



# Curriculum, Assessment and Teaching Policy

**Reviewed by Governors:** September 2024

**Next review:** September 2026

## **Curriculum and Assessment - features and rationale**

At Little Ilford School, the curriculum is:

- rich in powerful knowledge and language, which is specified, taught, assessed and securely learnt
- exceptionally well planned and sequenced, utilising the teachings from cognitive science
- exceptional in its use of assessment and feedback to support learning
- the responsibility of all teachers
- manageable for teachers; supportive of teacher workload and wellbeing

### **Rich in powerful knowledge, which is specified, taught, assessed and securely learnt**

Our curricula will...

- a) seek to provide the 'best' knowledge as defined by subject communities
- b) specify the powerful knowledge of each subject, precisely identifying substantive, disciplinary and experiential knowledge within each subject
- c) precisely identify the key takeaway knowledge from each lesson and unit of study, to help ensure the proximal and ultimate purpose of lessons and units are achieved for all students.
- d) break down each strand of disciplinary knowledge into its component parts, to help support robust skill acquisition across the curriculum.
- e) take account of the learning journey before (KS2) and the one that follows (KS4/5), but not be reductionist from it.
- f) ensure disciplinary language is identified and the development of reading and disciplinary literacy is clearly planned for.
- g) identify common misconceptions and where appropriate standardised subject specific approaches to addressing these.
- h) see the value in and embed experiential knowledge and cultural capital opportunities in order to support and enhance student learning within the classroom and enable students to take their place as informed, active citizens..

### **Exceptionally well planned and sequenced, utilising the teachings from cognitive science**

- All subject curricula will have a clear and convincing rationale for what is being taught, when it is being taught and how it will be assessed.
- Curriculum planning will specify exactly when and how threshold concepts and themes will be revisited and interleaved to ensure knowledge is retained over time.

The sequencing of our curricula recognises that:

- a) Knowledge is important to all thinking; we understand new things in relation to what we already know. Sequencing and threshold concepts are therefore key.
- b) The working memory is limited in capacity - the planning and mapping of our curricula takes into account how to manage the 'cognitive load' of students, avoiding

the 'overload' of the working memory and planning for the acquisition of fluency of various components before asking students to combine them in challenging syntheses.

- c) The purposeful retrieval of knowledge helps us to transfer it into our long term memories and ensures it can be retrieved when needed in order to be used by the working memory. Strategic retrieval and interleaving within our curricula is therefore carefully planned.
- d) We build fluency and memory in what we rehearse. We must 'Practice Perfect'; we therefore build flexibility within our curricula to address misconceptions, break through assumptions and model excellence.
- e) Within the long term memory knowledge is conceived of as being stored in schemata: webs of connected ideas whose organisation carries meaning. Curricula will therefore sequence in a way that allows students to develop their schemata for the subject in question.

### **Exceptional in its use of assessment and feedback to support learning**

#### **Assessments...**

- are expertly designed and conducted at appropriate times to maximise student learning. Schemes of learning will allow flexibility for teachers to discern the most appropriate time for students to undertake their assessments and work on feedback.
- will have high levels of validity (they test understanding of the core knowledge and skills as specified in the curriculum), and reliability (they allow the teacher to make reliable inferences about what a student has learnt and where gaps remain). Consequently, assessment and feedback will not only further student learning and teacher insight but inform future planning.
- are regularly moderated within departments for the purpose of improving and maintaining the quality of assessment and feedback.
- acknowledge that new learning is usually forgotten unless steps are taken to revisit and refresh learning. We are therefore wary of assuming students have securely learnt material until they can recall and apply at a later stage. Consequently, we plan to 'interleave' throughout schemes of learning and assessments
- Summative assessments are standardised across each subject and formative assessments and feedback strategies centrally agreed within the department A&F precis.
- Assessment data is consistently recorded and updated on Go4Schools in a meaningful way and timely manner.
- Assessment data is utilised by all stakeholders to rigorously and regularly evaluate the impact of the curriculum, assessment and teaching strategies on student learning and to identify next steps in terms of curriculum adaptations and support for staff and students.

#### **Feedback...**

- will be planned into our schemes of learning at appropriate times to maximise student learning.
- will prioritise improving student learning and engendering a culture of student reflection and independence.
- will be student-led; teachers should not have to work harder than students to make

progress in their learning.

- appreciates that learning is incremental and applying teacher feedback takes time
- is most effective when students know the criteria and are able to self-report their strengths and targets for improvement.
- is multi-model and can be achieved through different methods; verbal responses, written responses, coding, tutorials, peer and self assessment/feedback.

### **The responsibility of all teachers**

Every teacher has the responsibility to:

- Maintain deep and fluent knowledge of the curriculum content they teach, and how it fits into the subject's broader curriculum design
- Use agreed curriculum documentation (LTP, SoL, Knowledge takeaways) to guide and learning and ensure it is well organised over time
- Maintain deep and fluent knowledge of the relevant language and terminology related to the subject taught
- Understand typical ways students think about subjects, concepts, process and ideas, anticipating common misconceptions and planning teaching to take account of these.
- Uphold the School's expectations regarding assessment and feedback.

