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Teaching and Learning

Policy & Procedures

2020/2021

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TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY: 20/21

This is a whole School policy and applies to all members of Copthorne Preparatory School including EYFS.

Foreword

At Copthorne we strive to develop **confidence**, provide **opportunity** and realise **potential** in every child.

This mission statement, together with our core values, underpins all teaching and learning at Copthorne. We strive to offer children the opportunity to realise their potential across the entire spectrum of academic, artistic and physical disciplines which makes up our curriculum, and we recognise that confidence and high self esteem are essential for a successful and happy learning experience.

1 Our philosophy

Albert Einstein said ‘imagination is more important than knowledge’.

At Copthorne we strive to provide our children with **opportunities** to imagine, question, hypothesise and scrutinise the knowledge which they encounter both in the classroom and beyond its walls.

We believe that the most fulfilling and effective learning occurs when the teaching is stimulating, challenging and fun. We strive to create lessons which are interactive; our classroom discourse is, as far as possible, a two-way conversation between teachers and students – a shared experience of the world around us and an exploration of the possibilities that lie within it.

Teaching and learning at Copthorne is as creative as it is rigorous; the two are not mutually exclusive. We believe that children can be challenged and stretched, not only through the promotion of high expectations and the setting of challenging tasks, but also through being encouraged to ask ‘What if?’ and ‘Why?’ at every available opportunity.

We want our students to be **confident** and independent learners: creative, discerning and articulate. We seek to achieve this aim through a combination of inspirational teaching, fun and engaging learning activities, high expectations and the promotion of self assessment and evaluation at regular intervals.

We believe in the importance of identifying the individual needs, skills and **potential** of every child. Ours is a differentiated, child-centred curriculum – that is to say we begin with where the child is and then we move them forward at a pace which is appropriate to their learning style and abilities, encouraging them to work hard to reach their potential.

At Copthorne we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. Through our teaching we equip

children with the confidence, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that a happy and fulfilling learning experience at school can lead to a happy and fulfilling life.

2 Our aims and objectives

At Cophorne we strive to achieve best practice at all times in the way we plan, deliver and evaluate our curriculum, so that ultimately we can:

- meet the individual needs and recognise the individual potential of all our pupils;
- build independent, discerning and creative learners;
- help children to form and articulate their own opinions in response to the knowledge and information that is passed to them;
- challenge children's reasoning
- broaden children's understanding
- stimulate their curiosity and preserve their sense of awe and wonder
- encourage their creativity
- help children to recognise who they are, what they believe in, and what they can achieve
- raise children's self esteem and self-respect, so that they may play an active part in the Cophorne community and in the world beyond its walls;
- encourage our children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- teach the importance of showing respect for all cultures and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards other people.

3 The Quality of our Teaching

The educational experience at Cophorne is underpinned by a comprehensive curriculum (the aims for which are set out in our Curriculum Policy) and high quality teaching, which is supported, and monitored regularly (see point 7 below).

All teaching at Cophorne shall:

- (a). enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
- (b). foster in pupils the application of intellectual, physical or creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
- (c). involve well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and wise management of class-time;
- (d) show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensure these are taken into account in the planning process;

- (e). demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- (f). utilise effectively classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range;
- (g). demonstrate that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
- (h). utilise effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to behave responsibly.

4 Our teaching and learning styles

At Copthorne, we seek to embrace a range of contemporary teaching and learning styles, so that knowledge and information can be passed from teacher to student, and between students, in the most efficient and effective ways. Our teaching methods aim to allow for different learning styles often within the VAK model, comprising:

<u>Learning style</u>	<u>Description</u>
• VISUAL	seeing and reading
• AUDITORY	listening and speaking
• KINAESTHETIC	touching and doing

No student learns via one style exclusively; we all need to vary the ways in which information comes to us, and so our teaching at Copthorne utilises visual, auditory and kinaesthetic aids during lessons, as far as is practicable, so that learners are engaged and important knowledge and information is received. Routine copying from the board, dictation or writing out passages from textbooks are not always the most appropriate ways of getting information across, and such methods need to be complemented by regular use of:

- bullet points and worksheets
- mind-maps
- cloze-procedure
- pictorial texts
- timelines
- recorded instructions
- discussions
- presentations using PowerPoint and IWB technology
- iPads

We believe that learning – whether visual, auditory or kinaesthetic in style – is a proactive process; it is not a slavish acceptance of truth, or a passive receiving of indubitable, propositional knowledge. Truth, concepts, facts and interpretations need to be scrutinised, tested, grappled with and responded to with opinions and ideas. We

recognise that an interactive learning experience is crucial for effective knowledge retention and understanding to take place. When new knowledge is rooted in experience, pupils come to understand it more clearly and will retain it for life.

