



DULWICH PREP LONDON
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TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

This is a whole school policy which applies to all sections of the school, including Early Years.



Person responsible for this policy:
Deputy Head Teaching and Learning

Date of Policy Review:
April 2021

Next Review Due:
January 2022

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

This policy describes the teaching and learning practices throughout Dulwich Prep London. All practice is centred on ensuring every child progresses in their learning, with challenge geared towards their individual needs, in a way that motivates and engages them.

This is a whole school policy and applies also to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

1. INTRODUCTION

Dulwich Prep London's ethos emphasises our commitment to providing an all-round education for our children in order to prepare them to become good citizens and lead fulfilling lives. We believe that thoughtful, well-structured and stimulating teaching and the creation of appropriate, varied and imaginative learning experiences are central to achieving these goals.

2. AIMS

At Dulwich Prep London, we wish to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop knowledge, skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- ensure the wellbeing and happiness of all of our pupils
- provide the opportunity for every child to excel
- help our pupils feel part of a well-established and valued community
- develop the character and the values of each pupil
- support and challenge each pupil as they learn, develop and make progress
- empower our pupils to become responsible world citizens

3. PEDAGOGY

Dulwich Prep London pupils are in an educational environment that requires them to be able to gain, understand and apply knowledge. For this to happen the school acknowledges that instructional methods are highly effective in increasing attainment. Building on what is already known, instructional methods combine teacher explanation and modelling with student practice and feedback to teach new knowledge and skills. The process commits new learning to long term memory. Instruction is teacher-led, but is not necessarily 'traditional' and / or passive; active learning, discussions and group work, for example, are all within the remit of instructional teaching. But, rightly, we do more as teachers than embed knowledge and skills in long term memory.

Our pupils are growing up in a world which is changing rapidly and is increasingly influenced by the interaction of digital technologies; a world where value will also be placed on the human attributes of creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration. Effective learning in these areas can be achieved with the use of more open-ended activities as expressed in inquiry-based learning (progressive pedagogy) where, at times, the answer is unimportant and/or unknown and where it is the skills required during the process that form the essence and purpose of the learning experience.

However, our best practice is to plan such activities only when the requisite knowledge and skills have been embedded to support a learning experience where the scaffolds of teacher direction, modelling and feedback are largely removed.

From Reception to Year 8, Dulwich Prep London is a school for boys; educational methods which are particularly effective in aiding boys' learning are therefore encouraged. Approaches which foster engagement and enthusiasm, as well as subject content which has relevance for boys, are often considered and implemented.

At the heart of our teaching Dulwich Prep London recognises that the relationship the teacher has with their pupils, their 'teacher presence', has a significant impact on the learning experience. The ability of the teacher to bring joy and wonder to their lessons, to motivate and foster enthusiasm, and to adapt to the needs of each pupil is paramount, regardless of the pedagogical approach being adopted.

4. VALUES

At Dulwich Prep London, we recognise that the children's sense of happiness and wellbeing is paramount to their achievement in all areas of the curriculum. We will emphasise intellectual mastery and academic ambition and we will build qualities of character which directly link to the School's values:

Courage
Gratitude
Honesty
Humility
Justice
Love
Self-Discipline
Service

In addition to these values, the Early Years follow the Golden Rules:

Be gentle
Listen
Be kind and helpful
Look after property
Be honest
Value everyone

We recognise the crucial role that parents and other adults play in their children's education and encourage parental involvement in the educational process. The variety and diversity of family backgrounds, make-ups, cultures and religious groups is what makes our learning community a strong one. Furthermore, our curriculum looks to celebrate and promote all aspects of diversity and equality.

In addition to teaching a broad curriculum with a balanced content, it is the aim to help pupils develop a wide range of transferable skills which will enable them to develop their individuality. The education provided is challenging, rigorous and supportive.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Dulwich Prep London is committed to developing approaches, attitudes and behaviours for good learning. As part of this commitment the school has engaged in identifying specific characteristics of effective learners and embedded approaches to develop such characteristics in each and every pupil. These characteristics build and develop the pupils' metacognition.

The approaches vary from section to section but are all built on the same premise – learning how to learn (metacognition) is as important as knowing what to learn.

Early Years, Pre-Prep and Lower School use 'Excellent Learning Characteristics' to promote good learning habits in the pupils. These are introduced through assemblies and displays. Teachers will then refer to them in their teaching and learning with the children. The 'Excellent Learning Characteristics' identified and used by school are:

Linking, Creating, Persevering, Thinking, Memorising, Willing, Discovering, Playing, Enjoying, Organising, Focusing and Communicating.

