

Teaching & Learning Policy

Teaching & Learning Policy for both the Junior School and Senior School

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Where available	Staff Handbook, Parent Handbook

Teaching & Learning Policy

Aims of document

To provide support, advice and guidance for all teachers in the school to provide the best learning experience for the pupils. These can help further the school's mission and aims.

School Mission:

We want children at Freeman's to learn, to lead and to make a difference.

Our Aims:

We will do this by:

- nurturing a community of learners – adults and children – who are ambitious about what they might achieve in and out of the classroom;
- providing relevant opportunities for pupils to expand their horizons intellectually and socially; athletically and creatively; emotionally and spiritually;
- establishing an environment at Freeman's where everyone involved in the community is respected, trusted and supported;
- encouraging responsibility and capability; honesty and reliability; pride and passion;
- promoting determination and innovation; flexibility and adaptability; kindness and consideration;
- fostering in our pupils the confidence, curiosity, independence and wisdom to succeed in the next stages of their lives.

Teaching and Learning at Freeman's can contribute to these aims. Children can:

- 'Learn' the most up to date subject knowledge and skills across a range of traditional and contemporary subjects, taught by passionate specialists in Key stage 2 and individual subjects.
- 'Lead' their own learning by questioning, reflecting on and responding to feedback and engaging with lessons.
- 'Make a difference' in the world through the choices their education can enable; choices about how to live, how to think and how to be a responsible and active citizen of the 21st Century; and to make positive contributions in the classroom and wider world.

These aims will be most effective when:

- the learning environment is secure, stable and stimulating;
- the learning builds on prior knowledge and understanding;
- success criteria are explicit and models are provided;

- learning is centred on pupil learning rather than teacher performance;
- learning is collaborative and cooperative, and mutual respect is evident between the pupil and the teacher, and among all the pupils;
- pupils are questioning, reflecting, and discussing;
- independent learning and thinking are facilitated and encouraged;
- there are opportunities for creativity;
- utilising different learning styles;
- pupils have opportunities to transfer skills, knowledge and understanding to other contexts.

The Characteristics of pupils at Freeman's

In order to fulfil the school's aims, pupils should have the opportunity to develop the following characteristics:

- a growth mindset;
- intellectual curiosity;
- a love of learning for its own sake;
- resilience, self-reliance and persistence;
- research skills which exhibit discernment and independence;
- the ability to speak confidently in public;
- the ability to work as part of a group;
- to hypothesise and make decisions based on prior knowledge;
- motivation to take the initiative;
- the ability to connect classroom learning with the outside world, see relevance to their own experience and other subjects;
- the ability to contribute positively to the learning environment;
- the ability to reflect on the learning process and evaluate their own progress;
- the ability to plan ahead;
- the ability to understand the different ways in which learning takes place;
- a belief that their effort will bring about improvement;

Planning for excellent Teaching and Learning at Freeman's.

High quality teaching is embedded within a structure of subject based and Key stage 2 curricula. Teams of specialists work together to plan, deliver and reflect on pupil learning. Form tutors, Heads of Year, Heads of Department and Section Heads retain an overview of pupil progress across subjects, and provide support and advice to pupils, teachers and parents.

From Key stage 3 up, each department is responsible for creating schemes of work for all year groups. In Key stage 2, each year group team is responsible for creating the schemes of work, in liaison with the Key stage 2 subject co-ordinators.

A Scheme of Work must contain:

well as watching video clips are the most effective teaching method. The 'teaching and learning' committee will conduct similar research involving pupil feedback and reflection on learning on a regular basis.

To achieve excellence all staff should:

- have an enthusiasm for their subject;
- be committed to keeping up to date with subject knowledge and pedagogical developments;
- identify and respond to pupil prior knowledge and skills to ensure progression;
- plan lessons to ensure knowledge, skills and understanding are embedded (though formal written plans for each lesson are not expected unless the lesson is being observed) ;
- begin and end lessons on time and in a structured manner establishing clear and appropriate routines;
- ensure pupils are prepared for the next lesson;
- maintain engagement, pace and challenge, and spend as high a proportion as possible of lesson time on learning;
- ensure that the lesson is planned and is pitched appropriately to the age and ability of the pupils, using, where appropriate, differentiated materials and resources (e.g. technology);
- have high expectations of pupil work and behaviour;
- employ a range of teacher strategies/approaches/activities within a lesson or sequence of lessons and ensure an efficient shift from one activity to the next;
- identify where it is necessary to change and adapt plans;
- make effective use of questioning (pitching closed and open questioning appropriately) and ensure thinking time for pupils to make connections in their learning;
- value pupils' contributions and make use of praise and reward to underline the value of achievement;
- ensure pupils are given feedback on work completed and that they know how to move on to the next level;
- ensure pupils are challenged, stretched and critically thinking;
- demonstrate checking of progress during the lesson in a variety of ways;
- regularly set, monitor and mark home work;
- regularly identify and use key subject specific language.

