



Thameside Primary School: Curriculum Policy

(incl. Teaching & Learning Guidelines)

Approved by Governors: September 2025

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Key Changes:	Inclusion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Classrooms • Transition Week • Oracy & speaking like specialists • Behaviour Curriculum Updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject leader responsibilities • TA responsibilities • Assessment • How we teach Maths & English
Policy reviewed by:	Sophie Greenaway



Section 1: Intent

Intent: What are we trying to achieve with our curriculum?

1. Key definitions

'Curriculum'

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage. Our curriculum starts with the National Curriculum and also includes the range of extracurricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave.

'Progress'

Children at Thameside make progress by:

Knowing more, remembering more, doing more, feeling more.

2. Thameside Motto, Vision, Aims and Values

Our curriculum is underpinned by our school vision, aims and our community values.

Motto

Progressing together – inside & out

Vision

Our vision is to work together to enable our pupils to become confident, resilient and independent young people who are fully prepared for the challenges ahead, both in education and in the community.

Aims

1. To provide a well taught curriculum that meets the educational and pastoral needs of our pupils
2. To enable children to be independent learners and thinkers
3. To foster a sense of belonging to the community so that children can participate with integrity
4. To work in partnership with parents
5. To enable children to be the best they can be

Our Community Values...

Belonging

Resilience

Assurance

Independence and Integrity

No limits



'Brain Power'



Core value	Associated behaviour
Belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will co-operate with others and work as a team • We will respect ourselves, each other, our belongings, the environment and authority • We will take pride in our school, our work through the effort we put in, our uniform and PE kit and our achievements • We will volunteer in and out of school • We will be tolerant of others
Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will keep trying and not give up • We will try to find solutions to problems • We will show determination • We will be able to resolve conflict with our classmates • We will try to help ourselves before we ask an adult
Assurance (confidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have a go at things even if we find them difficult • We will be able to control our emotions and express them effectively • We will communicate through our writing, our speaking and through ICT effectively and responsibly with our friends, teachers, visitors and others that we meet • We will look forward to the next stage of our education • We will participate in all areas of school life
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be curious • We will concentrate • We will try to help ourselves before we ask an adult • We will be productive • We will look after our belongings • We will be able to make decisions
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be honest and tell the truth • We will do the right thing – even when it is hard • We will make good choices • We will earn people's trust • We will know right from wrong • We will know when it is right to tell an adult
No limits (aspiration and ambition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will keep improving • We will enjoy our learning • We will use our imagination • We will know what we can achieve • We will have ambition and aspiration • We will be ready for the next stage of our education • We will be the best we can be

Please note the red behaviours are also the characteristics of good learning (Shirley Clarke)

3. Why we teach the way we do

We recognise that children learn best when learning is active, purposeful, and inclusive. Our curriculum promotes equity by:

- removing unnecessary barriers (e.g., excessive writing);
- building conceptual understanding through practical tasks;
- prioritising communication, collaboration, and reasoning.

This is not a lowering of expectations but a lifting of access. All children are expected to engage with core subject knowledge; how they demonstrate this may differ depending on individual need.



4. Curriculum Statement of Intent

Through the Thameside Primary curriculum, we intend that all children will:

- make significant progress during their time at Thameside Primary School;
- experience a broad and balanced education that is tailored to the context, needs and values of our school ;
- cover less content in subject areas, like History, but go into far greater depth into the areas of the curriculum that we have chosen to cover/teach in each year group ;
- develop and embed in their memories the knowledge, skills, understanding and vocabulary that will enrich their experience in all subject areas and empower them to access the next stage of their education ;
- value learning for its own sake and develop a range of skills, aptitudes and personal qualities to take into life. These will include non-cognitive skills (such as resilience, working with others, acceptance of feedback and kindness), metacognitive skills (such as planning, monitoring and evaluation) and study skills (such as retrieval practice, spaced practice and dual coding);
- know how to make the community a better place and contribute positively to society .

5. Our curriculum journey

Ensuring that children are successful academically is a crucial part of education but of paramount importance is that they also learn how to live successful and happy lives where they are informed, courageous advocates of the things that matter to them. In a nutshell, we want to ensure that our curriculum is as rich in teaching and instilling values as it is in knowledge.

With the skills, experience and passion in our staff team, we have been continually developing our foundation subject curriculum on the principles above. Our curriculum is constantly developing - it is never static. The more we teach our curriculum, the more we understand it and this leads to adaptations and changes that build stronger connections.

These five key areas are 'plaited' into our knowledge based curriculum:

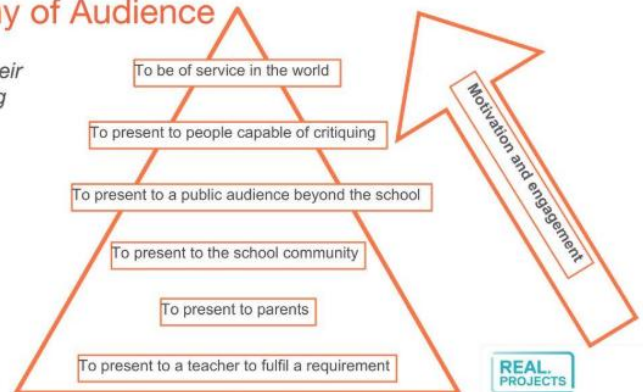
- **Coherence** – is there a logical arc to the curriculum?
- **Compassion** – is the curriculum developing care and compassion in young people and is it equally showing care and compassion to them in its application?
- **Creativity** – is there enough scope for young people to apply their knowledge in unfamiliar contexts, showing fluency?
- **Credibility** - is the curriculum accountable to knowledge and ensuring that knowledge is secure?
- **Community** – what expertise within the local community is being accessed and how is the local area being utilised to support learning? How is the curriculum reaching out to the community?

We aim to motivate and engage our pupils through our use of audiences e.g. presenting structures built in DT to a real architect or engineer, for example.

Examples of our curriculum planning are available on our school website.

Hierarchy of Audience

Ron Berger
Leaders of their Own Learning





6. Roles and Responsibilities

Learning and teaching is a shared responsibility and all members of the school community have an important part to play.

All members of the school community should work towards the school's aims by:

- esteeming children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs;
- fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
- providing a well-ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations;
- offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures;
- encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviours and work;
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- all required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met;
- the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board;
- where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum;
- they manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate;
- the school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements;
- the governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum;
- the governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions;
- proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND.

