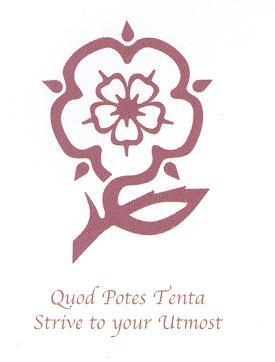
Bullers Wood School

Teaching and Learning Policy



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| **Policy created by:**  J Stone | **Date of Adoption:**  October 2016 | **Date to be Reviewed:**  July 2017 | **To be reviewed by:** Pupils, Parents & Community Committee |

**Teaching and Learning Policy**

Bullers Wood School



We want teachers to constantly challenge us so that we keep on getting better – but who are there to support us when we need help.

Eve & Sophia, Year 10

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| Author:  J Stone | Adopted: XX/XX/2016 |
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## Our Vision

If someone visits our school for the first time, then we would expect that person to

* encounter a friendly community in which diversity is celebrated and in which all learners are valued, regardless of their background
* experience vibrant, inclusive learning environments where learners are engaged in a diverse, yet coherent, range of activities that they find meaningful and compelling
* see confident learners who have forged positive relationships with their teachers and with each other, and whose teachers care for their education and their well-being
* have conversations with articulate learners who, amidst a culture of respect and reflection, are engaged in learning through rich dialogue and resonant questioning
* meet committed teachers who strive to ensure that learners are appropriately challenged and effectively supported, so that learners improve.

Ultimately, we aim to be an aspirational school, built on the right values, that is relentless in its ambition to do all that it can to empower learners to thrive and flourish.

## Our Aims

To nourish our learners’

* intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and creativity
* emotional health, maturity, and resilience
* self-confidence, self-knowledge, and independence
* social skills, relationships, and friendships
* moral compass, responsibility, and integrity.

To help our learners, including those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, to

* enjoy success: to progress, to achieve, and to attain
* recognise, realise, and push the limits of their potential
* understand that their abilities can grow through effort and persistence
* identify, raise, and pursue their own aspirations
* appreciate truth, goodness, and beauty
* be well-equipped for life beyond school.

To ensure that all of our learners

* are treated equitably and justly, regardless of any protected characteristic
* have their learning needs met, including any additional needs.

To nurture a vibrant learning culture fostering

* questioning, commitment to open enquiry, and a love of learning
* solidarity and democratic values such as freedom of thought
* pro-learning and pro-social dispositions such as turn-taking
* mathematical thinking, including numeracy
* proficiency in language: articulacy, literacy, oracy
* acceptance, respect for all, and the celebration of difference.

**Introduction**

This policy promotes an education built on shared aims, principles, and values. It is maintained that good teaching involves

1. relationships and care
2. engagement
3. questioning and dialogue
4. challenge and support
5. feedback
6. homework.

It is important that our learners experience different approaches to teaching and learning, for they have a right to a broad and balanced education to help them become rounded adults. We therefore embrace diversity of practice.

Involving learners in decisions that affect them (including co-construction) and providing learners with opportunities for leadership fosters democratic values.

It is expected that our teachers cultivate their own personal approach to, and style of, teaching and learning, their own cogent realisation of our aims, principles, and values, in accordance with subject specific requirements and pedagogy.

Teachers will see themselves principally as learners, and learners will see our teachers as lead learners. Such teachers show humility and are committed to acquiring new skills and improving their teaching. For us, every teacher is an improving teacher.

# Six Foundations of Effective Teaching

## 1. Relationships and Care

### Relating to learners

Teachers need to nurture positive relationships with and between learners.

We advocate a firm and assertive approach, through which misguided attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour are challenged.

We also advocate fairness and reasonableness. For example, learners appreciate being spoken to calmly, and it is often appropriate to explain reasons and to listen to them.

Learners’ dignity needs to be respected, for example, by giving out test results discreetly.

### Behaviour

Good behaviour in the classroom is a necessary condition for quality teaching and learning. Teachers need to adhere to our [Behaviour Policy](http://intranet/staff/admin/policies/Policies/Behaviour%20and%20Anti%20Bullying%20Policy%20-%20June%202014.docx) which provides guidance on promoting pro-social and pro-learning behaviours and dispositions.

Conversely, the quality of teaching can have a direct impact on learners’ behaviour, so it is essential that teachers concentrate on teaching learners in a way that engages and challenges them appropriately.

### Recognising success

Appreciating learners’ successes can boost their self-esteem and build good relationships. The nature of success varies between learners; our learners value in particular the recognition of their personal bests.