Further information is available in the school's Excellent Learning Handbook.

Middle and Upper School use Arthur L. Costa's 16 Habits of Mind to promote good learning habits in the pupils. These habits of mind build on the 'Excellent Learning Characteristics' and are introduced through assemblies and displays and referred to by teachers and pupils in lessons.

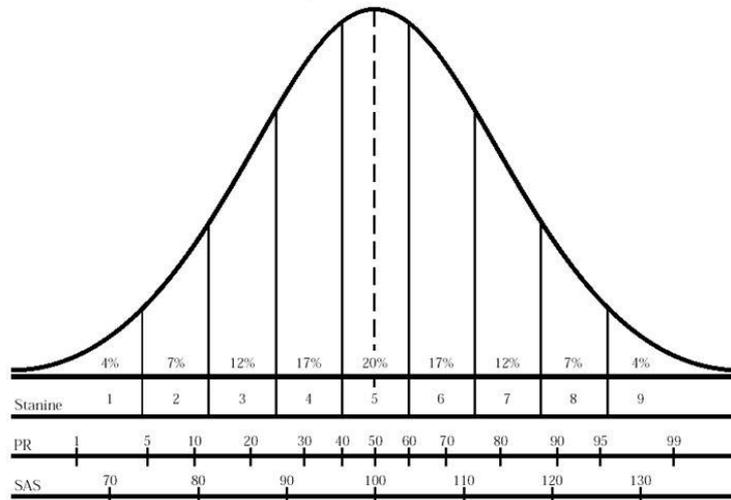
The 16 Habits of Mind identified by Costa and Kallick include:

- Persisting
- Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
- Managing impulsivity
- Gathering data through all senses
- Listening with understanding and empathy
- Creating, imagining, innovating
- Thinking flexibly
- Responding with wonderment and awe
- Thinking about thinking (metacognition)
- Taking responsible risks
- Striving for accuracy
- Finding humour
- Questioning and posing problems
- Thinking interdependently
- Applying past knowledge to new situations
- Remaining open to continuous learning

6. ACADEMIC PROFILE OF PUPILS

Dulwich Prep London uses GL Assessment's CAT 4 cognitive ability testing which measures verbal, non-verbal, quantitative and spatial reasoning to establish baseline data against national benchmarks.

Standardised Age Scores- A national distribution / benchmark



The above scale is applicable across the national context, but the children at Dulwich Prep London almost always achieve ability and attainment scores above 100 (the national median) and usually in stanines 7, 8 or 9. Pupils are almost always 'above average', and often exceptional, whilst a pupil with ability and attainment scores in the middle of their year group is very likely to be placed in the top 20% nationally.

We build the curriculum with awareness of this national context to ensure that the learning of pupils at the lower end, the middle and the top end is scaffolded and advanced, ensuring all can make progress and be celebrated.

7. EFFECTIVE LEARNING

At Dulwich Prep London we acknowledge that learning can take place in different ways. We are creative when planning opportunities for all children to learn. These opportunities include:

- Teacher instruction and modelling
- Practice
- Spaced Retrieval
- Investigation and problem solving
- Researching and finding out
- Pair and group work
- Questioning
- Innovative and creative use of ICT across the curriculum
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Creative activities
- Responding to musical or recorded material
- Learning through the use of concrete materials and experiences
- Debates, role-plays and oral presentations
- Designing and making things
- Participation in athletic or physical activity

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn. Pupils are involved in self review and peer review throughout the school where deemed appropriate for the stage of individual child development.

8. EFFECTIVE TEACHING

We provide a range of high quality learning opportunities for our children. To achieve this we look to appoint highly qualified and specialist staff, provide first-rate teaching facilities and create a positive and supportive learning environment. The Dulwich Prep London Teacher Toolkit provides guidance for all teachers on key aspects of their teaching practice.

Staff:

- We make considerable use of subject specialist staff throughout the school, to enthuse colleagues and to develop subject skills at all levels.
- We have an annual staff professional development system which is supported by a clear, structured and well financed CPD programme.
- We encourage staff to take on extra responsibilities to broaden their professional skills and to enhance the overall provision.
- We establish an effective planning, assessment and review cycle which enables staff to reflect on pupil progress, individually and collectively.
- We allow teachers a degree of autonomy and value their individual strengths. We encourage teachers to take the initiative in developing excellent teaching strategies.
- We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. They work with small groups and with individual pupils. Our adult helpers also assist with the preparation of resources.