Subject leaders will:

Subject leaders play a vital role in driving the intent, implementation, and impact of their subjects. At Thameside, subject leaders are expected to:

- champion their subject across the school, modelling high expectations, subject passion, and inclusive approaches that reflect Thameside's ethos;
- ensure planning aligns with the whole-school curriculum aims, including scaffolding for SEND pupils and those in the lowest 20%, and providing opportunities for oracy and verbal reasoning;
- monitor the quality of teaching and learning through pupil voice, work sampling, and lesson visits with a focus on engagement, inclusivity, and progression—not formal lesson grading;
- support teachers with curriculum implementation, including modelling lessons, co-planning, and sharing high-quality resources that promote practical, activity-based learning;
- review and adapt assessment strategies in line with school expectations (e.g., use of exit tickets, verbal feedback, and meaningful summative tasks) to ensure they are manageable and purposeful;
- lead subject review weeks, using allocated time to evaluate subject effectiveness, analyse outcomes, and refine future planning;
- promote disciplinary learning, ensuring children experience the habits and thinking of subject specialists (e.g., scientists, geographers, artists);



- contribute to whole-school CPD and staff development, sharing subject updates, modelling effective practice, and supporting new staff;
- ensure subject content is relevant and sequenced, allowing for progression over time while meeting national curriculum expectations and the needs of Thameside's learners;
- work collaboratively with other leaders, including the curriculum team, SENDCOs and EAL coordinator, to make sure all pupils can access and succeed in their subject.

Teachers will:

- deliver a stimulating, inclusive and ambitious curriculum that challenges all pupils and supports them to achieve their full potential;
- plan with individual needs in mind, adapting teaching according to pupils' abilities, aptitudes, and prior knowledge;
- ensure that learning is progressive, sequenced and connected, enabling pupils to build and deepen understanding over time;
- ensure that all children are able to make progress in lessons through effective scaffolding and consistent implementation of the school's [Behaviour Curriculum](#);
- model professionalism in all aspects of their work, including punctuality, preparation, organisation and conduct;
- engage in ongoing professional development to remain informed of research and evolving best practices in education;
- communicate clearly with pupils, parents and colleagues, sharing information about learning, progress and school procedures;
- demonstrate a growth mindset, embracing opportunities for reflection and the continuous development of their own expertise;
- foster strong links with the local community to help pupils understand the world around them and prepare for life beyond school;
- work in collaborative partnership with colleagues and wider stakeholders, contributing to a shared philosophy and consistent, high-quality practice across the school.

Teaching Assistants play a vital role in supporting high-quality teaching and learning at Thameside. They:

- support learning and children's progress by working closely with teachers to reinforce key concepts, facilitate group work, and guide individual learners;
- respond to pupils' needs in the moment by adapting support based on observation and feedback. This includes:
 - providing verbal prompts or visual aids to help children access tasks;
 - using sentence stems or vocabulary mats to support talk and writing;
 - modelling and rephrasing questions during independent work to clarify understanding.
- implement scaffolding strategies identified in planning and during lessons, particularly for pupils in the lowest 20% and those with SEND. For example:
 - pre-teaching vocabulary or key concepts;
 - supporting retrieval practice through low-stakes quizzing;
 - using manipulatives in maths to support conceptual understanding.
- support assessments of children's understanding through observation, questioning, and feedback to teachers, helping to inform responsive teaching;



- encourage and develop children's independence by gradually reducing support over time and encouraging self-checking, peer support, and perseverance (rather than an over-emphasis on task completion);
- foster a calm, purposeful classroom environment, reinforcing behavioural expectations and routines in line with the Behaviour Curriculum;
- engage in professional development to build expertise in scaffolding, SEND, and subject knowledge relevant to the curriculum;
- engage in high-quality interactions in provision (particularly in EYFS and Year 1) by:
 - observing, joining, and extending play to develop thinking and language;
 - modelling vocabulary and questioning to deepen understanding and spark curiosity;
 - knowing when to step back to allow children to take risks, problem-solve, and develop independence.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support their child's learning by:

- ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health;
- ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing necessary equipment;
- providing support for the therapeutic approach to behaviour within the school and for the teacher's role;
- supporting the work of educational targets and becoming actively involved in the implementation of any support programme;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's wellbeing, progress and behaviour;
- supporting the school's [Homework Guidelines](#) and give due importance to any home or ownwork projects;
- ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school;
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;
- attending class assemblies and year group performances;
- both listening to their child read at home and reading regularly to them.

Pupils are encouraged to support the school's aims by:

- attending school in good health, maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- attending school regularly and punctually;
- being organised and ready for learning e.g. bringing necessary equipment such as pencil cases or PE kit;
- showing a growth mind-set and positive attitude towards learning;
- showing the school values at all times;
- respecting all staff, visitors and volunteers at Thameside;
- completing home and ownwork on time;
- looking after our school site and classrooms;
- taking the opportunity to read for pleasure in school and at home;
- relishing opportunities to do more for and in our school community;
- taking increased responsibility for their own learning.



The governing board will ensure that:

- a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets;
- enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements;
- proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND);
- the school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements;
- it participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum;
- it fulfils its role in processes to dis-apply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals.

The community is invited to support the school by:

- contributing to activities, such as assemblies, specialist outings, clubs, etc;
- presenting themselves as positive role models to be emulated;
- organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills;
- supporting school events;
- being the audience for end of unit outcomes;
- voluntarily helping in the classroom.

7. Workload

Good Work Health

Thameside Primary places great importance on staff wellbeing and good work health. We understand that sustainable teaching comes from both professional collaboration and personal self-care. To promote this:

- time is protected for curriculum planning and reflection through INSET days, Subject Review Weeks, and year group planning meetings;
- conference marking and structured exit tickets reduce marking workload while ensuring purposeful formative assessment;
- we encourage autonomy, collaborative working, and the sharing of expertise across staff teams.

Transition Week

- To support staff wellbeing and ensure purposeful starts to the academic year, we allocate a Transition Week in the final week of the summer term. This week allows all staff to meet their new classes, establish routines, and prepare classroom environments. It also reduces summer workload and eases anxiety for both staff and pupils.