Effective recognition is task-orientated: it concentrates on the actions of the learner, not their ego. In particular, it highlights the effort and application that engendered the success. It does not need to be formal; descriptive praise, for instance, can be low-key yet effective.

### Safeguarding

In order to care for and safeguard our learners, teachers will make sure that our learning activities, structures, resources, and environments are appropriate for the age, background, and identity of learners (see [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](http://intranet/staff/admin/policies/Policies/Child%20Protection%20and%20Safeguarding%20Policy%20September%202014.docx)).

## 2. Engagement

### Planning

Engaging learning activities and robust learning structures need to be thoughtfully planned, flexibly prosecuted, and critically evaluated. Informed by both an overarching scheme of work and available data on learners, teachers can identify ambitious learning goals, which learners are expected to accomplish, and then plan specific learning activities and structures that will help learners accomplish these goals.

Some teachers or school leaders may feel that there is utility in writing or typing lesson plans.

It is important that our learners understand the context of their learning. This can be accomplished by clarifying learning goals or by articulating overarching questions, in relation to specific learning activities and structures.

### Learning objectives (LOs)

LOs can be a useful teaching tool. LOs are statements of precisely what learners will be able to do after they have been taught.

Learning activities and structures can be planned to help learners understand and accomplish ambitious LOs. LOs can facilitate the checking of learning. Opportunities should be planned that permit learning to be monitored against LOs. Returning to review LOs with learners after teaching is usually advisable and can engender a sense of accomplishment.

There may be occasions when planned activities and structures result in unintended or incidental learning. Teachers and learners can seek to identify and articulate this learning.

### Learning environments

It is vital to cultivate structured educational environments that give teachers and learners the freedom to experiment, take risks, and learn from failure. This requires careful thought.

Learning areas need to be vibrant and appealing, as well as clean, tidy, and clutter-free. Learners benefit from easy access to excellent, and inclusive, learning resources.

If skilfully used, technology, including electronic technology, can facilitate effective teaching and learning.

Learning time needs to be maximised. To this end, teachers will begin lessons promptly and manage transitions well so that learners do not feel rushed.

If teachers miss lessons, then productive cover work will be set.

### Learning activities and structures

Teaching and learning are inseparable educational processes. Good teaching can take many forms. What is important is that, regardless of the style and method of teaching, learners are helped to succeed and our aims, principles, and values are upheld. Starters, for example, are *one* good way of beginning learning, and plenaries are *one* good way of ending it.

### Independent learning

It is desirable that learners receive an education that strikes an appropriate balance between teacher-led and learner-led learning. Independent learning is learning that is facilitated and supported by teachers, within defined but broad parameters. Learners are given freedom to determine the nature of their learning, and held responsible both for their decisions relating to the learning process and for their learning outcomes. Teachers can scaffold and structure independent learning, for example, by giving learners checklists and setting mini-deadlines. Independent learning may be slower than teacher-led learning, but it can strengthen learner self-efficacy.

### Mathematical thinking

It is important that all teachers improve learners’ proficiency in mathematical thinking and numeracy, in relation to their subject, when opportunities arise naturally.

## 3. Questioning and Dialogue

### Questioning and dialogue

Rich dialogue and resonant questioning are powerful teaching and learning processes. A dialogue is a communal discussion that is open, respectful, reflective, and exploratory. It improves learners’ communication skills and is an antecedent of reading and writing mastery.

In rich dialogues, teachers draw judiciously from a range of questioning techniques, such as pausing after posing questions. Also, learners will be provided with opportunities to pose their own questions, seek their own answers, and improve their own questioning skills.

### Language

Articulacy and a firm grasp of English are vital if learners are to access the curriculum and thrive outside of their studies.

All teachers are responsible for strengthening learners’ proficiency in language. This includes improving learners’ oracy: their listening, speaking, and spoken speech skills. It also includes developing learners’ literacy: their reading, writing, and textual skills.

Learners need to be taught both new vocabulary and how to use known vocabulary more precisely and creatively. They also need to be initiated into subject-specific language and acquainted with relevant and challenging texts, literature, and spoken speech.

Attention to accurate spelling, punctuation, and grammar, as well as to the instruction verbs used in assessment questions, is essential if learners are to succeed.

Reading for pleasure, the use of Standard English, and clear, fluent, and eloquent communication, are all encouraged.

## 4. Challenge and Support

### Challenge

The performance of learners across our school varies considerably. Teachers will use available data (quantitative and qualitative) on learners and collect and use information about their performance. This will enable teachers to challenge appropriately all learners so that they find learning neither too easy nor too hard. Whole class teaching, buttressed by questioning and dialogue with individuals and groups, can often meet different learning needs.