We hope that children at Cophorne feel confident enough to comment on that which they learn, and have the opportunity to offer their own interpretations and evaluations as part of the learning experience.

Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning at regular intervals, through discussion, through worksheets and through extended, evaluative writing. Self-assessment is a crucial part of the learning process, and children are encouraged to take ownership of their learning as soon as they are able. This is supported, particularly in the senior part of the school, by revision and study skills workshops and written advice.

Learning activities are varied, reflecting the different learning styles in operation and the different subjects being taught. Over the course of a term, students will have access to a broad spectrum of activities, which includes, but is not limited to:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of the computer and iPads;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- watching television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

Through such a broad and varied range of classroom activities, we hope to meet not only the aforementioned learning styles of the students, but also the different kinds of intelligence which prevail in our classrooms. Howard Gardner, the celebrated Harvard professor, suggests there are nine kinds of multiple intelligence. At Cophorne we remain mindful of these at all times and try to plan learning activities which embrace a range of these, which comprise:

Intelligence	Learning activities
verbal – linguistic	creative writing; essays and projects; speeches; presentations; spoken language.
logical – mathematical	working with patterns; number work; strategy games; puzzles; problem-solving.
visual – spatial	painting; sculpting; designing; arranging; working with maps; building.
musical – rhythmic	singing; playing instruments; appraising and responding; identifying rhythms and sounds.
bodily – kinaesthetic	playing sports; athletics; dancing; acting; outdoor pursuits
interpersonal	teamwork; participating in team games; sociable behaviour; showing good manners; being considerate in class.
intrapersonal	evidence of self-confidence; responding; reflecting; critically reflective appraising; being decisive; articulating own thoughts.
naturalistic	recognising patterns in nature; showing empathy; investigating plants; discussing environmental issues.
existential	asking insightful questions about life and mortality; being spiritually aware; philosophising; discussing and reflecting.

5 Our Curriculum

The curriculum at Copthorne, its sources, format and subject provision are explained in more detail in our Curriculum Policy.

Our school curriculum is designed from the ground up – that is to say it begins with the early years foundation stage and runs on, through pre-Prep and Prep school, offering a comprehensive and integrated syllabus along the eleven year journey.

Our curriculum draws its influences from the National Curriculum and the ISEB syllabus for Common Entrance at 13+. At all times we seek to match the subject matter and the learning targets to the abilities of the children, keeping one eye on the destination, which is, in the main, Pre-testing in Yr 6 followed by Common Entrance or Scholarship examinations.

Heads of Department are required to take an active interest in the quality and content of teaching and learning in their specific subjects. A Head of Department at Copthorne is ultimately responsible for ensuring a smooth transference of knowledge, skills and concepts along the eleven-year journey, liaising with subject teachers in their department and the Head of Teaching and Learning.

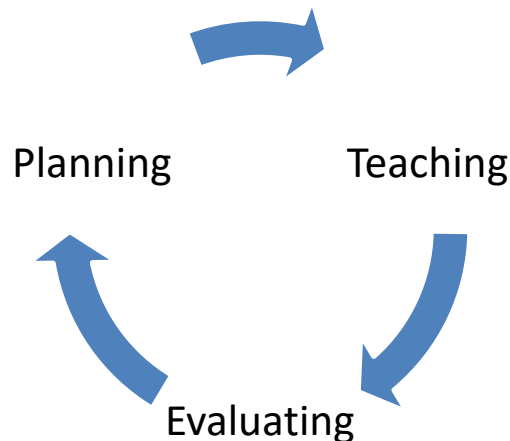
At all times, and in all subjects, we strive to find the most effective and efficient ways of bringing the curriculum to each student, through the aforementioned teaching and learning strategies, so that every child can access the knowledge and information we deliver, despite any language and learning difficulties which they may have. Work set is matched to ability; children at each end of the learning spectrum, are given work which will challenge and engage them.