Part 2: Implementation

Implementation: how do we deliver our curriculum?

This part of the Curriculum Policy provides Teaching and Learning Guidance for Thameside teaching staff; it promotes best practices, including key strategies and knowledge, to establish consistency in Teaching and Learning across the whole school.

The Structure of the Foundation Stage:

The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure progression and continuity of skills in seven interconnected areas of learning and development, or early learning goals (ELG).

Three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively in order to be ready for school:

1. Communication and language (CL)
2. Physical development (PE)
3. Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)

There are also **four specific areas** through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

1. Literacy (reading and writing)
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world (UW) – people and the community, the world around us, technology
4. Expressive arts and design (EAD)

See our [EYFS Policy](#) for more information on our early years curriculum

Continuous Provision in Year 1:

At Thameside we passionately believe that young children learn best through play and exploration. Through our approach to continuous provision, these play-based experiences enable the children to consolidate their skills, knowledge and understanding and enable them to become independent and resilient learners. Throughout their learning environment, busy children are actively engaged in a wide range of activities that they themselves have chosen. Continuous provision supports and encourages our children to have a lifelong love of learning.

Key features of our continuous provision:

- children engaged and enthusiastic about learning;
- staff who plan for rich learning opportunities in both the indoor and outdoor provision;
- skilled adults who enable maximum progress through their engagements with the children, asking open-ended questions and modelling vocabulary;
- an outdoor area that supports physical development with resources and challenges being on a much larger scale including a mud kitchen and mud pit, sand pit, water play and balance course;
- engaging learning stations enhanced with books and vocabulary;
- resources boxed up and clearly labelled for children to independently select;
- provision is enhanced weekly in response to assessment;
- short inputs;
- effective use of tutor tables supports targeted instruction while allowing time for independent application;
- individualised feedback at tutor table and in provision;
- long periods of 'Challenge Time' for children to become immersed in learning;
- children who are busy and happy.



How the school intervenes swiftly to help those having difficulty to make sure they keep up, and to stretch and deepen the learning of the 'rapid-graspers':

- adults will assess at the tutor table, here they can stretch the learning or allow pupils to return several times to practise and revisit skills;
- adults to observe children and identify gaps in learning;
- adults to carry out interventions throughout the day;
- adults to engage with children, including asking the right questions, to enable individual progress;
- 1:1 tutoring and 1:1 reading interventions.

What opportunities are there for intelligent practice of knowledge and skills?

- long periods of challenge time allow children to practise knowledge and skills;
- enhancements and interactive displays in the environment to prompt children;
- pictures of continuous provision regularly shared on social media so parents can have discussions with their children at home.

Structure of the National Curriculum:

The national curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said, and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

The national curriculum **is just one element in the education of every child**. There is time and space in the school day and in each week, term and year to range beyond the national curriculum specifications. The national curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum.

Core Subjects

- English
- Mathematics
- Science

Foundation Subjects

- Art and Design
- Computing
- Design and Technology
- Geography
- History
- Modern Foreign Language (KS2)
- Music
- Physical Education, including swimming
- Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education (PSCHE)
- Religious Education (This is a statutory requirement although parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE)
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE; compulsory since September 2020)

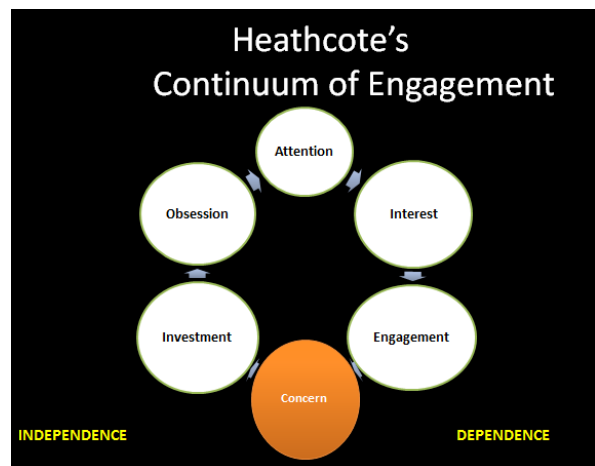
As set out in the DfE's Teachers' Standards, Thameside teachers are required to deliver curriculum to a high standard through quality first teaching in order to commit learning to the long-term memory.

Teachers at Thameside:

Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

Key strategies & knowledge

- In all subject areas, the curriculum clearly sequences and builds towards clear end-points, and should also address typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills whilst remaining as broad as possible.
- Teachers at Thameside have ambitious and high expectations for all, using techniques such as:
 - cold calling & no opt out** (encourage children to ask for more information, more time or to rephrase the question);
 - right is right** (be sure that the answer does relate to the original question that was asked, using the correct technical language);
 - probing questions** (reward right answers with follow-up questions that extend knowledge and test for reliability e.g. ask for another way or for evidence);
 - say it better** (set an expectation for full sentences, grammatically correct answers, audible answers);
 - no apologies** (sets the expectation that everything taught has intrinsic value and avoid blaming 'they' for why something is on the curriculum).
- Teachers will inspire and motivate children through:
 - the use of high-quality texts and books in all subjects;
 - weaving stories, places, people, voices and different perspectives into foundation subject learning through drama and the sentence starter: 'let's say...';
 - teaching of tier 2 and 3 words;
 - planning for children to cross the 'bridge of concern', so that they are fully invested in their learning because of the potential to make something better for someone else. Teachers ensure small steps are planned to take the children over this bridge.



Teachers create and maintain a calm, purposeful learning environment that supports focus, wellbeing, and positive behaviour

Key strategies & knowledge

Teachers will ensure that pupils are not cognitively overloaded and can focus effectively on their learning by consistently applying the strategies outlined in our Inclusive Classroom Sway and using the checklist to maintain a clear, inclusive and supportive classroom environment.

Checklist: common, whole school organisation

Sway: Click [here](#)



Evidence suggests that the best way to support children in the classroom is to structure the environment and adapt teaching practices in order to reduce the demands placed on working memory. A low arousal environment can significantly enhance concentration, engagement, and overall learning outcomes. Through our inclusive classroom designs at Thameside, we are striving to create calm learning spaces with minimal visual distractions.