Staff will employ the following strategies:

- Prepare and plan lessons thoroughly;
- Evaluate and build upon children's prior knowledge;
- Differentiate on the basis of data, learning needs, context and children's prior knowledge;
- Deliver lessons where skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities are developed through active, practical and first hand experiences;
- Pace lessons appropriately so that all children have time to consolidate skills and understanding, as well as to move forward in their learning;
- Share learning objectives and ensure that these are understood by the children;
- Give clear indicators of expectations, providing success criteria;
- Ask open ended, thought-provoking questions;
- Give children thinking time before gaining responses;
- Provide and plan for opportunities for children to review and reflect on their learning;
- Give developmental feedback on children's work;
- Integrate use of ICT across the curriculum;
- Integrate opportunities to develop Learning Skills as denoted by the 'Excellent Learning' and 'Habits of Mind' programmes.

9. DIFFERENTIATION

To ensure every child makes excellent progress differentiation occurs throughout the curriculum. It can be most clearly observed in staff planning, during lessons and in feedback.

Differentiation is informed by data which includes but is not limited to the following:

Quantitative data

- Cognitive Ability Test Scores (CAT)
- Other standardised assessment results (see assessment policy)
- SEND reports and recommendations (quantitative)
- Formal subject assessments
- Low-stakes testing

Qualitative data

- Pupil reports
- SEND reports and recommendations (qualitative)
- Teacher lesson reflections
- Participant Observations (Early Years)
- Marking and feedback
- Pupil voice

In most cases, effective differentiation is informed by this data and identifies the varying level of support pupils need to achieve the same learning objective; this objective should be ambitious and aspirational. To achieve effective differentiation teachers should:

- Establish a common but challenging learning objective for all pupils
- Plot clear steps needed for pupils to be successful
- Prepare supporting materials for those that need it
- Plan key questions to support and challenge as required
- Guide the pupils along the steps through use of feedback
- Move pupils from guided practice to independent practice when they are ready

10. SETTING

Setting and ability grouping is employed on the basis of the constructivist approach to teaching (Vygotsky). Such measures better enable teachers to scaffold learning, ensuring students remain within the zone of proximal development and thus appropriately challenged. The curriculum does not change within subjects (unless determined by senior school entrance examination in Year 8); the level of scaffolding and support does.

RWI Setting

In Early Years and Pre-Prep boys are assessed on their phonic knowledge and skills using the Ruth Miskin phonic approach. This indicates which coloured level of book and speed set sounds they need to practise and therefore which group they are placed in. The boys are assessed every half term and then moved between these fluid groups accordingly. Teachers may have between 3 and 16 boys in each group and there can be as many as 14 groups working at a time.

Subject Setting

Boys are normally grouped into sets for maths from Year 5 and for English from Year 6. These sets are formed on the basis of the boys' ability and performance and may in Year 8 be influenced by senior school assessment requirements. In Upper School setting is extended to science, modern foreign languages and Latin. In Year 8 both form groups and academic sets are influenced by the boys' senior school choices and the examinations they are required to take.

Pupils with identified Special Educational Needs and Disabilities receive specialised support. In addition to this, all teachers are made aware of the needs of these pupils and are given appropriate training and advice for meeting their needs. This is all achieved through the specialist work with the boys of The Skills and Strategies Team. (See below)

The needs of most able pupils are also met within the classroom through differentiation as outlined above. Teachers are particularly careful to include open ended and investigative tasks to access higher order thinking skills.

11. LEARNING SUPPORT (SEND) – Please refer to SEND Policy for more detail

Learning support is organised through the 'Skills and Strategies' team under the leadership of the SENDCo. Every Dulwich Prep London teacher should consider themselves a teacher of SEND. Teachers must be aware of the process of referral and must incorporate recommendations from reports into their daily planning. SEND falls into four areas of need: Cognition and Learning; Communication and Interaction; Sensory and/ or Physical; Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

12. INCLUSION

At Dulwich Prep London we value children's uniqueness. We listen to the views of individual children and we promote respect for diverse cultures. We value the importance of each person in our community, and we organise our curriculum to promote inclusion, cooperation and understanding among all its members. We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our school. Each child is respected for who they are and they are treated with fairness and honesty. Each person is enabled to be successful, and equal opportunities are provided for all our pupils. We strive to meet the needs of all of our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements regarding inclusion. The school ensures that all pupils are given opportunities to access the curriculum regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, sexual orientation or ability. Teachers encourage all pupils to participate fully.

