



Horizon Schools Federation

Teaching, Learning & Assessment, & Curriculum Policy

This document applies to Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and is advisory for Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools.

Date: July 2026
Review: July 2027

School Vision Statement - Donington

Donington Cowley Endowed Primary School provides a caring environment where everyone is respected and valued; where unity lies at the heart of our community. Our aim is to provide an enriching curriculum which evokes aspiration and inspires all children to be the best versions of themselves. Through determination, courage, excellence, pride and success, we strive to encourage children to become confident, ambitious and passionate learners; laying the foundations of knowledge, skills and understanding for life-long learning.

School Vision Statement – St Gilbert’s

As a welcoming church school, we strive to Sow Seeds and foster pride in all we do. Through an aspirational learning environment, we support our school family to Grow Together so that everyone feels value and motivated to achieve. We Reach High for success at St. Gilbert’s and beyond.

Sow Seeds: Grow Together: Reach High

‘I am the vine; you are the branches.’ (John 15:5)

Church schools serving their communities through excellence, exploration and encouragement within the love of God.

Introduction

The teaching and learning processes lie at the very heart of our Federation. We want our children to leave school with the confidence and skills to become life-long learners.

The aim of our Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy is to make explicit the shared and agreed principles and practices upon which teaching, learning and assessment are based.

Aims

We aim to

- Ensure that all children receive a high-quality curriculum which builds upon what they know, can do and understand
- Provide opportunities for children to maximise their potential
- Place children at the heart of our school and plan from children's interests and needs
- Engage children in creative, fun and challenging learning both within and outside of the school environment
- Encourage teamwork
- Promote high standards of behaviour and conduct
- Personalise learning for individual children
- Promote confidence in children by supporting them to take risks
- Develop resilience and perseverance to enable children to challenge themselves
- Encourage openness and trust
- Guide children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development
- Recognise and reward effort

Effective Teaching and Learning

Our school recognises that learning is a continuous process which involves acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and concepts and developing positive and worthwhile attitudes. We strive for quality first teaching at all times to promote active learning whilst simultaneously 'Broadening Horizons'.

Quality First Teaching:

- Builds on what learners already know and can do and understand
- Embraces flexibility to develop learning linked to children's questions and interests
- Actively involves children in their own learning
- Scaffolds learning effectively whilst developing independence
- Helps children to recognise and value their achievements and successes
- Makes learning exciting and enjoyable
- Makes learning real and challenging
- Lessons cater for a range of learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic)
- Teaching styles/activities are relevant to the needs and development of the children and are differentiated accordingly
- Develops a full range of learning skills across the curriculum
- Teaches beyond the classroom and in the wider community to broaden horizons

Effective teaching and learning takes place in an environment in which:

- A visual timetable is clearly displayed which includes words and pictures
- Reading, writing and maths are visually promoted
- The long date and the short date are displayed on the board
- Displays celebrate and value the individual successes of the range of children in each class
- Displays are purposeful and engaging to stimulate and encourage children's learning
- Key vocabulary linked to areas of learning is incorporated into classroom displays
- Pupil voice is encapsulated at all opportunities including displays
- Working walls are in place for English and Maths
- Adults and children take pride and responsibility for the environment
- Relationships promote a confident and positive atmosphere
- Self-evaluation is actively encouraged
- All learning is valued and there is room for reflection
- Mutual respect is demonstrated between all members of the school learning community
- It is a safe and acceptable place to make mistakes without judgement and where advice can be confidently and actively sought
- Teachers vary pace to match the task and children's individual needs
- Support from home is encouraged
- Be adaptive to children's individual needs

Teachers and other adults in our school:

- Are ambitious for all learners
- Provide a safe environment which encourages children to learn from their mistakes and make progress
- Guide, support and respect each other
- Actively promote different learning styles
- Encourage children to be responsible for their own learning, their environment, themselves and others around them
- Ensure learning objectives address the needs of all children and that there are opportunities for all children to be actively involved in creating them
- Ensure all children are aware of what they are learning and why
- Ensure the behaviour of all children allows learning to take place
- Equip children to be able to transfer knowledge and skills
- Have the flexibility to embrace and explore unexpected responses without losing sight of the intended learning outcome
- Set learning in meaningful contexts, within and beyond the classroom, to link subjects and ideas together (cross curricular)
- Use skilful and higher order questioning
- Have high expectations at all times throughout the school day

