



Teaching and Learning Policy - 2026 to 2027

Policy information	Detail
Policy owner	Assistant Headteacher Teaching and Learning
Approved by	Senior Leadership Team
Effective from	September 2026
Review date	July 2027

Learning | Relationships | Community

Purpose and scope

This policy defines the shared expectations that support consistently high-quality, inclusive teaching at Sexey's School. It applies to classroom teaching, curriculum implementation, assessment, feedback, homework, professional learning and the evaluation of teaching quality. The detailed classroom guidance is set out in the Learning Routines guide.

Our aim is ambitious learning for every student. Consistency comes from common routines and a shared language, while teachers retain professional judgement to respond to their subject, phase and the needs of the students in front of them.

Ethos and values

Our Christian ethos, rooted in the story of the Good Samaritan and the commitment to life in all its fullness, shapes how we teach and how we treat one another. Honesty, forgiveness, empathy, courage, resilience, kindness and respect underpin a culture in which students feel known, safe, challenged and supported.

Aims

- Ensure that all students experience ambitious, coherent and inclusive teaching.
- Establish predictable routines that maximise learning time and reduce unnecessary cognitive demand.
- Use assessment responsively so that misconceptions are identified and teaching is adapted.
- Develop students who can retrieve, apply, monitor and evaluate their learning with increasing independence.
- Support teachers through evidence-informed professional learning, collaboration and proportionate quality assurance.

Core principles

Principle	Expectation
Ambition and inclusion	All students access challenging subject content. Support improves access without lowering expectations.
Curriculum first	Lessons implement a coherent curriculum and connect prior, current and future learning.
Explicit instruction	New learning is explained and modelled in manageable steps, with expert thinking made visible.
Responsive teaching	Teachers check understanding, address misconceptions and adapt support, pace and challenge.
Practice and independence	Students receive purposeful practice, feedback and gradually reduced scaffolding.
Strong routines and relationships	Calm, respectful and predictable classrooms protect learning and belonging.

The Sexey's Learning Routines

The Learning Routines provide the shared structure for students' learning experience. They are not a rigid lesson template or a checklist. Teachers use the routines in a sequence and proportion appropriate to the subject and learning, returning to earlier phases when assessment shows that re-teaching is needed. Adaptive teaching and checking for understanding run through every phase.

Routine	Core expectation
1 Retrieval	Meet and greet at the threshold. Students begin a calm, silent retrieval task from memory. The teacher circulates, checks completion, addresses key misconceptions and guides correction.
2 What and Why	Communicate the learning intention through the lesson's Curious Question and make links to prior and future learning clear.
3 Teacher Instruction	Break explanations into manageable steps, model new learning and expert thinking, explicitly teach Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary, and check understanding before practice.
4 Deliberate Practice	Provide practice aligned to the intended learning. Use scaffolds and live feedback, adapt teaching in response to misconceptions and reduce scaffolds as independence grows.
5 Learning Review	Check learning against the lesson intention, consolidate and reflect, identify misconceptions, celebrate success and use the outcomes to inform future teaching.
Orderly dismissal	Students pack away when instructed, stand behind desks in silence and are dismissed positively and calmly by the teacher, one row at a time.

Adaptive teaching

Adaptive teaching underpins high-quality teaching at Sexey's. Teachers plan for likely barriers and respond to assessment so that all students can access ambitious curriculum goals. Adaptation may include clearer explanation, additional modelling, worked examples, vocabulary support, carefully chosen scaffolds, adjusted pace, re-teaching, targeted questioning, additional challenge and effective deployment of teaching assistants. Scaffolds should be reduced as students become more secure.

Teachers use assessment information, reading ages, SEND profiles, reasonable adjustments and knowledge of students to anticipate need. A label does not determine a fixed teaching approach, and support must not replace challenge. This reflects the Teachers' Standards and the EEF guidance on supporting pupils with SEND in mainstream schools (DfE, 2021; EEF, 2020).

Retrieval and readiness to learn

Lessons begin with a calm, purposeful routine. The teacher meets and greets students at the threshold, with retrieval prepared before they enter. Students retrieve from memory, normally in silence, using a visible timeframe. The teacher circulates, checks participation and selects the most important misconceptions for immediate correction.