Effectively embed Oracy

Key strategies & knowledge

We acknowledge that oracy is not only a learning tool but also an essential life skill. Therefore, we:

- explicitly teach and model effective speaking and listening behaviours;
- introduce and embed the use of talk roles and discussion guidelines across the curriculum;
- provide structured oracy opportunities, including partner talk, group discussion, and formal presentations;
- scaffold pupil talk using sentence stems, visual prompts, and vocabulary lists;
- actively listen to pupils and value all contributions, encouraging quieter voices;
- use formative oracy assessments and feedback to support pupil progress.



Discussion Roles

Discussion roles help students to manage talk and encourage the development of certain speaking and listening skills.



Instigator

Starts the discussion or opens up a new topic for discussion

Will say:

I would like to start by saying ...
I think we should consider ...
We haven't yet talked about ...
Let's also think about ...

Prober

Digs deeper into the argument, asks for evidence or justification of ideas

Will say:

What do you think would be the effect of ...?
Why do you think ...?
Can you provide an example to support what you are saying?

Challenger

Gives reasons to disagree or presents an alternative argument

Will say:

I disagree with you because ...
You mentioned X but what about ...
To challenge you X, I think ...
I understand your point of view, but have you thought about ...?

Clarifier

Simplifies and makes things clearer by asking questions

Will say:

What do you mean when you say ...?
Can you explain a bit more about ...?
Does that mean ...?
Please can you clarify what you meant by ...?

Summariser

Identifies the main ideas from the discussion. This might be during the discussion, to help move the conversation forward, or at the end of the discussion.

Will say:

Overall, the main points were ...
The main ideas raised today were ...
Our discussion focused on ...
The three main things we talked about were ...

Builder

Develops, adds to or runs with an idea

Will say:

I agree, and would like to add...
Building on that idea, I think ...
Linking to what X said, I think...

Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

Key strategies & knowledge

'Happiness fuels success, not the other way around. When we're positive, our brains are more motivated, engaged, energetic, resilient, and productive.'

(Psychological Bulletin, 2007)



1. Thameside Primary teachers know that happy children learn better.

As an InsideOut school, teachers at Thameside know that there are 5 evidence-based actions that, if practised regularly, can improve personal wellbeing. InsideOut have linked each of these actions to a specific 'key'. We have adopted the '5 Keys of Happiness' to help us create our very own bespoke PSHE curriculum to help us ensure that these actions are fully embedded into our whole school curriculum.

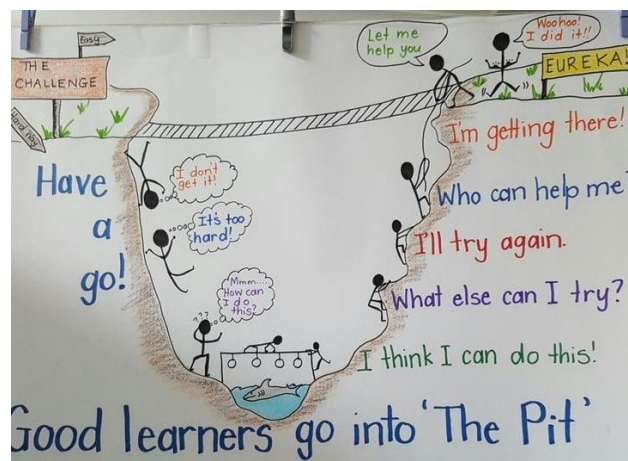
Each half term we have a 'focus key' from the InsideOut toolkit:

- Term 1 is a reminder of all the keys
- Term 2 Look Inside
- Term 3 Move Outside
- Term 4 Be Curious
- Term 5 Be Kind
- Term 6 Share More

2. Children are supported to develop a growth mind-set.

Teachers understand that the brain can be developed like a muscle through:

- taking on challenges;
- learning from mistakes;
- accepting feedback and criticism;
- practising and applying strategies;
- perseverance and focus;
- asking questions;
- taking risks.



3. Teacher use praise language that focuses on achievement and effort.
4. All adults should treat children equitably, with kindness and respect.
5. Teachers support children to develop learning powers (metacognition) so that they:
 - concentrate ;
 - don't give up (children are encouraged to say "I can't do it ... yet");
 - cooperate;
 - are curious;



- have a go;
- use their imagination;
- keep improving;
- enjoy learning.

6. Staff are aware that children learn from each other in a number of ways:

- peer assessment;
- Buddy system (FS & Y5; Y1 & Y6);
- World Friendship Ambassadors & Active Leaders on the playground;
- talk partners;
- paired work;
- coach approach
 - work on the problem for 5 minutes in silence;
 - coachee talks for 3 minutes about what they have done;
 - coach responds for 2 minutes, with further questions and clarifications.

Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

Key strategies & knowledge

1. All subjects have a place on our timetables or are allocated the cumulative amount of time required to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.
2. CPD opportunities for teaching staff are embedded across the year, with regular training in core subjects and strategic development of foundation subjects through the work of our SDP Focus Groups.
3. Teachers at Thameside are timetabled to teach either Maths or English, rather than both, to reduce cognitive load and planning pressure. This approach enables deeper subject expertise, more targeted CPD, and higher-quality teaching and learning for pupils.
4. Subject leaders produce succinct documentation outlining the intent, implementation and impact of their subject areas 'On A4' - ensuring consistency in curriculum design and delivery across the school (see our online Staff Handbook for the complete 'On A4' collection).

Core subjects in brief:

Reading: we use the Read, Write, Inc phonics programme, reading target cards when children are reading to learn and then children move to using Accelerated Reader. The school has developed its own approach to 'Learning to Comprehend' using Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Reading' as our starting place. Thameside's [Reading Policy and Guidelines](#) is available on the school website and is given to all staff at the beginning of the academic year. Staff are also given their 'Learning to Comprehend: Staff Guide', which they are expected to follow when they teach and plan whole class reading lessons.

Writing: we use The Literacy Tree's book-based [Literary Curriculum](#) for our English lessons.

Maths: we use the teaching for Maths Mastery approach and use the NCTEM and White Rose Maths Hub documents to inform our bespoke planning.

Science: we aim to make science lessons practical, creative and challenging whilst encouraging pupils to use higher order thinking skills.

Subject specific guidance:

Religious Education: The school has an [RE policy](#) and scheme, both of which are available for reference. Thameside Primary School is a non-denominational school and provides Religious Education, in conjunction with the locally agreed syllabus. Parents and staff have the right to withdraw their children from this subject.