Layout and Presentation in Children's Books

Teachers should make sure that the following happens to help children with their presentation:

- Children are encouraged to join their handwriting from year 2 onwards as appropriate
- Children will begin to move from pencil to pen from Year 3, as appropriate, once a neat, cursive handwriting style has been fully adopted
- Adults will always model neat, cursive handwriting
- All maths work will be completed in pencil
- Children will be taught to put one digit in one box in maths jotters
- All underlining will be carried out using a ruler

All worksheets/sheets of paper need to be dated, marked and carefully trimmed, before they are stuck in books by the children

- Children will be encouraged to write their own learning objectives and dates (short date in Maths only) and these will be underlined from Year 2 onwards as appropriate
- Children should be encouraged to take responsibility for the presentation of their work as appropriate

Planning Long Term Planning and Curriculum Framework

Our planning ensures effective, efficient and creative delivery of the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Long Term plans have been designed to encompass a range of subjects and the development of knowledge and skills in line with National Curriculum requirements. Each term class newsletters are shared with parents; these are published on the school website and distributed via parent mail.

Our plans are:

- Knowledge, skills and concept based
- Cover the full breadth of the Foundation Stage and National Curriculum
- Create cross-curricular opportunities where appropriate
- We aim to create opportunities for child centred learning wherever possible based on children's interests
- Saved on Staff Share/ One drive

Medium and Short Term Planning

Our medium and short term plans set out the work to be covered during each term/ unit.

Plans are to be available for all teaching and support staff to refer to. A copy of planning is available to support staff in advance of each lesson, via email or paper copy. This allows support staff to be briefed, and appropriately prepared for each lesson.

All plans should be on the Shared Drive at the start of each week/unit.

Shared Learning Objectives and Success Criteria

The sharing of learning objectives is a crucial element in the process of teaching and learning. By sharing the objective, we empower children to take ownership of their learning.

We ensure:

- Learning objectives for each lesson are: ○ Clear
 - Shared
 - Explained using age-appropriate language
- Children understand the purpose of their learning
- Task instructions are clearly separated from the learning objective
- Success criteria is discussed within each lesson and opportunities are provided for children to develop their own success criteria
- Learning objectives and success criteria are displayed where appropriate and referred to, except in lessons where they are to be 'discovered.'
- Learning objectives provide the focus for the teacher and support staff to evaluate to what extent the lesson met its aims.

- Learning objectives and success criteria provide a focus for self/peer assessment
 - Learning objectives and success criteria provide the focus for marking
- Learning objectives are recorded in books

Learning objectives often begin with:

To ...

- know (knowledge; factual information)
- be able to (skills: using knowledge and resources)
- understand (concepts: understanding reasons, cause and effect, how things work)
- be aware of (attitude: empathy, awareness of issues)
- create (practical application)

Success Criteria

The purpose of the success criteria is to enable teachers, support staff and children to be sure about how to judge whether or not the learning objectives have been met. If the learning objective is seen as the 'house,' then the success criteria are the 'bricks' used to build the house.

Success criteria are shared, discussed and agreed with pupils. They are differentiated where appropriate to ensure all pupils can make progress towards the learning objective. Success criteria are used as a basis for evaluation of the lesson by the teacher, support staff and the children. They should be referred to throughout the lesson. This forms part of key questioning and plenaries/mini plenaries.

Non-Negotiables

- When planning, curriculum overviews for each unit guide weekly planning and the unit curriculum plans to ensure that all objectives are covered. The content in this overview must be covered.
- All lessons should have a guided focus and active teaching should take place throughout.
- Support staff should be planned for effectively and should always have copies of planning prior to the lesson.

