Berwick Middle School Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Date agreed by Governors	JANUARY 2016
Date of review **Next review Due**	 SEPTEMBER 2017
Responsible officer	Nick Shaw

A Whole School Policy on Teaching, Learning and Assessment
This policy is the lead in a suite of policies which incorporate the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy, the Feedback Policy, Presentation Policy, Appraisal Policy and the Curriculum Policy. It is intended to ensure that there is a clear and consistent view on Teaching, Learning and Assessment across the whole school.
This policy will be reviewed September 2017

"It turns out that as long as you go to school (and that's important), then it doesn't matter very much which school you go to, but it matters very much which classroom you sit in"
(Dylan Wiliam)

Principles of the Policy

We recognise that all pupils possess unique skills, abilities and aptitudes and all have an entitlement to access a broad, challenging and appropriate curriculum. Every pupil is also entitled to experience a variety of teaching and learning styles which enable them to achieve their full potential. Berwick Middle School aims, through successful teaching, learning and assessment, to develop the whole child and to enable our pupils to make good progress and become lifelong learners.

All teachers have a responsibility to plan and deliver lessons where teaching and learning is of the highest quality, with effective pace and challenge in all lessons and where the learning needs of all pupils are met.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure high quality teaching and learning experiences for pupils of all abilities and aptitudes.
- To provide a framework for teaching, learning and assessment within which there is flexibility and scope for creativity.
- To provide coherence of approach and consistency of expectation.
- To make explicit the entitlement of all pupils.
- To promote the core values and skills of Berwick Middle School.
- To raise attainment by increasing levels of pupil motivation, participation and independence.
- To promote reflection on, and sharing of, good practice; through a variety of methods.
- To promote an understanding of how learning takes place.
- To make explicit a baseline for assessment and monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning that takes place.
- To provide practical guidance and clear procedures.

- To provide a focus for development.
- To inform teachers, pupils, parents, Governors and the wider community about the aims and processes of teaching, learning and assessment.
- To identify specific areas of responsibility at whole school, Key Stage, department and individual staff level.

Roles and Responsibilities:
Governors
- To ensure the effective and rigorous implementation and monitoring of the policy.

Senior Leadership Team:
- To provide appropriate support, training and resources for departments, subject areas and individual staff.
- To monitor and evaluate the delivery and impact of the policy.
- To modify and update the policy in the light of ongoing developments and the changing needs of the school and its priorities, taking into account national, local and partnership needs.

Middle Leadership Team:
- To be responsible for the co-ordination of long, medium and short term planning of schemes of learning, taking into consideration the aims and objectives of the policy.
- To monitor and evaluate consistent delivery of the policy at Key Stage and subject level.
- To provide appropriate support to team members by providing training materials or advice and guidance.
- Support staff to take risks in new teaching methods.
- To implement and monitor intervention programmes to support pupils.

Teaching staff:
- To ensure that their own teaching meets the National Teachers Standards; ensuring teaching and learning is at least good.
- To implement this policy by planning and delivering high quality learning experiences.
- To have a growth mind set, be willing to take reasonable risks.
- Actively seek to reflect on their practice.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to share best practice and improve teaching.

All staff:
- To be aware of the principles of the policy and how they can contribute to it.

Pupils:
- To work positively within lessons to enable staff to implement the policy effectively.
- To engage with learning experiences outside the classroom by ensuring completion of the learning tasks set as homework.

Those with parental responsibility:
- To support the policy of the School, in line with the Home-School Agreement, by providing support for pupils at home, allowing them to continue to develop their learning effectively.