Collective Worship: This is provided on a daily basis and is of a broadly Christian nature. See Thameside's [Collective Worship Guidelines](#) for more information.



Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships Education: The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

Science curriculum: The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals.

Please note: Parents may withdraw their children from Sex Education (content which goes beyond that taught in science lessons). [Relationships & Sex Education \(RSE\) Guidelines](#) are available on the school website.

Plan and teach well-structured lessons

Key strategies & knowledge

Curriculum planning

Subject curriculum planning provides a clear map of the knowledge to be taught, while allowing flexibility for teachers to adapt lessons to the specific needs of their classes. The school recognises that different types of knowledge are taught through the curriculum—see the table below for further detail.

Term	Definition	AKA
Subject specific content knowledge and conceptual understanding	The stuff you want students to know, understand and do in your subject if you have successfully taught them a rich, challenging curriculum. This “stuff” is central to being able to think mathematically, or scientifically, or historically, or to communicate clearly.	Substantive knowledge Declarative knowledge
The subject specific pursuit of truth	A curricular concept for what pupils learn about how that knowledge was established, its degree of certainty & how it continues to be revised by scholars, artists or professional practice. It is that part of the subject where pupils understand each discipline as a tradition of enquiry with its own distinctive pursuit of truth.	Disciplinary knowledge
Subject specific skills/strategies	The skills/strategies specific to your subject which can either help students develop subject knowledge or apply subject knowledge to solve problems.	Procedural
Knowledge of Metacognitive strategies	‘to know when and which one’ is knowledge about when to use a procedure, skill, or strategy and when not to use it; why a procedure works and under what conditions; and why one procedure is better than another.	Conditional knowledge
Core and hinterland knowledge	The core knowledge you want pupils to remember is supported by an equally important hinterland, the little examples, the stories, the illustrations, the richness, the dwelling on this but not that, and the times when you as a teacher go off-piste with your passion.	N/A
Key concept	An important concept which allows students to understand what comes next in a subject.	Threshold concept

- The curriculum must be taught in a coherent and step-by-step sequence that allows for the incremental development of knowledge with in each subject/topic.
- When possible, each unit of learning should build upon the previous unit.
- Broad and deep factual knowledge is usually the prerequisite for skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, evaluation and analysis.



- Learning and performance should not be confused. Curriculum design should support real learning which requires durable changes to long-term memory.
- New tier two and tier three vocabulary should be incorporated into curriculum planning, including opportunities to revisit vocabulary.
- Aim for consistency – not just in what is taught but in language of learning and language for learning.
- The curriculum should be ambitious for all.
- The curriculum is clearly sequenced and builds towards clear end-points or outcomes.
- Planning should also address typical gaps in pupils’ knowledge and skills whilst remaining as broad as possible.

Effective Learning

Learning opportunities should always be engaging to enable all groups of pupils to make at least good progress. They should be designed to enable all groups of pupils to gain skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate across the curriculum.

Learning opportunities should incorporate a range of strategies in order to engage pupils in learning. These could be:


- the use of a high-quality text, book or story e.g. “Let’s say...”;
- using drama;
- taking children over the ‘bridge of concern’ in lessons;
- work planned from children’s own interests;
- working with a range of adults either 1:1 in a group or as a whole class;
- investigations;
- problem solving activities;
- research;
- whole class work;
- collaborative work with a group or with a partner;
- independent work;
- using ICT;
- outdoor learning across EYFS, KS1 & KS2, including field trips;
- visitors;
- theatre groups;
- self-evaluation and improvement;
- presenting work to others, including experts from the community;
- children as coaches and/or experts.

Children need to be active participants in their own learning, able to review their own learning, identifying how to improve and how to overcome challenges in their learning.

First quality teaching

Learning happens when pupils connect new knowledge to what they already know. To achieve this, teaching must involve:

- **Challenge** so that pupils have high expectations of what they can achieve;
- **Explanation** so that they acquire new knowledge;
- **Modelling and thinking aloud (metacognitive talk)** so that pupils learn through observation and that the narration of teacher decisions and choices helps pupils internalise and build their schemata;
- **Scaffolding** so that pupils are supported to reach ambitious goals and that, when ready, the supports are withdrawn;
- **Questioning** so that pupils are made to think hard with breadth, depth and accuracy;
- **Feedback** so that pupils further develop their knowledge;
- Purposeful **practice** so that pupils think deeply and eventually achieve fluency (see key principles below);
- Positive and effective **classroom climates and relationships**. A structured and safe classroom environment where relationships are valued and built on mutual respect;
- Pupils are taught how to **store and retrieve** knowledge using learning strategies such as retrieval practice and spaced practice;
- Pupils are taught how to develop **metacognitive** strategies.



Tom Sherrington

Good techniques involve all students checking their knowledge.

Key Principles
With retrieval practice try to...

- 1 Involve everyone in the process.
- 2 Make checking accurate and easy.
- 3 Specify the knowledge.
- 4 Keep it generative.
- 5 Vary the diet and mix it up.
- 6 Make it time efficient.
- 7 Make it workload efficient.

Encourage children to think, talk and behave like subject specialists



Key strategies & knowledge

Teaching and Learning in Foundation Subjects

At Thameside, we believe in purposeful pedagogy that meets the needs of all learners. In our foundation subjects, written outcomes are not the primary means of demonstrating learning. Instead, we:

- prioritise verbal reasoning, practical exploration, and active participation;
- develop pupils' disciplinary understanding by encouraging them to think and behave like subject specialists;
- reduce unnecessary barriers such as excessive writing, particularly for pupils in the lowest 20% or with SEND;
- maximise pupil engagement through hands-on, collaborative tasks that build vocabulary and deepen understanding;
- support future written outcomes through a firm foundation of spoken language, conceptual clarity, and visual or physical models.

This approach ensures that every child can access the curriculum and demonstrate their understanding, irrespective of literacy barriers.