Excellent lessons at Freeman's.

All lessons at Freeman's should have clear aims, objectives and assessable outcomes.

Key term	Purpose	Planning questions
Lesson aim	To provide a rationale for the lesson and to ensure it fits into teacher's broader ideas about their subject education, within the specific topic and scheme of work being studied.	How do I want pupils to think in this lesson? Why are they learning about this? What are they learning for? How does this lesson fit with the ones before and after?

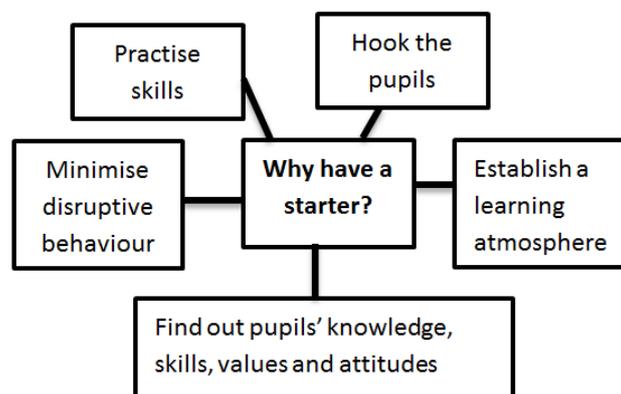
<p>Learning Objectives</p>	<p>To make clear what it is that pupils will be learning e.g. Knowledge, understanding, skills, behaviours, values, attitudes, Narrow down the aim into a workable form.</p> <p>Often objectives are differentiated to take into account varying ability levels, identifying those objectives which all pupils should be achieving, those which most will be able to meet and those which some might achieve in the lesson (though this can be a challenge in a highly academic school like Freeman's).</p>	<p>What do I want pupils to learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -about -to do -through doing -from each other -and why? <p>Will I be able to evidence the pupils' learning?</p> <p>Is there a role for ICT to support learning?</p>
<p>Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>To make clear what will show that pupils have learnt in the lesson and how well. This is measurable and often quantifiable.</p> <p>To enable a reflection on the lesson aims and broader ideologies to inform future planning.</p> <p>Were the bigger aims built towards?</p>	<p>Were the objectives achieved?</p> <p>Have I been able to measure this?</p> <p>How might this inform the next teaching?</p>

The aims and/ or objectives do not need to be shared with the class. Wording them in the form of an enquiry question, which the pupils write down as the title of the lesson, can help structure the lesson for the pupils (for example, *Why did Hitler come to power?*); the question can be addressed in the plenary.

Once the aims of the lesson have been decided upon the outcomes envisaged and how these outcomes are to be assessed and monitored, at that point the pedagogy of the lesson needs to be planned.

An excellent lesson at Freeman's has three distinct parts: A starter activity, a main section, and a plenary.

The lesson should have a clear "starter" activity.



Pupils should be encouraged to engage in learning from the moment they arrive in the classroom. A starter should be a discrete element of a lesson and hook pupils' interest. This could be in the form of a key question, photograph, image or a short video-clip to which the pupils react or comment. It should be accessible as soon as pupils enter the classroom. Pupils may gain an understanding of the objectives, purposes of the lesson or it may recap on previous learning, and link to the lesson's content.

Starter activity	Example	Purpose
Intriguing image displayed to class for them to look at on arrival in the classroom.	Get them to ask simply 'who, what, where, how and why?'	To ask questions to stimulate thinking about the subject or topic being studied.
Mindmap	Pupils start with initial stimulus and branch out ideas and understanding.	To assess prior knowledge of a new topic, or understanding of previous topics.
Key word re-cap	Wordsearches, crosswords, matching exercise (word and definition), odd one out.	To check understanding of vocabulary used in the topic, and in the lesson which follows.
Unusual question/ 'Thanks'	This works particularly well with older pupils: - <i>Can water ever flow uphill?</i> - <i>Would it matter if no one ever wrote a poem again?</i>	To stimulate thinking and encourage pupils to apply understanding to unusual situations.

Main Lesson activities

Within a lesson, a variety of activities should be planned.

Teachers make choices about whether these episodes are teacher-led in which the teacher has close control over the activities of the pupils, or more pupil-led to encourage more independent learning. Each approach can bring different benefits. Teacher led activities can help children to remain on task as there is less chance of misunderstanding as the teacher can elicit specific information from the pupils. Pupil led activities involve pupils taking more control over what they learn and how they learn it.