Definition of Teaching:
The purpose of teaching is to promote learning and to raise standards of achievement. Teaching includes the whole range of activities that a teacher employs to promote learning and progress. This includes:

- Use of expert subject knowledge and general knowledge of current affairs.
- Planning of individual lessons and series of lessons to ensure all learners are challenged.
- Having consistently high expectations of all pupils, applying the school behaviour policy correctly. (see Behaviour Policy)
- Ensuring high standards of Behaviour for Learning.
- Implementing varied learning activities.
- Ensuring that lesson objectives are shared with pupils in every lesson.
- Lessons are objective led and outcome driven.
- Pupils must be made aware of the success criteria they are working towards.
- Effective use of differentiation to ensure that the needs of all learners are met so that they make good progress relative to their starting points.
- There is a quick start to the lesson with an engaging starter activity, ensuring learning is evident.
- The pace of the lesson allows all pupils to make progress.
- Setting challenging and purposeful homework.
- Marking, feedback (oral and written) formative and summative assessment and reporting. (see Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy, Feedback Policy and Presentation Policy)
- Teaching reading, writing, communication and mathematics.
- Establishing a positive climate for learning in lessons to encourage interest and engagement.
- Providing intervention when underachievement is evident.

Definition of Learning:
Learning is the process by which an individual makes sense of new experience. Learning takes place when the individual constructs their own knowledge and understanding of a subject, skill or values. Learning often takes place through personal interaction; therefore, we believe that it is important to promote activities that allow the learner to work with others to solve problems, to explore concepts and to develop language as a means of learning and a tool for thinking.
We believe learning will most effectively take place when:

- The learning environment is secure, stable and stimulating.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and respectful.
- Pupils' self-esteem is high.
- Pupils understand the purpose of the learning and see relevance to their own experience.
- Pupils understand the ways in which learning takes place.
- The learning builds on prior knowledge and understanding.
- Success criteria are explicit and models are provided.
- The learning is active and collaborative.
- Pupil questioning, reflection, and discussion are encouraged to extend and guide discovery.
- Independent learning and thinking is facilitated and encouraged.
- There are opportunities for creativity and utilising different learning styles.

- Pupils can self-assess, know what they need to do to improve and are able to set appropriate targets.
- Pupils have opportunities to transfer skills, knowledge and understanding to other contexts.

Definition of Progress:
To make progress in learning is to move forward towards a learning objective or an agreed target.
All pupils are expected to make clear progress in their learning over time as follows:
- Performance data collated throughout the year shows that the pupils are making good progress towards their agreed targets; in line with their starting points.
- The quality of work produced by the pupils' shows that they are acquiring knowledge quickly, developing their understanding and skills and consolidates this in line with expectations for their age group and national averages.
- Pupils develop and apply skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Pupils can transfer their learning and apply this knowledge, skills and experience across other curriculum areas.
- Where pupils' prior attainment is low or falls below that of all pupils nationally, the gap is closing over time.

Expectations:
This section of the policy reflects our expectation that pupils enjoy the highest quality of teaching and learning at Berwick Middle School. In order to achieve this aim, we need to establish a shared understanding of what constitutes a good or outstanding lesson.

The 'Aspects of Effective Teaching and Learning' document outlined in Appendix 1 is provided to suggest good practice. In the document, expectations of pupils are also made explicit. The importance of effective pace and challenge and good practice in Assessment for Learning is also emphasised. Appendix 2 includes an aide memoire created by the school's staff which includes what they believe to be elements of 'outstanding teaching.' Neither list is expected to be exhaustive or a 'recipe' for a good lesson.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD):
Teachers have a responsibility to reflect on their practice, enhance and update their professional knowledge and skills. This is to ensure that consistently high standards of teaching and learning are maintained and national Teacher Standards are met. Berwick Middle School's CPD programme will provide opportunities for staff to participate in a variety of activities in order to support the individual professional needs of staff and build whole school capacity. These CPD activities are based on the needs of the school resulting from Quality Assurance processes and analysis of the school's data. They include opportunities for self – reflection, sharing best practice, presentations by current staff and outside trainers, peer observation, professional discussions, coaching and mentoring. Staff use individual professional portfolios to gather evidence of where they have met teacher standards and use the portfolios as self-reflective tool. It is the responsibility of each individual member of staff to keep their own portfolio up to date.