English

- There should be at least 2 independent pieces of writing each week (if not in English book this may be in topic/science/RE) in KS1, 3/4 in KS2
- Each English unit will be taught over 2/3 weeks and will lead to an extended piece of writing which is edited and presented in a presentation book as a final piece.
- English tasks will not always be differentiated by outcome and planning and books will show evidence of provision for all learners
- The English planning format will be used, and the guided group work highlighted within lessons.
- Each class will have a class book and shared 15-minute whole class reading and in Key Stage 2 an additional 20 minutes independent reading time daily – this will be timetabled
- Each class will have a reading area/ display
- The class book will be clearly displayed and celebrated. The whole class book will be a highquality text which challenges vocabulary development.
- Pupil voice celebrates reading
- Pupil work is presented in and around the classroom to reflect current learning
- English working walls will be regularly updated to reflect unit of work

- In EYFS and KS1- RWInc phonics and Get Writing will be taught daily as appropriate and from Y2 onwards RWInc Spellings and comprehension will be taught 4 days per week. This will be assessed 6 weekly
- In Key Stage 2 guided reading will be taught daily
All children in Reception and KS1 will read 1:1 with an adult at least weekly, KS2 weekly if on reading scheme. Books will be changed weekly in KS1 and KS2 where children are still on reading scheme
- Reading diaries will be used to log each child's reading journey and develop home/ school communication. This should be checked by an adult in school at least twice weekly.

Maths

- Maths will be taught for a minimum of 1 hour daily
- The Maths planning format will be used, and the guided group work, problem solving and reasoning elements highlighted within lessons.
- There will be a Maths working wall in each classroom which will reflect the current unit of work
- Key vocabulary related to the current unit of work will be displayed
- Sentence stems will be displayed and used within maths lessons, and by the children in their books
- Age-appropriate place value grids, number squares and number lines will be displayed
- Models and images of concrete apparatus being used within the unit of work will be displayed on the working wall
- Times tables to be explicitly taught, as appropriate to year group, and progress tracked
- Mental maths activities, including Times Table Rock Stars, will occur daily
- Mistakes should not be rubbed out so the 'journey' of the calculation can be seen

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and lies at the heart of promoting children's progress, raising self-esteem and ensuring every pupil is known, valued and supported. High-quality assessment enables teachers to understand what pupils know, remember and can do, and to identify the next steps needed to secure strong outcomes for all learners.

Why do we assess?

We recognise three main types of assessment, each fulfilling a distinct and essential role in supporting pupil progress:

- Formative assessment – ongoing assessment for learning that informs teaching in real time
- Summative assessment – assessment of learning that evaluates attainment at a point in time
- Diagnostic assessment – assessment that identifies specific gaps, misconceptions or barriers to learning

Effective assessment for learning happens continuously in the classroom and involves:

- Promoting trusting relationships so pupils feel safe to take risks
- Valuing attitudes to learning and celebrating effort
- Encouraging and building self-esteem through supportive feedback
- Sharing learning intentions and success criteria with pupils
- Helping pupils recognise the standards they are working at and those they are aiming for
- Providing precise feedback that identifies next steps and how to achieve them
- Believing that every child can improve relative to their starting point

- Supporting pupils to review and reflect on their own progress
- Teaching self-assessment and peer-assessment techniques so pupils can identify their own areas for improvement

How do we assess?

Formative Assessment – Assessment for Learning

Formative assessment is an active, ongoing process between teacher and pupil. It is central to responsive teaching and ensures that learning is adapted swiftly and effectively. In our school, formative assessment includes:

- Live marking and verbal feedback during lessons
- Use of hinge questions, mini-whiteboards and low-stakes quizzing to check understanding
- Targeted questioning to probe depth of knowledge
- Pupil conferencing to explore understanding and misconceptions
- Use of PIXL therapies and diagnosis tools to identify precise next steps
- Review of pupils' workbooks to monitor progress over time

Formative assessment directly informs planning, ensuring teaching is adaptive, inclusive and ambitious for all learners.

Summative Assessment – Assessment of Learning

Summative assessment provides a snapshot of attainment and progress at key points in the year. It enables leaders, teachers and parents to understand how well pupils are achieving against national expectations and school-based benchmarks.