13. DIGITAL LEARNING

Dulwich Prep London values the benefits of using digital resources in teaching and learning. In all sections of the school our aim is to incorporate digital learning into the curriculum. Digital devices are used individually, in paired and group work. Pupils use digital tools and resources when it enhances the learning; devices may also be used to record aspects of a pupil's learning. The individual boys and the class also keep a record of work through various digital learning platforms. The boys attend discrete lessons of computing where digital skills are taught as well as Computer Science (coding).

14. REMOTE LEARNING

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and school closures, Dulwich Prep London is now well prepared and equipped for remote teaching and learning, both for small groups of pupils learning at home and in the case of school closure. We utilise digital learning platforms through which the children can access the curriculum, post their work and receive feedback. In the event of groups of children learning from home or in the event of school closure Dulwich Prep London is committed to delivering a high proportion of teaching live via Zoom whilst recognising that the quality of instruction is more important than the mode of delivery.

15. RECOGNISING EFFORT AND ACHIEVEMENT

Recognition is an important source of motivation for the children. As they grow older, we seek to migrate from more extrinsic to intrinsic forms of recognition but there are still appropriate times and ways to recognise and celebrate effort and achievement. We celebrate the social, physical, creative and academic achievements of our pupils in many ways and celebrate individual and collective effort and achievement. We reward our children for their positive endeavours, be they related to academic achievement, progress, effort or acts of kindness and good citizenship. Celebrations and awards include:

Early Years:

- Stickers and stamps
- Class Monitor Chart

- Celebrations Assemblies (Golden Rules and Excellent Learning)
- Certificates (Golden Rules and Excellent Learning)
- Notice boards and displays

Pre-Prep (Years 1 and 2)

- The use of class marble jars and marble jar parties
- Stickers and stamps
- Being placed on the Gold traffic light
- Good work and Favourite Mistake Assemblies
- Good behaviour certificates and a cup
- Merit and Good Conduct awards
- Celebratory teas with the Head of Pre-Prep

Lower School (Years 3 and 4)

- Class 'dots' (marble jars) and 'dot parties'
- Stickers and stamps
- Being placed on Silver or Gold card
- Token for good pieces of work
- Celebratory assemblies
- Prizes, awards and certificates for academic effort, progress and achievement

Middle School (Years 5 and 6)

- Quarter slips, Good Show Ups and Honours for academic effort and achievement as well as for demonstrating the school values
- Celebratory assemblies
- Annual prizes, awards and certificates for academic effort, progress and achievement
- Prizes, awards and certificates for effort and achievement in sport, music, art and drama

Upper School (Years 7 and 8)

- Quarter slips, Good Show Ups and Honours for academic effort and achievement as well as for demonstrating the school values
- Celebratory assemblies
- Annual prizes, awards and certificates for academic effort, progress and achievement
- Prizes, awards, certificates and colours for effort and achievement in sport, music, art and drama
- Leavers' certificates and ties for all leavers

16. ASSESSMENT

Each section utilises a wide array of assessment mechanisms, both summative and formative, to ensure the constant monitoring of learning progress for every child. Assessment mechanisms are also used to give the school national context for their curriculum delivery in Maths and English as it relates to both individual pupils and each cohort. In the Early Years we track the children's attainment and progress in the seven curriculum areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Finally, assessment mechanisms are sometimes useful when identifying children who may have specific learning needs.

Nationally benchmarked assessments

Dulwich Prep London uses assessments designed by GL Assessments. Such assessments enable comparison to an enormous sample of students from across the country. This helps provide nationally standardised age scores in various assessments and builds a clear picture of each learner and each cohort.

Internal standardised, summative assessments

A variety of year and / or subject specific assessments are administered to help give cohort based context to attainment and prepare children for external admissions assessments.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is administered on a daily, lesson-by-lesson, task-by-task basis. It is designed to enable both the teacher and pupil to better understand the pupil's progress in learning. It aims to inform the pupil about their own strengths and weaknesses. It also aims to inform teachers about how best to plan activities and tasks to help ensure progress. Formative assessment takes many guises ranging from exercises on worksheets to exit tickets at the end of a lesson. Formative assessment is continuous.

