognise progress and areas for improvement and adjusts accordingly to ensure learning needs continue to be met. In short, it shifts the focus from teaching a subject to teaching the students.

## **Metacognition**

Learning can be defined as a change in long-term memory “The aim of all instruction is to alter long-term memory. If nothing has changed in long-term memory, nothing has been learned.” (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clarke, 2006 p. 77). Metacognition, on a very basic level, is about a student’s ability to monitor, direct, and review their learning. Effective metacognitive strategies get learners to think about their own learning more explicitly, usually by teaching them to set goals, and monitor and evaluate their own academic progress. Self-regulated learners are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and can motivate themselves to engage in, and improve, their learning. At Medway Green, we believe that developing students’ metacognitive knowledge of how they learn, their knowledge of themselves as a learner, of strategies, and of tasks is an effective way of improving student outcomes.

There are three stages to developing metacognition:

- Planning—encouraging pupils to think about the goal of their learning (set by the teacher, or themselves) and to consider how they will approach the task; this includes ensuring they understand the goal, activate relevant prior knowledge about the task, select appropriate strategies, and consider how to allocate their effort. At Medway Green School, we aim for all pupils to be able to;
- Monitoring—emphasising the need, while undertaking the learning task, for pupils to assess the progress they are making; this includes the self-testing and self-questioning activities that are necessary to control learning and making changes to their chosen strategies.
- Evaluating—appraising the effectiveness of their plan and its implementation.

At Medway Green School, we aim for all pupils to be able to:

- Consistently plan for tasks with independence, reflecting upon the success of their plans.
- Engage in metacognitive talk with their peers with relative independence.
- Effectively manage their learning outside of the classroom, utilising a range of strategies with increasing independence.
- Engage with feedback to monitor their learning with increasing independence.

We aim for all teachers to:

- Consistently execute an explicit explanation of their thinking for most tasks.
- Consistently provide support for pupils in all facets of planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning.
- Challenge is regularly pitched in the zone of desirable difficulty.
- Model and explicitly share the thinking behind each step when planning
- Consider scaffolding when planning tasks and principles of cognitive load are applied.

As part of everyday teaching, some of the most common strategies used to embed metacognitive strategies are:

- Explicit teaching
  - With a focus on activating prior knowledge, introducing new knowledge and skills, modelling the application of knowledge and skills, and providing ample opportunity for independent practice and reflection.
- Supporting students to plan, monitor, and evaluate their work/learning
  - Explicitly teaching skills in these areas, and structuring work around these phases, will give students the opportunity to gradually internalise these techniques and use them to take control of their own learning.
- Developing rubrics (and wherever possible co-designing them with students)

- Assist students with the monitoring of learning and the setting of individual learning goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART).
- Modelling of thinking
  - Verbalise the thought processes used to consider, analyse and solve problems. This may be as simple as 'thinking aloud'.
- Questioning
  - Both in terms of using questions to engage students, to monitor their progress and stimulate their thinking, as well as valuing questions from students as a form of feedback and an opportunity for clarification/extension of learning.

## **Dyslexia**

At Medway Green School, a high number of our learners have been diagnosed with Dyslexia or have been assessed within a high likelihood of having Dyslexia. As a result, we have whole school strategies in place to ensure we allowing our learners can access their learning. We do this by:

- Using a specific colour in our PowerPoint slides.
- Using a specific type of font, including the line spacing.
- Limiting information in our PowerPoint slides.
- Ensuring our classrooms following a 'Dyslexia Friendly' approach (limiting the information available in the classroom).

In using the HAST2 Spelling Test, Hertfordshire Reading Test and Accelerated Reader Assessments to baseline and inform gaps in learning, we will be able to tailor interventions in aid to support our learners to close the gap. Regular, additional, reading interventions will take place within classes for those with a diagnosis of Dyslexia, or those with suspected Dyslexia.

## **Active Learning**

Active learning can be defined as "students participate [in active learning] when they are doing something besides passively listening," Bonwell & Eison (1991). At Medway Green School, we believe that our children learn best using different methods to achieve the best levels of engagement. We encourage teachers to plan lessons where children can take a proactive approach to their own learning. Therefore, we expect a lot of the evidence in lessons to be presented in the form of photos and observed notes to highlight how the children have met the learning objective.

The outdoor learning environment is a fantastic tool to use when teaching. We recognise that our learners need to have these learning opportunities. Teachers will work with the Outdoor Education Team to plan lessons that use the environment as a facilitator for learning. We currently aim for at least 10% of lessons to be delivered outside.

## **Challenge for all**

While many of our learners face different needs, it is important to recognise that they have the ability to be challenged within the stage they are working at. By the time our learners reach the end of KS4, we want to give them to be able to attain qualifications that are appropriate for them. Therefore, we need to ensure that they are being challenged academically across the curriculum. Teachers will be monitoring continued progress across all learning and will adapt learning where necessary.

## Assessment

When children start at Medway Green School, we will assess them using GL Assessments in English and Maths if they were working within the Primary Curriculum, and they will complete NCFE Assessments if they are working within the Secondary Curriculum. This gives us a baseline of where the children are coming from and that we are teaching them at the appropriate stage.