	Talking like a Musician Sentence Stems	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like / dislike..., because... • I think this music is like... • The music made me feel... 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my opinion, this piece is... because... • I know that... because I have listened carefully to the... • I believe there is a strong emphasis on... • I think this music has been developed with... in mind. • <i>How does this technique make you feel?</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe this musical technique is important, because... • The musicality of this ensures that the listener... • The most surprising thing about the music was... • The planning of this musical piece has meant that... • The musicians... and... are similar, because... • The questions I have after listening to this piece are... • <i>How has this music influenced the modern world?</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think the combination of media means that... • This piece made me ask the following questions... • The combination of music has concluded that... • The music within this piece has enhanced the emotion, because... • Using the technique of... ensured that the piece was... • Through working in this way, I have found that... • This articulation makes music more interesting by... • This music has influenced me, by... • This style is classically..., as you can see from the... • <i>Why is it important to understand traditional/modern concepts through time?</i> 	



Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

Key strategies & knowledge

Inclusion: Statement of Intent

- We endeavour to achieve maximum inclusion of all children (including vulnerable learners) whilst meeting their individual needs.
- Teachers will plan lessons with scaffolded activities so that pupils with SEND and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.
- Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:
 - novice learners – with the understanding that most children are novice;
 - expert learners;
 - pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds;
 - pupils with SEND;
 - pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).
- Special Educational Need might be an explanation for delayed or slower progress but is not an excuse, and we make every effort to narrow the gap in attainment between vulnerable groups of learners and others.
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not considered a Special Education Need. Variation in work and individual learning opportunities are provided for children who are learning EAL as part of our provision for vulnerable learners. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.
- We focus on individual progress as the main indicator of success.
- We strive to make a clear distinction between “underachievement” and special educational needs:
 - some pupils in our school may be underachieving but will not necessarily have a special educational need. It is our responsibility to identify this quickly and ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place to help these pupils catch up;
 - other pupils will genuinely have special educational needs and it is our responsibility to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have the maximum opportunity to attain and achieve in line with their peers. The accurate early assessment of need and carefully planned programmes, which address the root causes of any learning difficulty, are essential ingredients of success for these pupils.

EAL (English as an additional language)

Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home languages of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued in the curriculum. The curriculum supports EAL children through opportunities for talking, listening and drama in a range of purposeful contexts.

Vulnerable Children

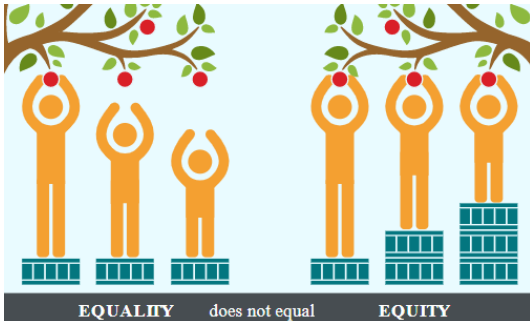
We recognise that some children may face barriers to achieving their full potential due to circumstances at home or previous adverse childhood experiences. Our staff are mindful of how such factors can influence a child’s social, emotional, and academic development. We take a holistic approach to each pupil, considering their wellbeing, behaviour, and self-image alongside their learning. The curriculum is designed to offer enriching experiences that build essential skills, foster independence, and promote self-esteem. Additionally, our Family Hub provides targeted support by working closely with families to help remove barriers to engagement and progress.

Early reading and writing

At Thameside, we do not assume that difficulties with reading automatically indicate a special educational need. Many pupils may thrive when tasks are carefully broken down into manageable steps and revisited regularly to secure understanding. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their planning to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to succeed. Key questions to consider include:

- *have I built in sufficient opportunities for each child to practise essential reading and writing skills, such as recognising letters, blending sounds, or sentence construction?*
- *are pupils practising the right things in a focused and purposeful way?*

Equality of Opportunity



The school actively promotes the equal opportunity and the understanding of, and respect for the rights of others.

In keeping with Thameside’s ‘Equality Scheme & Accessibility Plan’, we are an inclusive setting who knows that promoting equality of opportunity does not mean all children should be treated the same i.e. we focus on what children **need** to succeed and **not** what they **want**.

Equality is treating everybody the same.
Equity is giving everyone what they **need** to achieve success.

Therefore, some children require a **varied approach** to how they are taught.

Scaffolding for equity (how we plan to give everyone what they need to achieve success):

- teachers plan for and deliver structured scaffolding for pupils in the lowest 20% and those with SEND, i.e. we prepare for the top and support our pupils to get there through effective scaffolding, rather than decide in advance which pupils will perform which tasks;
- tasks are adapted and supported through visuals, sentence stems, guided talk, or adult modelling;
- classrooms maintain a culture of high expectation with appropriate support to enable success;
- high quality talk, questioning, checking for understanding, modelling, explaining.

Group dynamics

A dynamic is the interactions of people when they are grouped with others either by choice or circumstance.

There are many group dynamics that operate across Thameside Primary – for example, the classes children are taught in – and at times, differentiating the group dynamic may be the only option to:

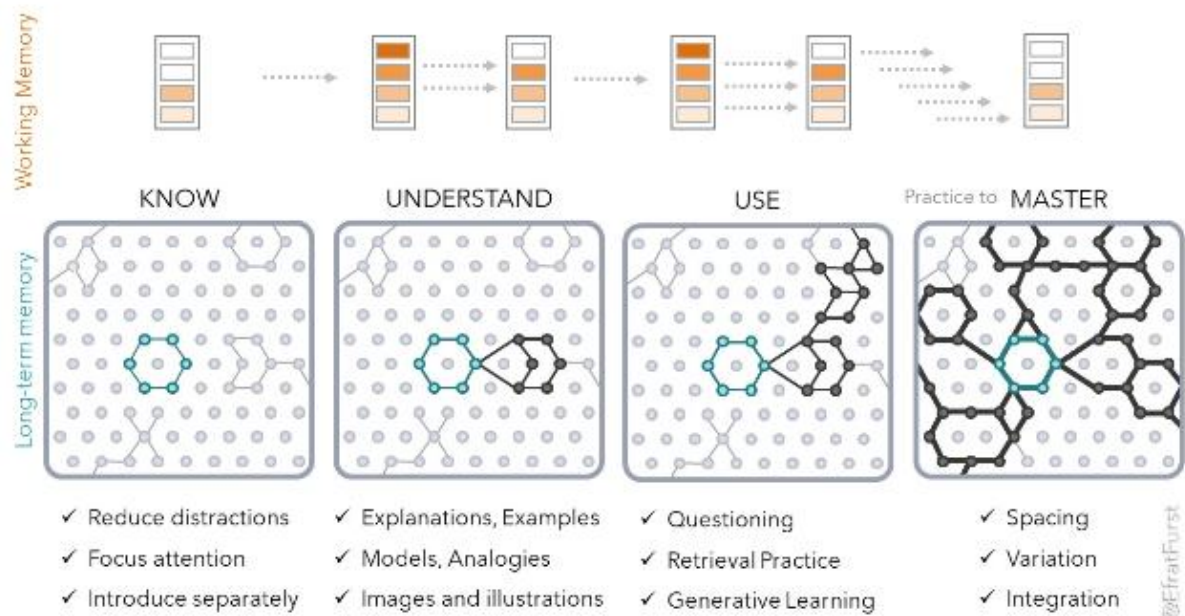
- ensure the physical safety, wellbeing or opportunities of the child;
- ensure the physical safety and wellbeing or opportunities of other children, staff or other elements of the class dynamic.