Monitoring and Review:
Senior and Middle Leaders will ensure that they monitor and review the quality of teaching, learning and assessment on a regular basis and in a number of ways.
- Book scrutinies.
- Work trawls, including assessment, marking and feedback reviews.
- Lesson Observations.

- Lesson drop-ins.
- Questionnaires with staff/pupils/parents.
- Examination reviews and progress checks.
- Intervention reviews.
- Reviews conducted alongside external agencies.
- Pupil interviews.

A schedule for the main quality assurance mechanisms (whole school and core departments) is created annually by the senior leadership team and is shared with staff in September. (See Quality assurance Monitoring Schedules).The outcomes of monitoring and reviews will be shared with staff in an open and professional manner. Where standards of teaching and/or learning fall below expectations, appropriate support will be given and further monitoring will take place as appropriate. If concerns continue, further action will be taken in line with the Teacher Appraisal Policy.

APPENDIX 1

Aspects of Effective Teaching and Learning
Lesson Structure:
Planning and preparation:
- Lessons are planned with clear aims and learning objectives, structure and challenge for all pupils.
- Lesson Objectives must be shared with pupils in every lesson.
- Pupils must be made aware of the success criteria they are working towards and the expected outcome.
- Learning environment is stimulating, relevant and informative.
- Lessons are planned to develop metacognition skills.
- Lesson objectives are clearly linked to departmental long and medium term plans which are periodically reviewed.
- Planning is linked with short, medium and long-term assessment opportunities.
- Planning allows for a variety of learning styles and provides opportunities for developing a wide range of thinking skills.
- Teachers make use of all available information, both statistical and personal, to set clear, realistic, yet challenging targets and to plan differentiated learning opportunities.
- Lessons are planned to build on prior learning and ensure continuity and progression.
- Opportunities for developing Literacy, Numeracy, SMSC, Computing Skills and cross-curricular elements are integrated into lesson plans wherever possible.
- Planning makes provision for the effective use of TAs when available.
- Appropriate and stimulating multisensory resources are organised prior to the lesson.

Start of the Lesson:
- The teacher uses effective strategies to 'Meet and Greet' pupils on arrival;
- The start of the lesson has a clear focus, using activities which immediately engage the learner;
- The expected learning outcomes are shared with pupils (not always necessarily at the start), in the context of prior learning, to ensure they understand what they are doing and why.
- The success criteria by which the learning will be evaluated are made explicit.
- The teacher establishes and communicates clear expectations for behaviour.

Lesson Development:
- The teacher presents lesson activities with clarity, enthusiasm and pace, ensuring timings are clear and adhered to;
- Active learning is promoted by provision of tasks which enable pupils to make meaning, construct knowledge and develop understanding and skills. The teacher and/or other pupils model activities and processes, making their thinking and decision-making explicit to pupils.
- Exemplar work/perfect model is provided and/or demonstrated so that pupils are aware of the sophistication of response expected;
- Appropriate differentiated resources/teaching approaches/learning activities support pupils' learning.
- To enable success for every pupil, tasks are accessible to all.
- As the lesson proceeds, learning activities are organised into chunks or stepping stones in order to maintain pupil engagement and support progress towards expected outcomes.
- A variety of questioning techniques probe and develop pupils' understanding.

- Active listening is promoted, inviting a range of different responses and building in time for reflection.
- Constructive, relevant assessment and feedback is provided on progress to provide the highest impact on pupil progress.
- Pupils are encouraged to evaluate and refine their work in order to meet targets.
- Activities ensure progression in pupil learning by increasing the level of conceptual challenge, the depth of understanding and the breadth of application of skills.
- Groupings and seating arrangements are varied according to the task.
- Teachers demonstrate flexibility in their approach and be prepared to deviate from the lesson plan where appropriate.
- A variety of homework tasks are set to deepen, extend, or initiate learning.