Teacher led activities	Pupil led activities
Running a class debate Questioning individuals or pairs Review of homework and class work through whole class review.	Peer to peer teaching Individual research projects Presentations to the class on a particular aspect of topic being studied.

- during a lesson, activities should be planned in which pupils are asked to evaluate, explain, justify, develop their understanding, draw their own conclusions, work independently, self-assess, voice or formulate their own opinion and / or make reasoned judgements. Pupils can work co-operatively with the teacher, but also with each other in groups so activities can be planned to demonstrate this.
- certain activities should be avoided such as reading extended passages out of textbooks or off PowerPoint presentations. Copying off the whiteboard or off PowerPoint presentations should also be avoided as this does not encourage learning.
- thinking skills activities as ends in themselves should also be avoided; if a thinking activity is to be used it must develop subject knowledge.
- the main activity section of a lesson may have more than one section: if so careful consideration must be made as to when to move on from one activity to the next. Too early, and not enough pupils will have completed the basic tasks, too late and some might sit idle. Thus each activity should have an extension so those who complete earlier than the rest are able to continue learning.
- extension activities should be planned so if several pupils finish early, they are not sitting unoccupied. Extension activities should not be “more of the same”, but should allow them to access higher order thinking.
- teachers must monitor each pupil's progress throughout the whole lesson, by questioning individuals and circulating the room to see the work being done. This can then inform later aspects of the same lesson, or the following lesson.
- opportunities to use technology in the lesson should be sought, but not as an end in itself, but as a means to elicit and develop understanding, and aid learning.
- discussions should not go on too long as some pupils will switch off and lose engagement. This issue can be overcome if pupils are making notes as a mind map or spider diagram or another note-taking device.
- all pupils should contribute orally to a lesson if possible. Pupils should not contribute for a second or third time before another pupil has contributed to a lesson, or has at least been asked to contribute to a lesson. Directed questioning will help here, rather than only asking pupils who put their hands up.

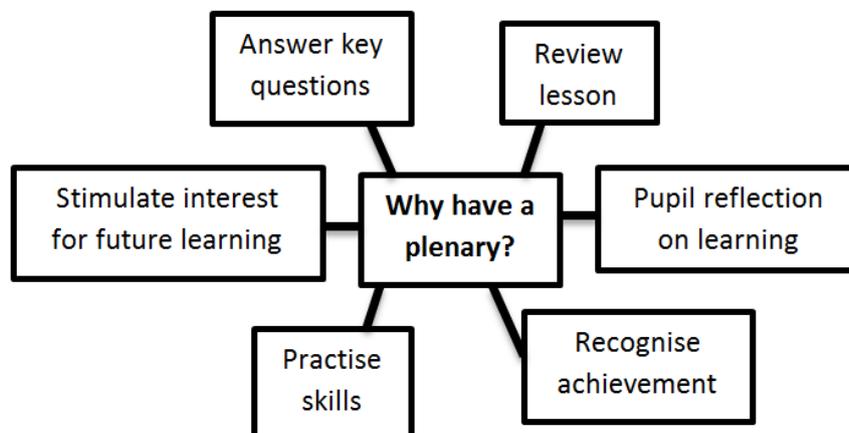
A range of possible learning activities is outlined below, and departments are encouraged to identify a similar activities specific to their own subjects.

Learning activity	Description
Card sort classification activity	Information is provided on a series of cards and pupils need to group into categories of on choice, or predetermined.
Role Play	Pupils pretend to be a stakeholder and argue or debate in character with each other

Odd One Out	Key words are provided, and a set of four presented to pupils who have to work out which one is not similar to the other three and why.
Taboo, Pictionary	Pupils have to get the rest of their team to say a key word by using their descriptions or drawings.
Living graph	Statements are provided about what life might be like at various stages on a graph, pupils have to decide where on the graph the statement refers.
Mysteries	A problem is presented to the pupils with a range of clues to possible solutions. Pupils read the information, maps, graphs and diagrams to solve the problem.
Most likely to....	This gets pupils to think about what types of people, activities or events are likely to take place in a given situation.
Predicting with video.	A video is played then stopped at a certain point, with pupils guessing what might take place next, before showing what really happened.

The lesson should have a clear “plenary” activity

Pupils should have opportunities to extend and deepen their learning and reflect on and articulate what they learned. The teacher may round off and summarise the lesson / part of the lesson and the learning of the whole group is drawn together. Teachers and pupils need to be able to assess what has been accomplished by the whole class in order to plan future lessons and pupils may be directed to the next phase of learning. Pupils should understand not only what they have learned, but how they have learned it. Mini-plenaries can also take place part way through the lesson to summarise the first part of a lesson, before moving on to a different topic or activity.