### Differentiation

Differentiation is teaching learners differently according to their prior performance. It is one way of ensuring that all learners are appropriately challenged. We recognise different approaches to differentiation (i.e. by outcome, task, resource, support, pace, questioning, and objective) and these approaches can be used in combination. Teachers can ensure that extension or harder tasks are available to stretch higher performing learners. We recognise that differentiation is only sometimes appropriate and therefore needs to be used carefully.

### Learners with additional needs

It is important to create inclusive learning environments in which the needs of all learners, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, are met. We maintain that high quality teaching is the first step in meeting the needs of learners with special educational needs or disabilities. We also recognise that being aware of the needs of such learners will enhance our provision for them. Teachers will familiarise themselves with relevant information provided by our Learning Support Department, and act on this information accordingly.

Our [Special Educational Needs Policy](http://intranet/staff/admin/policies/Policies/SEN%20Policy%20February%202015.docx) gives more detail.

### Learning support assistants (LSAs)

Collaborative planning between teachers and LSAs, a shared understanding of what constitutes good learning, can lead to more robust classroom support and intervention. It is expected that teachers and LSAs will have planning meetings. We understand that learners learn best when they look to the teacher for their main learning and to the LSA for support.

**Parents and carers**

Teachers will communicate with parents and carers to keep them abreast of their child’s attainment, achievement, and progress, and to ensure that they know what they can do to support their child’s learning.

## 5. Feedback

### Feedback

Learners benefit from effective feedback given by teachers and peers. It is usually verbal, but can be non-verbal. It can concern content, processes, language, or mathematical thinking. It is not necessary to evidence that oral or non-verbal feedback has been given, but it is often advisable for learners to make a note, in their own words, of such feedback.

Effective feedback is framed in a way that learners find meaningful and that effects learning. It does one or more of the following:

* focuses on what is good about learners’ performance in relation to criteria
* identifies areas for improvement in relation to criteria
* clarifies precisely how the learner can improve
* provides a forum for dialogue about learning and improvement
* sets constructive learning tasks that help learners build on their accomplishments
* poses questions that extend or deepen thinking, to which learners can respond.

Our shared Learning Language provides a small vocabulary for feedback.

### Marking

Timely and regular marking is an effective way of providing written feedback. Marking also serves other purposes, such as the checking of learning so that teaching can be modified if needed. It is important that teachers have oversight of how far learning tasks and goals have been accomplished.

We recognise two main types of marking: formative and summative.

### Formative marking

The aim of formative marking is to help learners improve. Formative marking is comment-only, expressed in learner-friendly language, and consonant with our general guidance on effective feedback. It includes correcting *some* of the mistakes of learners, including *some* literacy or mathematical errors. Teacher judgement is vital in determining what, and how many, corrections to make.

Not all learners’ work needs to be marked formatively. Teachers need to exercise discernment to establish which pieces are marked formatively to ensure maximal impact on learning.

### Summative marking

Summative marking is the marking of summative assessments, assessments that let learners demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, and skills. It means assessing the performance of learners against a standard, using metrics such as numbers, levels, grades, or pathways that accord with relevant subject and school requirements. Outcomes give learners information about their attainment. Learners can compare outcomes with prior performance outcomes and aspirational school target outcomes to track their progress and achievement respectively.

Summative marking is most effective *without* formative teacher comments; however, learning activities and structures can be designed so learners draw formative lessons from summative assessments.

### Peer assessment and self-assessment

Learners will be given opportunities to peer assess and self-assess. Peer assessment is when learners assess each other’s performance; similarly, self-assessment is when learners assess their own performance.

For such assessment to be possible, learning activities, structures, and resources are needed that make criteria explicit and help learners to understand those criteria.

Learners need to be taught how to peer assess and self-assess. Thus, there may be merit in teachers moderating the accuracy of peer assessment and self-assessment to provide learners with feedback on the assessment process itself.

### Dedicated Improvement Time (DIT)

DIT is planned time when learners respond to feedback. Learners need to be given time across series of lessons for this purpose. DIT will not always be appropriate for every piece of work, so teacher discretion is required. Learners can use DIT time to

* correct any mistakes identified, including literacy and mathematical errors
* answer any questions posed to them
* complete any constructive tasks set
* set themselves learning targets
* explain how they can meet any learning targets set
* engage in dialogue with their teacher about their learning, thinking, and performance.

## 6. Homework

Constructive homework assigned over time can consolidate, extend, or prime learning and strengthen learner self-efficacy.