End of the Lesson:
- The teacher creates the time to review lesson objectives and learning outcomes.
- Pupils have the opportunity to assess their own progress and set themselves appropriate targets (not always necessarily done at the end).
- Pupils receive supportive feedback from the teacher or their peers where appropriate.
- Opportunities are provided to celebrate success.
- Links are made to future lessons, learning activities and assessment opportunities as appropriate.
- The end of the lesson is prompt and orderly, allowing for efficient transition between lessons.

Expectations of pupils:
- To be engaged and not passive in their learning.
- To work effectively and purposefully in a range of contexts.
- To come fully equipped and prepared to maximise the learning opportunity.
- To be prepared to share their learning and ideas in an atmosphere of trust.
- To ask questions where appropriate – of each other and the teacher.
- To support one another, working collaboratively, recognising the contributions of all.
- To undertake self-assessment or peer assessment with some confidence, becoming increasingly able to apply the criteria for success and to set appropriate targets for improvement.
- To know where to go for help and recognise that further progress can always be made.
- To develop resilience in approaching problems and new learning challenges.
- To be able to select appropriate learning resources to help develop their own learning.
- To work with increasing independence, developing the skills to become life-long learners.
- To make effective use of ICT to develop their learning, accessing a wide variety of sources and use appropriate methods to present their work;
- To act on all assessment, marking and feedback.
- To use initiative and develop more independent learning.

Embedding Pace & Challenge:
- Setting high expectations for all pupils in your class.
- Planning for differentiated lesson outcomes and/or success criteria which are shared with class.
- Planning for the most and least able; Top – down approach (rising tide lifts all ships)
- Planning engaging starter activities to ensure quick start to the lesson and learning is evident in the first 5 minutes of the lesson (not just doing the register).

- Planning for and using a variety of forms of differentiation in your teaching;
- Planning for higher order dialogue; extending, explaining vocabulary varying the questioning and thinking through the use of Blooms Taxonomy.
- Depth; for example extension through complexity.
- Breadth; for example, enrichment through a broader range of tasks and resources
- Promoting independence in thinking and learning as well as providing opportunities to self-regulate learning.
- Using accelerated or an appropriate pace of learning.
- Share expected timings for activities and give time checks.
- Setting differentiated homework which is challenging for all pupils.
- Using learning conversations between the learner and teacher to inform the pupil of their progress.
- Overall confidence in planning and delivering lessons with pace and challenge embedded.

Assessment for Learning:
- Pupils receive regular developmental and motivational feedback in a variety of ways to enable them to progress.
- Feedback will sometimes include quality written comments which recognise the strengths of a piece of work and identify targets for improvement in a constructive, personalised way in line with the Feedback Policy.
- Pupils are able to act upon the advice they are given to improve their performance providing a response to the feedback they are provided with.
- Frequent opportunities are taken within lessons to provide immediate verbal feedback.
- Pupils are encouraged to judge the success of their own work, negotiate success criteria and set themselves targets for their own improvement.
- The language of subject progress is shared with pupils.
- Pupils are made aware of the criteria for progression and are enabled to interpret these criteria in a meaningful way.
- Pupils are encouraged to critically, but supportively, judge the performance of others within their group.
- Examples of work are modelled through display and explanation.
- Within subject areas, there will be opportunities for marking to be standardised across a year group.