Retrieval should draw on recent and earlier learning and include interleaving where it improves curriculum coherence. It is a learning strategy, not a memory test for its own sake. Predictable routines and well-chosen retrieval help activate prior knowledge and manage cognitive load (Roediger and Karpicke, 2006; Deans for Impact, 2015).

Teacher instruction and modelling

Teachers gain attention before giving instructions and communicate the expected means of participation. New material is introduced in short, coherent steps. Verbal instruction is supported by concise written prompts where helpful. Live modelling makes expert decisions, strategies and disciplinary thinking visible. Teachers move between explanation, modelling, guided practice and checking for understanding rather than explaining for long periods without assessment.

This approach draws on evidence about working-memory limits and effective explicit instruction (Rosenshine, 2012; Sweller, van Merriënboer and Paas, 2019).

Vocabulary and disciplinary literacy

Teachers explicitly teach the Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary students need to think, speak, read and write successfully in the subject. This includes a clear student-friendly explanation, spelling and pronunciation, examples and non-examples, and opportunities for all students to use the word in context. Key vocabulary should remain visible when it supports successful participation.

Checking for understanding and questioning

Checking for understanding diagnoses what students know and think before they move into independent practice. Teachers prioritise methods that reveal understanding across the class, including mini-whiteboards, hinge questions and structured paired talk. Individual questioning may include cold calling, No Opt Out and Say It Again Better, with appropriate thinking time and follow-up questions.

Teachers use the evidence gathered to decide whether to move on, re-teach, adjust support or increase challenge. Hands-up responses or answers from a small number of confident students are not sufficient evidence of whole-class understanding.

Deliberate practice and feedback

Practice is purposeful, closely aligned to the intended learning and introduced through modelling or guided examples. Teachers establish timeframes, success criteria and whether work is silent or collaborative. Scaffolds such as worked examples, sentence stems, writing frames and vocabulary lists are used where needed and reduced over time.

During practice, teachers circulate actively, sample work across the class and provide live feedback. Individual errors are addressed promptly; common misconceptions may require the class to pause for clarification or re-teaching. Students must have time to act on feedback and improve. Feedback should be timely, specific and manageable, consistent with the school's Feedback Policy and the EEF guidance on teacher feedback (EEF, 2021a). Detailed written marking is not required for every task (DfE, 2016).

Learning review

Teachers protect time to consolidate learning and check it against the Curious Question or intended learning. A review may ask students to explain what they learned, connect it to earlier learning, identify and correct an error, use key vocabulary or identify a question that remains. Responses should be specific enough to inform future retrieval, re-teaching or curriculum planning.

Learning review supports metacognition when students are explicitly taught how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning rather than being asked only for general reflection (EEF, 2021b).

Classroom climate and routines

Strong relationships and consistent routines create the conditions for learning. Staff apply the Behaviour Policy calmly and predictably, use positive recognition, maintain high expectations and make early contact with parents and carers where appropriate. Reasonable adjustments should enable successful participation while preserving safety, dignity and ambition.

Presentation of work

Students are taught and reminded how to present work appropriately for each subject. Teachers check books and folders through normal classroom practice, address presentation during circulation and share strong examples. Mistakes and corrections are part of learning; high standards do not mean that work must appear untouched.

Orderly dismissal

Students pack away only when instructed, stand behind desks in silence and wait to be dismissed. The teacher dismisses positively and calmly, one row at a time, from the doorway and maintains expectations as students move into the corridor.

Planning and curriculum implementation

Planning starts with the curriculum: the knowledge, concepts and disciplinary practices students should learn and remember. Teachers consider what students will think about, how new learning connects to prior knowledge, where misconceptions are likely and what evidence will show that learning is secure. Activities are selected because they advance the intended learning, not as ends in themselves.

- Learning should be appropriately ambitious and sequenced in manageable steps.
- Resources should be clear, accessible and free from unnecessary cognitive load.
- Assessment should be planned at useful decision points, not added after teaching.
- Departments should identify essential vocabulary, models, examples and common misconceptions.
- Reasonable adjustments and access arrangements should be planned and implemented consistently.