At the beginning of Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms all learners will complete an Accelerated Reader assessment, a Hertfordshire Reading Assessment, HAST2 Spelling Test and a Writing assessment. Our aim with this is to be able to clearly see the gaps that pupils may have, so that we can plan tailored interventions. Therefore, by the next assessment period, we will be able to see clear progress.

As a school, we are using continued assessment to help inform planning and interventions for the children. Feedback is given regularly both written and verbally to ensure the students know about their next steps and how they can improve their work. Children's work is marked in line with the Marking Policy in every lesson.

Pupil Target displays are also used in every classroom to display Boxall and IEP targets for every child. As Boxall targets are reviewed at the end of every half term, it is an expectation that Boxall targets are swapped by the first day of the new term. This is so that all members of staff working with the children are aware of their current targets and they can help them achieve these. IEPs are updated at the end of every term. New IEPs need to be displayed by the first day of the following term to ensure that we are meeting their needs. Throughout the term, it is expected that class teams record when children have been meeting their Boxall targets and their IEPs by using stickers or marking it off on the charts. This is so that staff are aware of what the children have already been achieving and what we need to support them further with. This is checked regularly on learning walks to ensure that all classes are consistently recording this information.

## Learning Environment

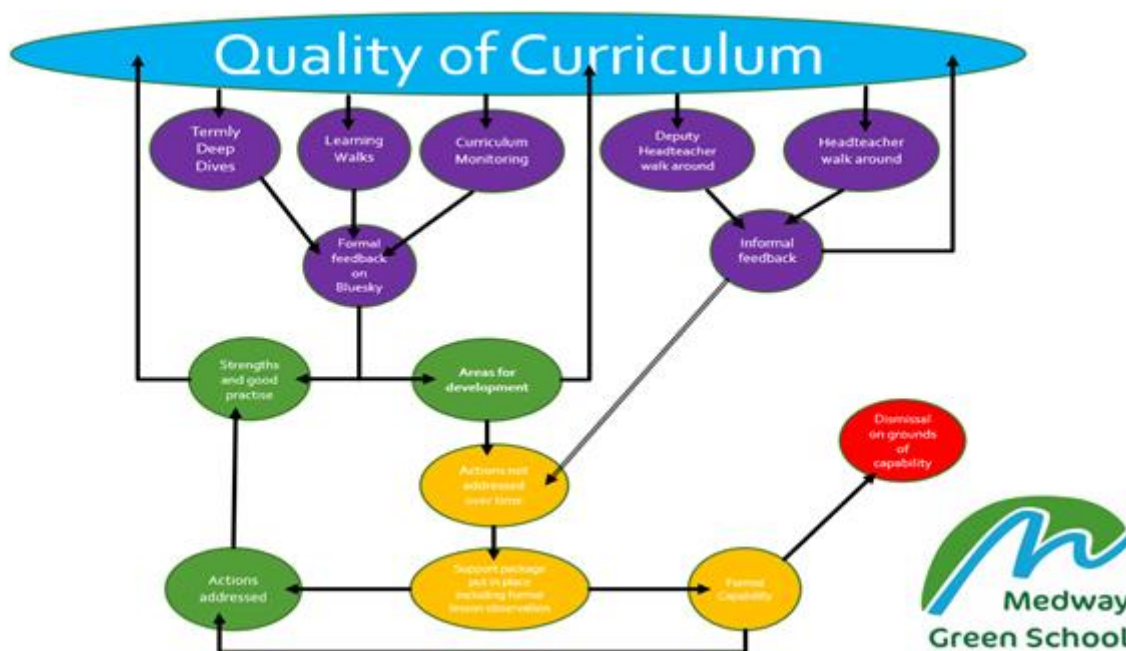
- **Safe and Supportive:** Learning environments should encourage an atmosphere of mutual respect between adults and children. We want children to learn in an environment where they feel confident to share their ideas freely, build their self-esteem and take risks.
- **Well Organised:** Students should work in an environment that is safe and organised. Children are also encouraged to organise their own working area. In working in a classroom that is safe and organised, it should encourage children to be proactive with their learning and facilitate a motivational environment where children can be ready to learn with minimal distractions.
- **Visual Supports:** Use of visual aids such as symbols, signs and pictures to help students understand routines and expectations. Display boards should be purposeful and showcase the work of the children in class, as well as around the school. Displays should also showcase examples of work from the children across curriculum areas – utilising display boards and other space in the classroom. In seeing their work in class and around the school, we want children to take pride in their work, be proud about their work and feel motivated to continue to produce work to a high standard.
- **Inclusive Resources:** Ensure all resources, including teaching materials and equipment, are accessible and suitable for the diverse needs of students.

## Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

Quality Assurance will be carried out by the leadership team regularly throughout the school year. Regular monitoring of this will include: learning walks; book scrutiny and curriculum monitoring where teachers will receive written feedback. Our Senior Leadership Team will also complete informal learning walks to have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The leadership team will meet regularly to discuss the impact of the quality of teaching and learning and areas that we would like to enhance. Training in these areas will be established and delivered within teacher meetings to develop the understanding of the use of different teaching methods and enhance learning for children.

A diagram highlighting our approach to Quality Assurance can be found below.





We are part of the Outcomes First Group Family, by working together we will build incredible futures by empowering vulnerable children, young people and adults in the UK to be happy and make their way in the world.

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