



LIFE Education Trust

**RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL
TEACHING & LEARNING
POLICY**

Policy	Teaching & Learning Policy
Policy Source	Own Source

Aims

At LIFE Education Trust, our **Mission** is to “*build great learning communities.*”

Teaching and Learning is built upon **eight** key principles:

- i. Teaching is informed by knowing **how pupils learn**
- ii. Teachers **research** and **collaborate** so their practice is **evidence informed**
- iii. Lessons are **well planned** and **appropriately challenging for the needs of every pupil**
- iv. **Learning is enhanced by pupils seeing excellence**
- v. **Questioning encourages pupils to think in depth** about their learning
- vi. Learning is **engaging and satisfying**
- vii. Learning is **sometimes difficult**
- viii. **Feedback is regular, clear, focused and drives improvement**

At the Rural Primaries we aim to:

- Provide opportunities for all learners to make excellent progress in their learning and engender a positive approach to learning.
- Train, develop and support teachers in their vital role of unlocking the skills, knowledge and potential in our students.
- Promote the use of resources which encourages and motivates learners
- Monitor the quality of teaching within the school.
- Maintain consistently high standards of teaching.
- Monitor student engagement and learning.
- Assess areas of strength and areas for development within the area of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that new staff are inducted properly into the community.
- Recognise and celebrate equality and diversity in everything we do.

The policies, procedures and plans for the curriculum, learning (objectives, resources, processes, planning of lessons), assessment and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) should complement each other in order to provide a cohesive experience for learners and staff.

Rationale

At the **Rural Primaries** our teaching is designed to help learners develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum. This will be achieved through the construction of a coherently planned curriculum, sequenced towards developing sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We believe that teaching is most effective when combining the following elements during a teaching session.

1. Introduction to the session - An initial activity that focuses on retrieval practice and enjoyment so able to build on prior knowledge and are motivated to learn.
2. Main teaching session - Learning is regularly modelled to enable children to feel confident in ‘having a go’ and pupils are clear about what is expected.
3. Appropriate, planned adaptive learning tasks that require learners to think and develop their understanding either individually or collaboratively.

4. Ongoing formative feedback whereby pupils are actively involved in reviewing their learning within an effective plenary/mini plenary. Pupils celebrate and share their achievement and look forward to the next step.

Teachers will have their own styles and approaches, but **every lesson** will be planned with the teaching and learning principles in mind, outlined in the Teaching and Learning Framework. Highly Effective lessons cannot be reduced to a tick list of set activities. However, there are certain features that will ensure students are challenged, engaged and thus able to make excellent progress over time.

Teachers should:

- Plan lessons with the students' prior attainment as a starting point
- Ensure there is a safe learning environment for students.
- Be at the door ready to greet students on their arrival
- Plan a retrieval task based on prior learning to engage the students at the start of the lesson
- Share lesson objectives with the class
- Plan an activity which involves explanation of a key concept, idea or example; this may involve targeted questioning that challenges students' understanding
- Model or scaffold tasks, and where appropriate share the success criteria with students.
- Plan engaging independent activities that are differentiated by ability.
- Balance the amount of teacher talk with independent learning activities for the students.
- Use assessment opportunities to check understanding before moving on to the next stage in learning.

In order to achieve the Principles outlined in the Teaching and Learning Framework, teachers will:

- i. Use student feedback and regular assessment to provide key information to inform future teaching and learning
- ii. Undertake high quality CPD to ensure they are up to date with current best practices and collaborate with each other
- iii. Plan stimulating and inspiring lessons, using planning on the LIFE Portal as a basis, differentiating lesson activities where appropriate to meet student needs
- iv. Model high expectations both in and out of lessons to encourage the pursuit of excellence.
- v. Employ methods of questioning to explore student knowledge and develop intellectual curiosity and understanding
- vi. Provide well planned programmes of study that build on prior skills and knowledge.
- vii. Encourage students to overcome difficulties by becoming resilient learners and provide appropriate levels of challenge and support
- viii. Equip students with regular, clear feedback in all forms to enable them to reflect and improve in both written and practical activities.

Homework

Across the Rural Primary Schools' homework is set frequently, in accordance with the Homework Policy across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Children will be expected to read daily for 20 minutes at home and will be expected to practice their spellings and times tables. EYFS children will be expected to read at home daily and will also be sent home a selection of phonics sounds to work on. Our homework encourages parents and children to work together to share an enjoyment and love of learning both inside and outside of school.