Formative assessment techniques and the uses of data drawn from such endeavour vary with the age of the children being taught. The purpose and philosophy of formative assessment does not change with age. It remains one of the most potent tools in a teacher's armoury for helping drive, scaffold and understand the learning of each individual.

Effective formative assessment mechanisms are a constant part of ongoing CPD for every teacher.

17. FEEDBACK AND MARKING

Feedback is a crucial factor in helping pupils know how to improve their performance or deepen their understanding. In order for feedback to be most impactful, it needs to be timely, actionable, positive and specific: a process that moves forwards. Feedback may be written by the teacher on individual pieces of work or it may take various other forms. For instance, it is recognised that verbal feedback, whole-class feedback, peer and self-marking are also powerful feedback tools when used effectively. Feedback given during a task, and not just on its completion, is encouraged.

Whilst some aspects of feedback are specific to each section and department, the following features are evident through the school:

- Teacher feedback (Y1-8) is written in green pen: green for growth (WWW/EBI)
- Teacher feedback is written in pink pen: tickled pink (Pre Prep only)
- Pupil response (Y1-8) is written in purple pen: purple pen of progress
- Feedback is given in relation to learning objective(s) success criteria
- Feedback identifies WWW and EBI (What Went Well and Even Better If)
- Feedback prompts action
- Feedback from teacher is encouraging and optimistic in tone
- Teacher uses the school's reward systems to celebrate and encourage effort and progress

18. HOMEWORK

At Dulwich Prep London, homework is referred to as **Prep**. The amount of prep given to the pupils builds through each section, fostering an increased sense of independence and ownership of learning. Prep can be used to build knowledge and curiosity ahead of lessons (pre-learning), consolidate what has recently been taught (practice), and to prepare for internal and external assessments and examinations (revision).

Early Years

In Early Years and Reception, the children choose a story book to take home to share with their parent(s)/carer. Nursery children begin taking home books and reading games to share with adults at home in the summer term. We encourage the parent(s)/carer to model communication and language skills and to develop vocabulary by reading the book to their child. As the Reception boys become more confident they take home a book to read twice a week and their progress is monitored in a

home-school book in which both parents and teaching staff make helpful comments. For more information please see the Early Years Homework Procedures.

Pre-Prep

Each evening the boys bring home a small amount of Prep. We start very slowly and gradually increase the quantity and difficulty. Year 1 & 2 boys read to an adult almost every day, and take home a reading book every day except Tuesday and Thursday when they may have been set alternative Maths or Literacy prep such as Doodlemaths or Reading Eggs. Year 1 prep should not take longer than ten minutes each evening; Year 2 should take no longer than fifteen minutes. Spellings are practised according to the guidelines of the Read Write Inc. (RWI) spelling and phonics programme. The boys might take home a log book of spelling words that they are studying/focusing on that week for prep. The boys may be given a 'Preview' homework task such as a question relating to their topic. This is optional homework for the weekend and encourages discussion and pre-learning for that topic.

Lower School

The Lower School values an ability to read well with fluency and expression but also for comprehension. In Lower School, reading is therefore given as prep at home. Teachers will monitor the books that the boys read to ensure they tackle books simply for enjoyment, to challenge them and across a range of genres. The boys should read for at least 20 minutes each evening.

The boys are then asked to use the remaining 10 minutes of their prep time at home to work on their knowledge and speed of recall of mental mathematical facts such as multiplication facts (they are given a 'Maths Tapas' sheet to suggest activities to achieve this). The boys also develop their knowledge of ambitious and adventurous vocabulary focusing on six English words given to them each week.

Lastly, over the course of each term, the boys are involved in independent work to enrich and extend their knowledge of our topic or science themes. Each half term, the boys will be provided with a 'Take Away Menu' of possible activities. These are graded by the length of time they take to complete; starters, mains and desserts. The boys are encouraged to complete a starter, main and dessert task each term.

Middle School

In addition to an English, maths and reasoning prep each week boys in Years 5 and 6 are expected to complete 20 minutes of recorded reading and 10 mins of vocabulary learning each evening. These are signed and dated by parents in the Prep Register.

Upper School

Prep is given for all academic subjects for a minimum of 30 minutes per subject. Depending on the senior school entrance route, boys will receive different amounts of prep from the various subjects. For instance, the day school Year 8 boys will only receive English, Maths, Science, Reasoning and MFL prep during the second half of autumn term and first half of the Spring term in order to help them focus on relevant preparation for school entrance exams.

Dulwich Prep London

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