- the timing of the plenary is important. It should not be rushed. The bell marks the end of the lesson, not the start of the end. If the bell rings, pupils will automatically switch off and start to pack up.

SAMPLE PLENARY STYLE QUESTIONS (from *Plenaries on a plate*)

- *What do you know now, that you did not know at the start of the lesson?*
- *What three things have you learnt today?*
- *What do you want to know as a result of what we have learnt today?*
- *How has today's lesson altered your knowledge or understanding?*
- *In what ways might you use your learning from today's lesson in the future?*
- *If you were going to teach this lesson to younger pupils, what would you identify as the key things they would need to know?*
- *Based on what we have learnt today, what do you think we should study next? Why?*
- *What connections can you make between today's learning and what we have studied previously?*
- *What skills have you used during this lesson?*
- *Produce five key points which summarise today's learning*
- *Pick one thing you have done today and identify why it was good and how it has helped you*
- *Compare what you have learnt this lesson with what you learnt last lesson. How is it similar? How is it different?*

Note: On the TES website there is a PowerPoint titled *Plenaries on a Plate*, which has 168 plenary ideas. It is excellent and has some really interesting and innovative ideas.

Monitoring Teaching and Learning and Freeman's

The success of teaching and learning relies on reflection and feedback. The implementation of this document will be monitored at a number of levels, with an encouragement for teachers to conduct peer-to-peer observation and feedback.

All teachers:

The quality of teaching is the responsibility of the teacher in the classroom. Each teacher achieves this by:

- planning all lessons carefully;
- being open to new ideas to help develop professional practice;
- being willing to try new activities, including the use of new technologies, to enhance pupil learning;
- observe other colleagues, within and outside own department, and be willing to provide positive feedback to their managers;
- be willing to be observed teaching to share best practice each year;
- sharing best practice amongst colleagues in the department and school;
- responding positively to lesson feedback and work scrutiny feedback;
- attending and being reflective of teaching and learning CPD and INSET opportunities;
- ensuring procedures for marking, feedback, recording and reporting on pupil progress are implemented and are in line with departmental and school policies.

Heads of Department:

Heads of subject departments are responsible for the effective teaching of their subjects, the evaluation of the quality of teaching and the monitoring pupils' progress. Each Head of Department achieves this by:

- championing teaching and learning in their subject area;
- ensuring teaching and learning is an item on the agenda at all departmental meetings;
- evaluating the teaching of their subject and the planning of lessons;
- ensuring curriculum coverage, continuity and progress for all pupils;
- ensuring that department procedures for assessing, marking, recording and reporting on pupil progress are implemented consistently and are in line with departmental and whole school policy;
- analysing and interpreting data on pupils' performance against school expectations and other comparative data;
- monitoring pupils' work and progress by regular sampling of classwork and home learning through book looks as well as assessment data;
- ensuring teaching and learning targets are incorporated into targets set in the annual departmental review;
- carrying out formal lesson observations with a clear focus of all subject teachers, with feedback, each year;
- carrying out informal 'learning walks' each term, and providing feedback.

Heads of Key stage 2 Years:

Heads of KS2 year-groups are responsible for the effective teaching within the year group, the evaluation of the quality of teaching and the monitoring pupils' progress. Each Head of KS2 year achieves this, with the support of the KS2 subject co-ordinators, by:

- championing teaching and learning in his/her year group;
- ensuring teaching and learning is an item on the agenda at all year group meetings;
- evaluating the teaching and the planning of lessons within the year group, with particular focus on the core subjects;
- ensuring curriculum coverage, continuity and progress for all pupils;
- ensuring that the year group procedures for assessing, marking, recording and reporting on pupil progress are implemented consistently and are in line with departmental and whole school policy;
- analysing and interpreting data on pupils' performance against school expectations and other comparative data;
- monitoring pupils' work and progress by regular sampling of classwork and home learning through book looks as well as assessment data;
- carrying out formal lesson observations of all year group colleagues, with feedback, each year:

- carrying out informal 'learning walks' each term, and providing feedback.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership team is responsible for the overall quality of teaching and learning across the school. This is achieved by:

- strategic planning of teaching and learning priorities in conjunction with Heads of Department;
- supporting the running of the 'teaching and learning committee';
- supporting individual departments through line management meetings;
- ensuring that the plan for school improvement places a high priority on teaching and learning and that structures are put in place to support these priorities; and
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school through activities such as lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutiny and department reviews.

The ethos of monitoring teaching and learning is to be positive, and to provide opportunities to share best practice across the school for the benefit of the pupils in the school.