Our summative assessment approach includes:

- Termly PIXL assessments in reading, writing and mathematics
- Standardised tests to provide age-related and comparative data
- Teacher assessment judgements informed by a range of evidence
- End-of-year attainment data used to evaluate curriculum impact

Summative assessment outcomes are analysed at pupil, class, cohort and whole-school level to identify strengths, trends and areas requiring targeted support.

Aims of Assessment

Our assessment system aims to:

- Ensure assessment is central to planning, delivering and reviewing the curriculum, enabling teachers to meet pupils' needs with precision
- Use assessment data to set ambitious yet realistic targets for all pupils, raising expectations and supporting strong progress
- Provide clear, meaningful information to pupils, parents, teachers, subject leaders, senior leaders and governors
- Involve pupils in their learning through regular verbal and written feedback so they understand:
 - where they are now
 - where they are going
 - how to close the gap
- Embed self-assessment and peer-assessment within lessons so pupils develop ownership of their learning
- Use PIXL diagnostic tools to ensure interventions are timely, targeted and effective
- Ensure assessment is fair, consistent and moderated, both internally and externally

Additional Principles Specific to PIXL Practice

To ensure assessment drives improvement, we commit to:

- Using PIXL Question Level Analysis (QLA) to identify precise gaps in knowledge
- Delivering PIXL therapies to address misconceptions and secure rapid progress
- Participating in PIXL moderation and standardisation to ensure accuracy and consistency
- Using PIXL data tracking to monitor progress of individuals and groups, including disadvantaged pupils
- Embedding the PIXL principles of Diagnosis, Therapy, Testing and Re-Teaching (DTTR) across the curriculum

Actions

At a whole school level:

Maths Fluency tests are carried out every half term; PIXL is used at the end of each term in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5. Past SATs papers are used in Year 2 and Year 6 for familiarisation purposes at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms.

Pupils will be assessed in phonics and spellings through RWInc. We use statements linked to the National Curriculum objectives for Reading and Maths. We assess against age related expectations for each year group and use teacher assessment and PIXL for reading comprehension, and White Rose Hub end of unit assessments and TT Rock Stars in Maths. Internal moderations of reading and maths assessments are carried out every term for all year groups.

We use statements linked to the National Curriculum objectives for Writing. We assess against age related expectations for each year group and use 'Talk and Write' tasks at the end of every half term for assessment. Internal moderations of writing assessments are carried out every term for all year groups.

Teachers complete Teacher Assessment Framework sheets for the children in their class at the end of each unit. These should be well maintained and filled out on the writing excel spreadsheet - this will be monitored half termly by the Assessment Lead.

Data will be analysed by the Assessment Lead at the end of each term.

Pupil Progress Meetings are led by the SLT each term to track the progress of children in each class. This information is then used to:

- Share assessment information with pupils, parents and all other interested stakeholders throughout the year
- Analyse the performance of different groups of pupils eg SEND, boys and girls, PPG etc
- Identify pupils who are at risk of underachieving and plan provision for additional support and intervention programmes to support these pupils (Intervention programmes are tracked using Provision Maps)
- Measure the impact of additional support and intervention programmes on pupil progress
- Provide quality information to support cohort transfers
- Identify whole school strengths and weaknesses in Reading, Writing and Mathematics and identify areas for development

At a classroom level

The school's tracking system is used to support planning, teaching and learning and assessment for learning on a day-to-day (formative) basis by ensuring:

- Appropriate grouping of pupils to support adaptive teaching in planning
- Teachers plan for and use day-to-day assessment strategies (questioning, observing, discussing, analysing work, checking children's understanding) to gather information on children's progress against learning objectives and targets
- Teachers annotate planning in the light of ongoing assessment
- Teachers use the information they gain to identify children's next steps in their learning and inform future planning so that they can move children's learning towards and beyond the learning objective
- Teachers share the expectations, learning objective, success criteria and outcomes of a lesson or unit of at an age-appropriate level
- Teachers provide children with oral and written feedback regularly as well as opportunities to assess themselves, individually or with a partner, to identify success against the learning objective and next steps
- Teachers plan time for children to respond to oral and written feedback and to discuss the improvements made