Berwick Middle School
Outstanding Lessons - Aide Memoire

Before the lesson: be organised!	
Are the title and the date written on the board?	
Is your projector on?	
Are your resources ready to be handed out?	
Have you got spare pens? Sheets? Glues? Scissors? Mini whiteboards... ready to use?	
Have you got key questions ready to ask, possibly to specific pupils?	
Have you got a name randomiser?	
Are you books marked up to date with www, ebi and tasks?	
Have a seating plan according to abilities, including all MA and vulnerable groups.	
Is the classroom tidy with up to date, smartly presented, interactive and motivating displays?	
I am clear about the school's behaviour policy and have consistently applied it to my teaching.	
My classes understand what I expect in their 'Behaviour for Learning.'	
I have to hand the data for my class which shows starting points, targets and any progress made.	
I understand the whole school's performance and work to improve the school's global situation in my classroom.	
Greeting pupils in	
Have you set a routine?	
Greet pupils at the door (where possible) with a smile ☺	
Comment on uniform, if necessary.	
Be assertive and authoritative with agitated pupils, challenge latecomers (but also be sensitive to known problems).	
Starting the lesson	
Stimulate pupils' curiosity as they come in: music, video clips, bizarre objects, problems solving...	
Have a starter which requires focus and thinking skills to settle pupils down (eg. odd one out, ask a question, choose the correct definition, sorting activity...)	
Get pupils to start as soon as they get in.	
Check attendance when pupils are busy working on the starter.	
Depending on the context, use colour-coded learning objectives and success criteria (as opposed to task based objectives) with Bloom's Taxonomy. Differentiate them to at least two. Eg. Define / list / recall... Select / contrast / explain... Analyse / Evaluate / Design...	
On occasion, let them create the last objective.	
Refer to literacy focus in your learning objectives if possible	
Explain to pupils how they will achieve the learning objectives	
Make it relevant to pupils: why are they doing it? Can they see the point? Link learning to real life.	
Throughout the lesson	
Be dynamic and enthusiastic about the lesson, enthusiasm is contagious!	
Refer to learning objectives and success criteria consistently throughout the lesson.	
Check pupils' understanding with AfL techniques: mini whiteboards, circulating, hinge point questions, no hands up policy...	
I take chances to improve the pupils core skills and SMSC development I also relate my subject to others when the opportunity arises.	
Adapt your lesson according to pupils' needs.	

Give clear instructions, involve pupils in this process	
Remodel tasks verbally by a pupil.	
Have creative and relevant tasks with challenging level of subject knowledge.	
Have different types of activities from lesson to lesson so they do not know what to expect.	
Have tasks which show excellent improvement and progress, over time.	
Have differentiated tasks (G&T, SEN, EAL).	
Have tasks in which pupils work individually, in pairs, in small groups based on effective differentiation (ability, gender, PLTS) to prove that they don't need adult supervision.	
Have tasks which cater for a wide range of learning styles: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic.	
Where appropriate, give pupils the choice of tasks they want to do (including homework).	
Pace your activities well with mini plenaries in between (mini challenges, recap, targeted questions…)	
Encourage extension work (eg: "In this lesson there will be 3 opportunities to do an extension task. I'd like you to do at least one.")	
Encourage independence by letting the pupils find out information by themselves (eg. a grammatical rule in French)	
Discuss pupils' misconceptions and show them how to improve.	
Involve pupils to assess their knowledge (peer or self-assessment)	
Praise pupils wherever possible.	
Give oral feedback including strengths and areas for development.	
Use Blooms taxonomy of questioning to deepen pupils thinking.	
Be fair and consistent with behaviour management system and sanctions, taking into account of any SEN needs.	
Provide TAs with clear directions and discuss how to best support pupils in your lessons.	
Give challenging homework with opportunities for extension (research based tasks, creative tasks)	
Think about giving homework at the beginning of the lesson.	
Ending the lesson	
Leave plenty of time for the plenary.	
Have a plenary in which pupils can demonstrate their learning and from which you can make your own assessment about whether they have achieved the learning outcome.	
Allow thinking time before feedback.	
Have them discuss in pairs about the objectives and what they have learned before reporting back to you.	
Tell them what will come in the next lesson.	
Question pupils who have not participated in the lesson.	
I am a reflective practitioner and regularly evaluate my own teaching so it always develops and improves.	