Teachers will plan and assign meaningful homework, mark most of it, and ensure that all assignments are actively used.

Tasks must be appropriately challenging: hard enough for learners to benefit from completing, and easy enough for learners to complete without support, or, for learners with a special educational need, to complete with support.

Assignments, their learning context, and their future use will be clarified to learners. Learners will be invited to ask clarificatory questions so that they understand what is expected.

Assignments will be recorded using the school’s e-homework platform. Records will briefly articulate the homework’s learning context and specify how it will be used.

Learners will be assigned a reasonable quantity of mandatory homework tasks (MHTs), compulsory tasks with explicitly defined parameters directly linked to syllabuses and summative assessments. Realistic maximum time limits will be specified for each MHT. Learners can complete longer MHTs over several weeks. Examples of reasonable quantity:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Lessons per week** | **Frequency** |
| 1 | up to 1 homework per fortnight |
| 2-3 | up to 1 homework per week |
| 3+ | up to 3 homework tasks per fortnight |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year group** | **Volume** |
| 7, 8 and 9 | 30 minutes homework per subject |
| 10 and 11 | 60 minutes homework per subject |

Learners will also be assigned OLAs, optional learning activities, that complement or extend classroom learning. The teaching challenge is to foster, and create conditions conducive to, learner engagement in OLAs.

In Years 7-11, learners will be given a minimum of one week in which to complete MHTs, except in Modern Foreign Languages and Mathematics, when MHTs likely to take no longer than 15 minutes may be assigned for submission in the next lesson.

Over school holidays, only OLAs, open revision, and coursework will be assigned as homework. Learners can be invited to engage in one school co-ordinated project. In the two weeks prior to specified examination sessions, only open revision and structured revision OLAs will be assigned.

Teachers will keep a record of homework submitted using the school’s e-homework platform.

If learners do not submit MHTs, or if MHTs show poor effort, then responses will accord with our **Homework Non-Submission Procedure**.

**Our Learning Language**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DIT** – Dedicated Improvement Time  **EBI** – Even Better If  **LO** – Learning Objective  **LSA** – Learning Support Assistant  **MHT** – Mandatory Homework Task  **OLA** – Optional Learning Activity  **PLC** – Personalised Learning Checklist  **RAG** – Red Amber Green  **WWW** – What Went Well | **//** – new paragraph needed  **?** – unclear meaning or expression  **^** – word missing  **C** – capital letter error  **F** – formality or style error  **G** – grammatical error  **P** – punctuation error  **S** – stick in loose sheets  **sp** – spelling error  **T** – wrong tense (past, present, or future)  **W** – wrong word used |

## Key Terms

**Achievement** – performance measured against target

**Articulacy** – oracy and literacy

**Assessment** – judgement of performance, based on at least one criterion

**Attainment** – performance measured against a standard

**Co-construction** –teachers and learners collaborating to plan, effect, and evaluate learning

**Dedicated Improvement Time** – time when learners respond to feedback

**Dialogue** – communal discussion that is open, respectful, reflective, and exploratory

**Differentiation** – teaching learners differently according to their prior performance

**Feedback** –giving learners information about their performance to help improve it

**Formative marking** – giving learners constructive written feedback and comments

**Homework** – learning activities assigned by teachers designed to be completed by learners outside of the classroom

**Independent learning** – learners determine what and how they learn, with teachers providing support and structure

**Learners** – the pupils and students, the children and young adults, at our school

**Learning** – the process of acquiring, constructing, or discovering knowledge

**Learning goal** –medium-termstatement of what learners will have learnt after they have been taught (i.e. over a series of lessons)

**Learning objective** – short-term statement of what learners will be able to do after they have been taught (typically by the end of a lesson)

**Learning structures** –strategies and systems thatprovide a framework for learning

**Literacy** – proficiency with written language (reading, writing, spelling, punctuation, grammar) and acquaintance with texts and literature

**Mathematical thinking** – use of mathematical concepts such as space, time, logic, order of magnitude, dimension, number

**Oracy** – spoken speech; speaking and listening skills

**Peer assessment** – assessing the performance of a peer using at least one criterion

**Progress** – performance measured against previous performance

**Scheme of work** – medium-termplan for teaching and learning

**School leader** – any teacher with management and leadership responsibilities relating to teaching and learning, including subject, year-group, and senior leaders

**Self-assessment** – learners assessing their own performance using at least one criterion

**Success** – learners progressing, achieving, or attaining

**Summative marking** – assessing the performance of learners against a standard

**Teaching** – the process of imparting knowledge, or of facilitating the construction or discovery of knowledge