Programmes of Study

The children within the Rural Primary Schools follow a two-year rolling curriculum aimed to be exciting and engaging for the children so to develop their self-esteem and to ensure they are reaching their full potential at all times. The curriculum is split into two cycles, cycle A and cycle B. We agree a long-term plan for EYFS and each key stage. Teachers are aware of which topics are to be taught within each cycle. These cycles are reviewed on an annual basis. Medium term plans will show teachers the objectives that must be met. Short term plans will detail the learning objectives that must be met and outline the input, task and plenary for each lesson. Teachers will assess the children upon these plans and evaluate them at the end of each lesson/week.

In EYFS the curriculum is planned carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum and early learning goals, and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 there is an emphasis on the core and foundation subjects. Foundation subjects are taught separately and one term the child may look at History whereas the following term the child looks at Geography. Children will be taught a range of curriculum subjects over the course of the academic year.

Our Rural Primary classes are taught in mixed year groups after EYFS, so children in Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 are taught within the same classroom. Therefore, our curriculum works on a two year cycle: Year A and Year B. Children will either experience the journey of Year A or Year B but by the end of each Key Stage they will have completed what is required of the National Curriculum.

It is delivered using a variety of approaches and resources depending on the nature of the subject being taught and the needs of the children (for more details please refer to the separate subject policies). We use a cross-curricular creative approach so that pupils are immersed in a topic each term or half term. The engaging curriculum and linked enrichment opportunities mean each child acquires vital cultural capital at each stage of their primary education. Separate curriculum road maps are available for:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- RE
- PE
- Music
- History
- Geography
- Computing

- PSHE and SRE
- MFL (French)
- Art
- Design Technology

Although teaching and learning is still theme-led, each subject's skills progression is carefully planned from the EYFS up to Year 6 and has a skills progression map to show this clearly. This ensures that the children learn the valuable knowledge required for their age. Reading is seen as a high priority in all subjects and is featured in lessons as regularly as possible.

The schools have collaboratively developed clear long, medium and short term plans which ensure that every teacher understands the curriculum intent of what is taught when and why, and that they are empowered to deliver creative and engaging lessons that secure pupil progression throughout the key stages.

The EYFS Curriculum

The Reception classes will work within the seven areas of learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Physical Development and Expressive Arts and Design. During the children's first term in the reception class, their teacher makes a baseline assessment to record the skills of each child on entry to the school. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child.

Learning Environment

A purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards across the Rural Primary Schools.

We will provide:

- A caring, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which all children are helped to reach their full emotional and academic potential
- Organised resources, displays of children's work, and colourful stimuli with enriched language choices around the schools help to provide the optimal learning environment
- A positive caring environment that promotes positive self-esteem and confidence in our children
- Time to work co-operatively with others to encourage positive relationships and team building skills across the school
- Chances for children to recognise that learning can take place anywhere by using a variety of different learning environments, e.g. going on walks around the local area or taking part in forest schools.
- A place where children feel safe and valued therefore they are willing to take on challenges that are presented to them
- Opportunities to celebrate good learning behaviours

Children at the Rural Primary Schools will feel safe and positive in all learning environments which will enable them to explore, investigate and take responsibility

for their learning. A positive and encouraging learning environment will allow staff and children will share a sense of pride through their achievements.

Sharing Good Practice

Sharing good practice is crucial to ensuring that ideas and strategies are communicated and disseminated across the school. The school acknowledges (formally through its CPD programme and informally on a day to day basis) the importance of pooling the wealth of expertise across the school. There is an expectation that good practice will be shared after attendance at a course where strategies and materials can be disseminated amongst colleagues.

Effective practice is shared in a number of ways which includes:

- CPD – the in-house programme
- Department/Staff meetings
- Learning Walks or Lesson Visits
- Professional dialogue
- INSET Days
- Teach Meet events

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning within the Rural Primaries is undertaken by SLT and those with responsibilities for leading a phase, subject or department. Learning Walks, Work Samples and Lesson Visits are conducted by leaders to evaluate the quality of teaching and identify areas for development.

In addition, other contributing factors are considered when monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching across the school. These factors include:

- Learning Conversations
- the progress of the School Improvement Plan;
- external inspection e.g. Local Authority, OfSTED;
- School Improvement Partner support;
- Data (attainment and progress);
- communication with children, parents and the rest of the school community;
- staff professional reviews in line with the Performance Management policy.

Links to Other Policies

- Curriculum Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Assessment Framework
- Teaching and Learning Framework
- Curriculum Framework

KEY DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY:

The Trust	LIFE Education Trust
The Board/Trustees/Trust Board	The Board of Trustees of LIFE Education Trust
School/Trust school	An Academy or school within LIFE Education Trust

Staff

All staff employed by LIFE Education Trust and working with academies, schools or units within LIFE Education Trust

All schools within the LIFE Education Trust are legally defined as academies, regardless of whether the term “school” is used to describe them in the following policy.