Therefore, where we are unable to prevent unacceptable, difficult or dangerous behaviour, the only option is to proactively use differentiated experiences, environments and people to create a protective consequence.

If we need to change the dynamics of a classroom, we will:

<p>Stage 1 Assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of pro-social learners • The number of children with difficult disruptive behaviours • The number of children with dangerous behaviours
<p>Stage 2 Assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available staff • Available locations • Necessary staff ratios • Permissible differentiation
<p>Stage 3 Agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New groupings • Revised ratios • Targeted staffing • Differentiated activity and access

Reducing distractions and focusing attention for **all** children is key to the first stage of committing knowledge to the long-term memory and enabling children to know more.



Small gardens at Thameside

There are times that some children find the classroom overwhelming and **need** access to a different working space. These children may internalise or externalise their behaviour.

At Thameside, we have planned and controlled limited experiences for these children in ‘small gardens’.

‘Small gardens’ are working spaces for children that are:

- calm and soothing;
- logical;
- safe and secure;
- proactive.

Children go to ‘small gardens’ to complete their work in an environment that does not overwhelm them.

Children are not taken to ‘small gardens’ for doing something ‘wrong’ – this time out of class to work in a different environment is always predetermined, typically following an Anxiety Analysis (see Behaviour toolkit for staff on common drive) or is provision identified in a child’s Therapeutic Plan.

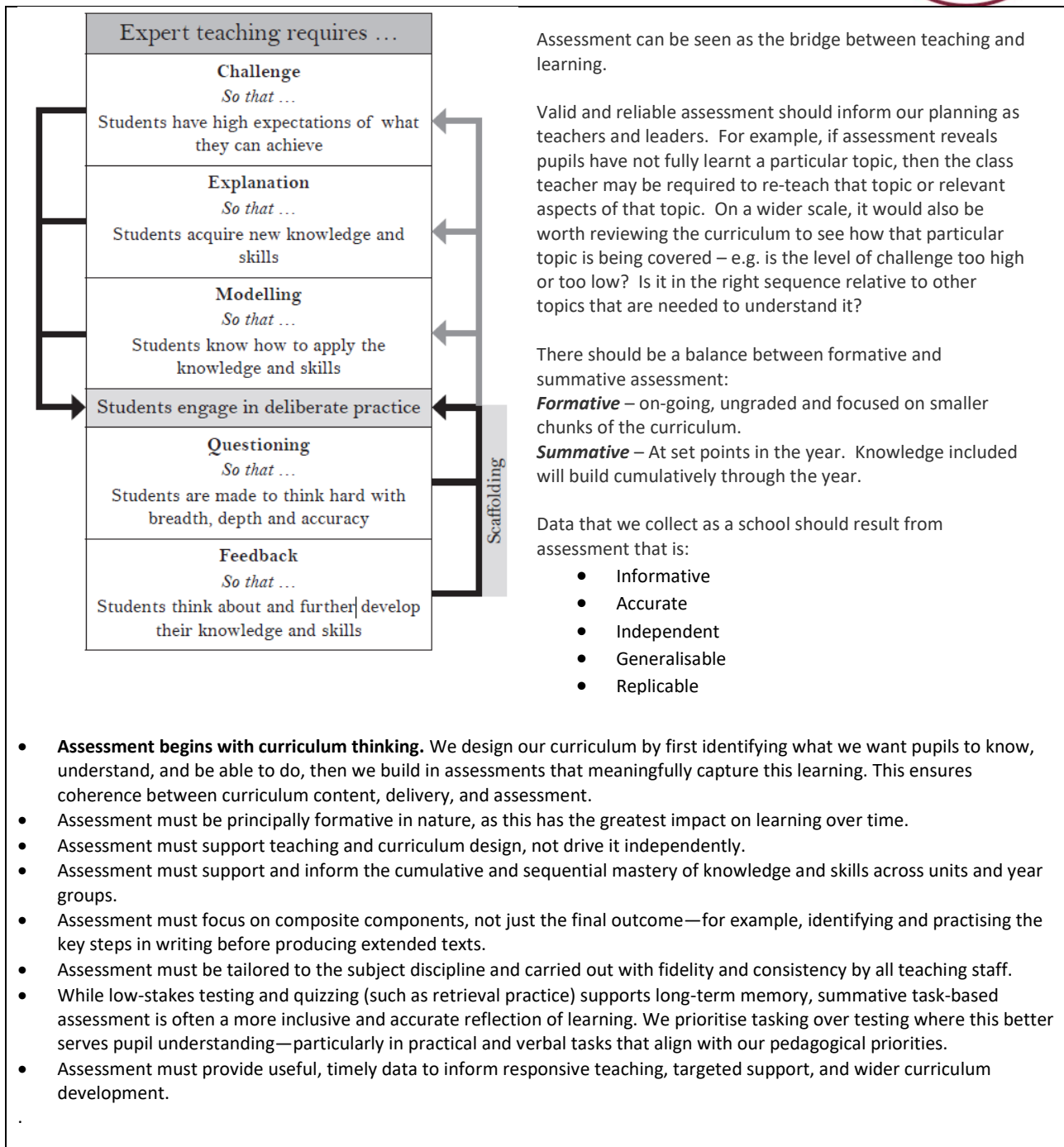
For more information on our therapeutic approach, see the [Thameside Relationships & Behaviour Policy](#).