### **Manageable for teachers; supportive of teacher workload and wellbeing**

- Effective curriculum planning will ensure...
  - teachers are always clear on what needs to be taught, in what order, to what time scale and how/when this is to be formatively and summatively assessed.
  - teachers are free to concentrate more of their attention on the delivery of the curriculum in their classrooms with skill and energy.
  - core resources - including SoL, takeaway knowledge documents, formative and summative assessments, lesson resources- are easily accessible to all teachers of that course.
- Teachers will be supported to develop subject specific pedagogy through regular training opportunities, regular standardisation and moderation, and subject knowledge discussions/training within JPTs and CTMs.
- Assessment and Feedback practices focus on the key principle of impact, not format, removing rigid marking structures from teachers, and allowing them to focus on what is best for their students and their progress.

## **Teaching:**

Our work on teaching and learning focuses on the elements of our practice which research shows make the greatest difference to student progress, achievement and learning; drawing on the work of Rosenshine (Tom Sherrington), Rob Coe, Tom Bennett, Dylan Wiliam, Daisy Christodoulou, Sweller and the EEF.

The quality of teaching is monitored through the LWs Policy and system a and the LIS Success Criteria will be used to determine the alignment of lessons to the pedagogy outlined above.

**Every teacher at Little Ilford has a responsibility to plan well-constructed lessons by:**

- planning backwards from the intended learning outcomes outlined within the curriculum and ensuring all learning builds towards this.
- using knowledge gained from assessment to understand the needs of students and plan for the appropriate next steps in their learning.
- using student information to plan for how you will support access to learning for all students.
- planning for learning to activate and build on student prior knowledge
- planning for common misconceptions
- planning for the explicit teaching of literacy skills, both general and subject specific

**Every teacher at Little Ilford has the responsibility within their lessons to:**

- **Create a positive climate for learning by:**
  - having good entry routines to the classroom; greeting students at the threshold, having a Do Now in place and expecting students to enter quietly, set up their desks and begin the Do Now immediately.
  - having high expectations for engagement and challenging those who opt out of learning
  - using clear signals and routines for stopping the class, and ensuring they are followed by students
  - ensuring students track the teacher/speaker at all times and comply with instructions
  - using precise praise for students whose behaviour supports a positive learning environment
  - using positive framing to communicate and reiterate the learning behaviours we wish to see.
  - using sanctions where needed and following the BfL protocols effectively.
- **Embed retrieval practice and the regular review of learning by:**
  - beginning every lesson with a Do Now that is a short review of previous learning, particularly that which is relevant to the day's lesson.
  - exploring the learning intention with students, highlighting how the lesson sits within the learning journey of both the unit and curriculum.
  - interleaving retrieval and learning reviews to consolidate memory and reinforce fluency.
- **Make use of effective questioning and regularly check for understanding by:**
  - asking a large number of questions to a significant number of students in greater depth, in order to challenge and check the understanding of all students
  - using a wide range of questioning techniques, such as cold call, no opt out, probing questions, say it again better, whole class response and think pair share.

- using questioning to ask students the process they used to answer the question and explain how/why the answer was found
- adapting teaching in response to assessment for learning within the lesson.
- **Sequence concepts and make effective use of modelling by:**
  - presenting new material using small steps, limiting the amount of material students receive at one time and ensuring each step is practised and mastered before the next is introduced.
  - modelling processes and thinking by:
    - thinking aloud to demonstrate how to solve a problem
    - providing multiple worked examples as a step by step demonstration of how to perform a task or how to solve a problem.
  - using success criteria alongside examples of work to help students understand what success looks like
  - providing additional scaffolding tools to allow access to challenging content, such as cue cards, prompts or checklists, that complete part of the task for the students, or model the completed task against which students can compare their own work.
- **Provide a high level of practice for all students by:**
  - committing to the I do, we do, you do approach
  - completing guided practice so the chance of forming misconceptions is minimised.
  - actively seeking opportunities for students to reflect on their own learning, e.g, through DIRT (Designated Improvement and Reflection Time) activities - students have the opportunity to learn from mistakes.
  - continually evaluating the success rate of our students, which if too low, we use as a basis to re-teach, re-explain and re-model.
  - providing students with the opportunity for independent, monitored practice - to do the things they have been taught, by themselves, when they are ready.

## Responsibilities:

- **The Senior Leadership Team** is responsible for overseeing the successful implementation, continued refinement, monitoring and evaluation of the school's approaches to curriculum, assessment and teaching in accordance with the principles and practices outlined above.
- **Curriculum Team Leaders** are responsible for ensuring:
  - the curriculum is clearly defined, resourced and adhered to within their respective subject areas
  - teachers are clear as to the curriculum expectations for their subject and are supported to develop the deep knowledge required for successful curriculum delivery
  - the consistency of teaching and learning within their subject area, supporting staff in developing their pedagogy.

- **Teachers** are responsible for:
  - reading, understanding and implementing the taught curriculum and approaches to assessment and feedback.
  - learning the content of the curriculum in depth and detail, so they are able to deliver content with authority, fluency and flexibility
  - the ongoing development of their own teaching practice