Assessment, feedback and homework

Assessment

Assessment is used to improve teaching and learning. Formative assessment within lessons informs immediate adaptation. Departmental assessment checks curriculum learning over time and should be valid, proportionate and followed by analysis and action. Teachers use assessment information alongside professional knowledge of students; data should not replace careful diagnosis.

Feedback

Feedback may be live, verbal, written, peer, self or whole-class. The method should match the learning purpose. Students must understand and act on feedback through correction, re-practice or improvement. Teachers prioritise misconceptions and students who may be at greater risk of falling behind, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Expectations are set out in the Feedback Policy.

Homework

Homework should be purposeful, curriculum-linked, accessible and followed up. It is recorded clearly on Arbor and checked or used in subsequent learning. Completed homework is recognised with House Points. Required homework that is not submitted is followed up through the Homework Catch-Up process. Full expectations are set out in the Homework Policy and Homework Support and Catch-Up Procedure.

Supporting and evaluating teaching quality

The purpose of quality assurance is to understand the quality and consistency of students' learning experience, celebrate strengths and identify manageable improvements. No single lesson visit, book sample or data point provides a complete judgement. Leaders draw on a range of evidence and consider curriculum intent, classroom practice, students' work, assessment and student voice.

Lesson visits

Lesson visits operate through a three-week cycle. During the first two weeks, the Curriculum Team completes subject-focused visits. The third week is used to review evidence and provide feedback. Departments receive a subject summary identifying strengths and potential marginal gains. The Head of Department and SLT line manager agree one specific, manageable next step, which is revisited in a later cycle.

Lesson visits also consider whether reasonable adjustments are in place. They support professional development and school self-evaluation and are not, by themselves, graded judgements or a substitute for the appraisal process.

Professional learning

High-quality professional development is sustained, focused on student learning and supported through expert input, collaboration, deliberate practice, feedback and follow-up (EEF, 2021c). Whole-school CPD, subject and faculty development, coaching, action research, ECT support and new-staff induction should connect to the Learning Routines, school priorities and evidence from quality assurance.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governors	Provide strategic oversight and seek assurance that the policy is implemented and evaluated.
Senior Leadership Team	Set direction, provide resources and professional development, evaluate impact and address whole-school priorities.
Assistant Headteacher Teaching and Learning	Lead the Learning Routines, professional development, quality assurance and annual policy review.
Heads of Department	Translate the policy into subject practice, lead curriculum and assessment, support staff and respond to evidence from quality assurance.
Teachers	Plan and teach ambitious, inclusive lessons; apply shared routines; assess responsively; provide feedback; set and follow up homework; implement reasonable adjustments.
Teaching Assistants	Work with teachers to support access, participation and independence, using agreed strategies and avoiding unnecessary dependence.
Students	Arrive ready to learn, participate in routines, think hard, complete work and homework, respond to feedback and take increasing responsibility for learning.
Parents and carers	Support attendance, routines, homework and communication with the school, and raise barriers that may affect learning.

Monitoring and review

Implementation will be reviewed through lesson visits, curriculum reviews, work sampling, assessment information, student voice and professional dialogue. Review will focus on impact and consistency rather than superficial compliance with a checklist. The policy will be reviewed by July 2027, or earlier where statutory guidance or school priorities require amendment.

Related policies and guidance

- Learning Routines guide
- Feedback Policy and Guide
- Homework Policy
- Homework Support and Catch-Up Procedure
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy and reasonable-adjustment guidance
- Assessment Policy
- Appraisal Policy and School Self-Evaluation arrangements

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

References

Deans for Impact (2015) The Science of Learning.

Department for Education (2016) Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking.

Department for Education (2021) Teachers' Standards.

Education Endowment Foundation (2020) Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools.

Education Endowment Foundation (2021a) Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning.

Education Endowment Foundation (2021b) Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning.

Education Endowment Foundation (2021c) Effective Professional Development.

Roediger, H. L. and Karpicke, J. D. (2006) Test-enhanced learning: Taking memory tests improves long-term retention. *Psychological Science*, 17(3), 249-255.

Rosenshine, B. (2012) Principles of Instruction: Research-Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know. *American Educator*, 36(1), 12-19 and 39.

Sweller, J., van Merriënboer, J. J. G. and Paas, F. (2019) Cognitive Architecture and Instructional Design: 20 Years Later. *Educational Psychology Review*, 31, 261-292.

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