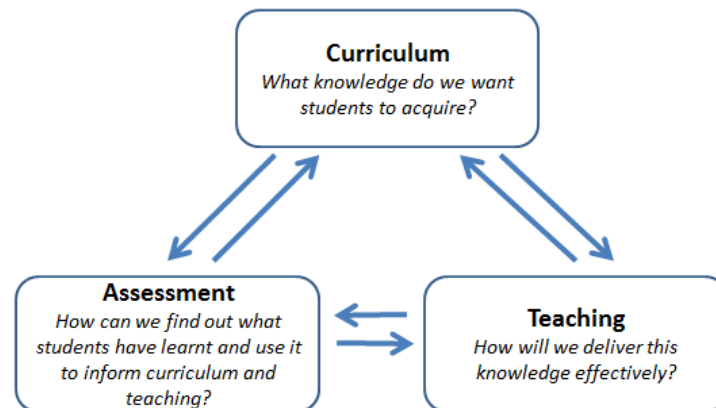
Make accurate and productive use of assessment

Key strategies & knowledge

The role of assessment in effective teaching & learning

*“It is only through assessment that we can find out whether what has happened in the classroom has produced the learning we intended.” — Dylan Wiliam, **Embedded Formative Assessment (2011)***





Curriculum, teaching and assessment are inextricably linked. When all three are aligned and of the highest quality, they should facilitate effective learning for all pupils, irrespective of their starting points. In turn, this should translate into all students making good progress and achieving strong academic outcomes. This is important, because it gives them the best possible life chances.

Feedback and marking in Core and Foundation Subjects

- In core subjects, we continue to implement conference marking as a formative approach, giving real-time feedback and reducing post-lesson marking workload.
- In foundation subjects, we use structured exit tickets to assess understanding and vocabulary acquisition. These quick, formative tools inform next steps.
- Summative tasks at the end of each unit provide a clear overview of cumulative knowledge, which may include verbal presentations, practical tasks, quizzes, or structured group discussions.

See [Thameside Marking & Feedback Guidelines](#) for more information.

Manage and teach behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

Key strategies & knowledge

Positive Relationships

Pupils learn best when they are encouraged to form *positive relationships* with their teacher, peers, and other members of the school community. As Tom Sherrington (Teaching Walkthrus) notes:

“Most importantly, relationships support the needs and rights of everyone in a classroom to feel safe, respected and valued; to feel they belong.”

At Thameside, positive relationships are actively nurtured through our [Behaviour Curriculum](#), which explicitly teaches children the expected behaviours, emotional regulation strategies, and social skills required to thrive in school and beyond. These expectations are revisited and reinforced daily, and underpin our whole-school culture of respect, safety and inclusion.

This involves pupils:

- reflecting on how their behaviour affects themselves and others;
- working with adults to establish and meet expectations and targets for both learning and behaviour;
- being intelligently critical of their own work and that of others;
- taking pride in shared and personal successes;
- engaging with the Behaviour Curriculum to understand and rehearse appropriate behaviours in a range of contexts;



This involves teachers and support staff:

- establishing clear routines, roles and boundaries (e.g. *signal, pause, insist*);
- explicitly teaching and modelling the behaviour we want to see using the Behaviour Curriculum framework;
- communicating kindness and warmth, alongside consistency and fairness;
- learning pupils' names and using them to build connection (e.g. greeting children at the door);
- using adult language, positive framing, and regulation strategies to de-escalate and support pupils effectively;
- responding to individual needs while maintaining high expectations for all.

Behaviour Management

All adults at Thameside maintain **high expectations** for both behaviour and learning. We believe that excellent standards of behaviour are fundamental to effective teaching, wellbeing, and inclusion.

We implement a **whole-school Behaviour Curriculum** which outlines and sequences the specific knowledge and habits that pupils are taught in order to behave respectfully, regulate emotions, engage positively in learning, and be part of a safe, calm learning environment.

This approach is supported by:

- weekly Behaviour Briefings for staff to ensure consistency, clarity and proactive planning;
- structured lesson time allocated to explicitly teach behaviour and emotional regulation skills;
- a focus on recognition, restoration and reflection, aligned with our **therapeutic approach** to behaviour;
- ongoing collaboration between teaching staff, SENDCos, pastoral teams and SLT to respond to children's individual behaviour needs with understanding and support

Our **Relationships & Behaviour Policy** details the systems, language and expectations used consistently throughout the school.

We believe that behaviour is a curriculum in itself, and that children learn best in classrooms that are calm, structured and predictable, with strong adult relationships at the heart.

Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

Key strategies & knowledge

CPD opportunities

Teachers will be part of the learning culture by being a member of a working party and so developing school policy and practice. They will also have the opportunity to take part in:

- Subject Reviews;
- Local Authority moderation exercises and subject reviews;
- SDP Focus Group work;
- partnership working, including with schools in the NRSP;
- leading whole school CPD meetings in subject areas;
- presenting to governors and working with link governors.

Subject Leaders

Subject leaders will be given whole school responsibility relevant to the current year's School Development Plan (SDP) and drive their subject forward in order to raise standards. Subject Leaders have whole school responsibility and produce annual subject action plans. Foundation subject leads are supported in their role through Thameside's bespoke Subject Leader Toolkit.

Extra-curricular

Our curriculum offer includes extra-curricular activities such as: Free KS2 morning clubs, Aspiration afternoon, Year 4 camp, RYG residential, Scrapstore play at lunchtimes, assemblies, Thames-fest, matches and sporting events, choir and Hexagon productions.

Staff are expected to support these initiatives, recognising their value to pupils.



Part 3: Impact

Impact: what difference is our curriculum making to pupils?

1. Target Setting & Tracking

Teachers should use baseline data plus teacher assessment and contextual information set aspirational targets for pupils in core subjects.

Pupil progress against these targets will be closely tracked.

Pupils should be encouraged to be involved in their own target setting and evaluating progress e.g. in cold tasks in writing. Involvement in their own learning will develop motivation and pride.

Thameside uses Sonar Tracker and B-Squared (for children accessing our ARP provisions) as a tool to monitor the achievement and progress of pupils.

2. Monitoring & Evaluation

Governors monitor coverage of National Curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- supporting the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensuring that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitoring teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitoring how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ensuring that staff development and performance management policies support the school self-evaluation process.

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school through regular monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of learning and teaching and provision through observations, planning monitoring, pupil voice, work sampling and data analysis.

Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

3. Review

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will review this policy every two years.

S Greenaway, September 2025