



## HAWKESLEY CHURCH PRIMARY ACADEMY

# **Teaching and Learning Policy - 2025 - 2026**

## **Introduction**

HAWKESLEY CHURCH PRIMARY ACADEMY is a school with the highest expectations of its children, staff and parents. Our vision is for all members of our Hawkesley family to be confident, empowered, successful and to live with integrity. This is in order for our children, staff and community to let their light shine (Matthew 5:16) and experience life in all its fullness.

Our staff are committed to providing a high-quality education that fosters the academic, social, and emotional and spiritual development of all our pupils. This policy outlines our core principles and strategies for teaching and learning, ensuring a consistent and effective approach across the school.

## **How children learn**

Children learn by processing information through their working memory and storing it in their long-term memory. Working memory is the temporary holding space where information is actively processed and manipulated. For effective learning, it is crucial to manage the cognitive load on working memory by breaking down information into manageable chunks and using strategies such as repetition and practice. Long-term memory, on the other hand, is where information is stored more permanently.

To facilitate the transfer of knowledge from working memory to long-term memory, we use techniques such as spaced repetition, retrieval practice, and connecting new information to prior knowledge. We enhance pupil learning and retention by understanding and leveraging these cognitive processes.

## **Core principles of learning**

### **Behaviour and Learning Culture**

Our approach to behaviour and learning culture is designed to create a supportive and effective learning environment.

**Emotional Constancy:** Staff maintain a calm and consistent emotional environment to support pupil learning. Our staff have the emotional capacity and stability to be the dependable and predictable adult in the room. Children feel safe and stable in their presence.

**Explain Everything:** We ensure clarity in instructions and explanations to facilitate understanding making sure to explain WHY something is happening, particularly if it is different. For example, talking through visual timetables to help children prepare for the day and adapt to any changes.

**Normalise Error:** Create a culture where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities and advocating a positive attitude to making mistakes as they are a pivotal and natural part of the learning process. Mistakes encourage resilience!

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**Change the Pace:** The tempo of the lesson is carefully selected for appropriate moments and the tempo does not remain the same all day. For example, stillness/happy breathing/prayer has a different tempo to transitions and Do Nows.

**Every Minute Matters:** Maximising learning time by minimising disruptions. Our staff and pupils believe that they are important people with important things to do and their time is precious. Any wasted time is viewed negatively and there is a productive sense of urgency to the way that we move around school and participate in learning.

**Warm/Strict:** We have relationships that balance kindness with firm boundaries and high expectations to maximise potential.

**Strong Voice:** The different style 'teacher voices' which are used in different moments to alter/direct the tone of the lesson. Regardless of the volume, the tone remains firm and helps to maintain control and order.

**Do It Again:** Encouraging pupils to repeat tasks until they achieve mastery. If learning/routines are not done correctly, it is repeated until it is mastered. This reaffirms high expectations and avoids 'good being good enough'.

**Positive Framing:** Framing feedback positively to motivate and encourage pupils. This is a growth mindset approach to understand and redirect children's negative perspectives and/or feelings towards something or someone.

**Precise Praise:** Giving specific and meaningful praise to reinforce desired behaviours. This empowers the receiver and gives passive direction to those who are not yet following instructions.

**Teacher Radar:** Being aware of and responsive to all pupil activities in the classroom. Standing in a space where all pupils can be seen.

**Tight Transitions:** We ensure smooth and efficient transitions between activities in order to make every moment of learning count.

### Teaching Strategies

#### Lesson Structure

Our lesson structure is designed to provide clear, engaging, and effective instruction.

**Explain:** Provide clear and detailed explanations of new concepts.

**Model:** Demonstrate tasks and processes to provide a clear example for pupils.

**Question:** Use various questioning techniques to check understanding and encourage critical thinking.

**Practise:** Provide opportunities for pupils to practise new skills and knowledge.

**Feedback:** Offer constructive feedback to guide pupil improvement.

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**Challenge:** Set high expectations and provide challenging tasks to extend learning.

### Classroom Techniques

Our classroom techniques are designed to maintain engagement and ensure effective learning.

**Entry Routine:** Intentionally shaping how the children enter the room to ensure an efficient and productive start to the lesson, e.g. children always know where to sit and have everything at hand ready to start their 'Do Now'.)

**Threshold:** Warmly greet pupils at the classroom door to set a positive tone for the lesson. Establish a personal connection and reinforce classroom expectations.

**Do Now:** The Do Now is a quick, engaging activity to settle and focus pupils at the start of the lesson. This task reactivates prior learning and is completed quietly and independently. The task is waiting for them at their desks before they enter the classroom.

**Call and Response:** Asking a question that the whole class responds to in unison. Can also be 'I say.. you say ...'

**Vegas:** Using theatre, performance, rhyme or general 'sparkle' as a way to commit learning to memory. This is short, sweet and to the point. Once it's done, it's done.

**Brighten Lines:** Clearly defining the beginning and ending of activities – reference points are distinct and visible. Clear timings help to keep children on task and helps the pace of the lesson.

**Name the Steps:** Break down tasks into clear, manageable steps. Identify what needs to be done and name the steps in order.

**Think Out Loud:** Orally model the thinking processes so that children understand the thinking needed to achieve success with the task.

**Wait Time:** Delaying by a few strategic seconds after asking the children a question before asking them to answer. This will produce more quality answers and pupil engagement.

**Peppering:** A fast-paced, unpredictable review of fundamentals with lots of chances for participation in rapid succession. Asking questions that build on each other at speed to different children so that answers can be built upon.

**Stretch It:** Rewarding right answers with more questions (e.g. asking 'how' or 'why', asking for another way to answer, asking for a better word/evidence).

**Cold Calling:** Routinely making seemingly random choices for who answers a question. The teacher carefully selects a child – children expect it and it is not done to catch anyone out. This increases engagement levels as all children prepare to answer a question.

**Turn & Talk:** Encourage pupils to discuss ideas with a partner to deepen understanding.



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**Everybody Write:** All children jot down thoughts and have time to turn them into phrases/sentences. This enables children to process thoughts into writing and improve the quality of thinking, ideas and discussions.

**Ratio:** Enabling pupils to do as much of the cognitive work as possible (e.g. the thinking, talking, writing, analysing). Pupils are actively involved in learning rather than being passive learners.

**Right is Right:** Insist on accurate and complete answers from pupils. Ensure kind clarity is given as feedback (i.e. not accepting 'kind of' answers)

**Circulate:** Purposefully move around the classroom, being present, to monitor and support pupil learning (e.g. through live marking). Give direct feedback and maintain a positive learning environment.

**Exit Ticket:** An assessment tool used at the end of lessons to check understanding of the learning focus (LF).

This policy outlines the core principles and strategies that underpin teaching and learning at Hawkesley Church Primary Academy. By adhering to these guidelines, we aim to create a positive, engaging, and effective learning environment for all our children.

**Ratified by LAB: May 2025**

**Review Date: June 2026**