At a pupil level

Assessment data from diagnostic tests and day-to-day (formative) classroom assessment strategies ensure that pupils:

- have high expectations of themselves and know that learning is important and enjoyable and that everyone can improve
- have the opportunity to receive additional support to help them reach their potential
- understand the purpose and aims of the work they are engaged in
- recognise their achievements and understand the steps they need to take in order to make further progress both within lessons
- are involved in whole group shared marking, appropriate to their age, which allows for discussion and analysis in a secure environment
- are sometimes engaged in creating success criteria for lesson objectives
- use success criteria to support self-assessment and peer assessment and are able to evaluate their own and others' work
- are regularly given time to respond to written and verbal feedback in order to improve their work

Feedback and Marking- see separate policy.

Target setting

The school has a number of ways that children are targeted, all of which are aimed at moving children forward. Planning is adjusted accordingly to meet these targets.

Individual targets and next steps are shared at parent consultation meetings.

We are aware of the need to keep the target setting process both manageable and constructive for both children and teachers. We acknowledge that it is an integral part of our practice and supports, encourages and challenges pupils. We encourage children to take increasing responsibility for targets and to judge their own progress towards achieving them.

End of year targets

Within our Foundation Stage, targeting is very much based on the individual child.

Staff use relevant EYFS documents to plan next steps based on a child's age and stage of development.

End of year targets for children in Key Stage 1 are based upon EYFS assessments. These targets are given for the areas of Reading, Writing and Maths.

Children in Key Stage 2 are given end of year targets that are based on their Key Stage 1 assessments results and in year tracking. These targets are given for the areas of Reading, Writing and Maths.

Reporting to Parents

Parents are invited to attend consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms at which staff discuss progress and targets for individual children. In the Summer term, parents receive a written report on their child's progress during the academic year.

Year 2 and Year 6 parents receive their child's National Curriculum assessments. There is also an opportunity for parents to discuss this report with the class teacher should they wish.

Our school runs on an open-door policy in which parents are welcome to make an appointment to come and discuss their child's progress with the class teacher at any time.

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Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

We have an ongoing, whole school approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. At the start of each term a clear timetable for monitoring is presented to staff by the SLT.

The focus for monitoring is also derived from identified priorities in the SIP and draws on the following:

- direct observation of teaching
- scrutiny of pupils' work
- scrutiny of planning
- teachers' self-evaluation
- discussion with staff
- pupil interview
- discussion with stakeholders
- analysis of assessment results
- targets set at performance management
- governor visits and their reports

The key aim of this monitoring is to learn from good practice. It helps us to identify our strengths, recognise when improvements need to be made and inform us of the next steps to move forward.

Evidence from monitoring feeds into:

- SIP
- School Self-Evaluation discussions
- School Termly Monitoring & Evaluation Reports
- Subject Action Plans
- CPD Planning
- Classroom observations
- Performance Management
- Reports to the Governing Body
- LA Advisor discussions

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is carried out at all levels within the school for the SLT to subject leaders, class teaches as well as members of the Governing Body.

Subject Leadership

Subject Leaders have responsibility for the active management of their subject(s). They help to lead improvements in the teaching and learning in their subject areas and see their role as developmental. Subject Leaders monitor standards in their subject through a range of processes, such as data analysis, work scrutiny, planning scrutiny, teacher or pupil interviews and lesson observations. Subject Leaders gather evidence to demonstrate standards and progression across the whole school and have dedicated subject leadership time to carry out monitoring activities. They are expected to lead and seek appropriate CPD for staff, draw up Action Plans each year which are evaluated termly and present and write reports for governors, providing information about standards in the subject and recommendations for further development.

Conclusion

This policy for Teaching, Learning and Assessment reflects the consensus of the whole teaching staff and has the full agreement of the Governing Body. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff and the Executive Headteacher.

Teaching staff are to make all support staff, supply teachers, pupils and parent helpers within the classroom aware of this policy.

This policy was ratified and adopted by the Governing Body: July2026

Reviewed: July 2026