Each Head of Department in the Prep school is required to pass to the Head of Teaching and Learning a policy handbook and schemes of work, setting out clearly what is being taught and how it is being taught in every year of the eleven year journey (from Nursery to Year 8). Subject leaders in the Pre-Prep are required to liaise with the Heads of Department in the Prep School when schemes of work are written. These are then passed to the Head of Teaching and Learning.

6 Our planning

The most effective teaching relies on knowledge of the children's attainment levels and careful monitoring and evaluating of their progress through the syllabus. Planning is not a definitive procedure which is completed at the beginning of the year, but a process of gradual development and modification, in which termly plans may be altered and updated to ensure that the curriculum is delivered at the right pace and in the right way for the children we have in front of us.

Our planning for teaching and learning at Cophorne is seen as a three-part, cyclical process, which comprises:



Such a cyclical process helps to ensure that our teaching is appropriate, exciting and set at the correct level at all times – though the entire process is built very much on the high expectations we have for the children.

We base our teaching on sound knowledge of the children’s level of attainment in each curriculum subject. Our aims are to broaden their understanding, challenge their reasoning, excite their curiosity and encourage their creativity in all curriculum subjects. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child’s level of ability – and this is supported by the aforementioned cyclical process of constant evaluation. When planning work for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children’s Personal Learning Plans (PLPs).

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from our schemes of work. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way we assess the children’s work. We evaluate all lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct based on the Cophorne Prep School Core Values. We expect all children to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our Rewards & Sanctions policy.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission.

We deploy learning support assistants (where applicable) as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. Appraisal takes place on a two yearly cycle.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all, based on our system of Core Values.

7 Monitoring the quality of our teaching and learning

Systems are in place at Cophorne to ensure that best practice is adopted at all times in the teaching and learning of our curriculum; these systems include:

- Regular lesson observations conducted by the Heads of Department, and the Head of Teaching and Learning, in which they observe the teaching of their subject in all years along the eleven-year journey. Lesson observation records are written up, discussed with the teachers involved and then given to the Head of Teaching and Learning during a regular 1:1 meeting with the HoD.
- Regular monitoring of books by the Heads of Department, and the Head of Teaching and Learning
- Regular monitoring of Heads of Department conducted by the Head of Teaching and Learning, (including lesson observations, pupil interviews, book scrutiny and 1:1 interviews with each Head of Department).
- Monitoring and evaluating of subject documentation, including Departmental Handbooks, syllabuses and schemes of work, by the Head of Teaching and Learning
- Regular curriculum meetings chaired by the Head of Teaching and Learning in which practice can be discussed, issues can be raised and ideas may be shared.
- Regular departmental meetings chaired by the Heads of Department, in which subject-specific issues and practices can be discussed and pupils' progress can be carefully monitored.
- Regular meetings with the Head of Teaching and Learning, SENCo, in which specific pupil concerns are raised and discussed in detail, and the learning targets on IEPs are reviewed and updated as appropriate.

8 The role of our Senior Leadership Team

The SLT/Governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from Heads of Department and the Head's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

9 The role of our parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- hosting annual meetings entitled 'How can I support my child's learning', in which staff can share advice and ideas on parents' roles in their child's learning;
- holding regular parents' evenings to explain how children are progressing;
- providing information (sent home or displayed on our website) for parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- sending regular reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework (Yrs 7 and 8). We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- help to foster creativity and imagination, through constant discourse and shared experience;

- fulfil the requirements set out in the parent contract.

10 Monitoring and reviewing our policy and procedures

The school's Teaching and Learning policy is monitored and reviewed regularly by the Head of Teaching and Learning in conjunction with the SLT, so that new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school, can all be taken into account.

The policy is written by the Head of Teaching and Learning, approved by the SLT, and then given to every teacher at Cophorne. Any concerns and queries which colleagues may have are brought to the Head of Teaching and Learning in the first instance, and then to the Headmaster.

REVIEWED: Summer 2014/ Summer 2016/ Autumn 2017/Summer 2019/Summer 2020

AMENDED: Summer 2014/Autumn Term 2015/Autumn 2018/ Policy Owner

NEXT REVIEW: Summer Term 2021