

## **St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School**

*We give thanks to God , work together and always try our best.*

*Shining in little ways for all to see.*

### **Teaching and Learning Policy**

**2026**

## Teaching And Learning Practice at St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

At St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, our mission is to provide every child with a rich, ambitious, and inclusive education rooted in our Catholic values. We believe that high-quality teaching is the most powerful lever for improving outcomes for all pupils, particularly those who may face barriers to learning. This Teaching and Learning Policy sets out the principles and practices that underpin excellent classroom provision across our school.

Our approach is grounded in Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, a well-established, research-informed framework that supports effective teaching through clear explanations, modelling, practice, and review. These principles ensure that learning is broken down into manageable steps, misconceptions are addressed early, and pupils are supported to achieve success with increasing independence. They provide a consistent, evidence-based structure that enables all teachers to deliver high-quality instruction and all pupils to thrive.

Alongside Rosenshine, we draw on the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) guidance, which highlights the importance of explicit instruction, scaffolding, retrieval practice, and responsive teaching. By integrating Rosenshine's principles with the EEF's recommendations, we ensure that our teaching practices are academically rigorous and grounded in the best available evidence of what works in the classroom.

In addition, our whole-school practice is enriched by Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion* techniques and The Teaching and Learning Playbook by Michael Feely and Ben Karlin, which offer practical, high-impact strategies for creating calm, focused, and intellectually demanding classrooms. These techniques—such as establishing strong routines, maintaining high expectations, and ensuring full participation—support our commitment to excellence and align closely with our Catholic ethos of dignity, respect, and aspiration for every child.

Together, these frameworks shape a shared, whole-school approach to teaching and learning that:

1. promotes clarity, consistency, and high expectations
2. supports pupils to know more, remember more, and do more
3. ensures that teaching is adaptive, inclusive, and responsive to need
4. builds strong foundations for long-term learning and success

At St Gregory's, we are committed to continually refining our practice so that every child receives the highest quality education. This policy outlines how we bring these principles to life in our classrooms each day.

## Key Pedagogical Influences

### 1. Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction

- **Scaffolding and Sequencing:** Lessons are carefully structured to build knowledge step by step, supported by clear modelling and guided practice.
- **Effective Questioning and Retrieval:** Teachers check for understanding frequently and strengthen long-term memory through regular questioning and retrieval activities.
- **Cumulative Practice:** Pupils are given repeated opportunities to practise, revisit, and embed knowledge, ensuring deep and secure understanding over time.

### 2. Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

- **Evidence-Informed Interventions:** We adopt strategies identified by the EEF as having the greatest impact on pupil outcomes, including high-quality feedback, metacognitive approaches, and purposeful collaborative learning.
- **Focus on Disadvantaged Learners:** Guided by EEF research, we implement targeted support to narrow the attainment gap and ensure equity of opportunity for all pupils.
- **Evaluative Culture:** We continuously review the impact of our teaching practices, using the EEF's rigorous evidence base to inform ongoing improvement.

### 3. Doug Lemov – *Teach Like a Champion*

- **High Expectations and Strong Routines:** We use TLAC techniques to establish consistent, purposeful routines that maximise learning time and create calm, focused classrooms.
- **Instructional Precision:** Strategies such as *Cold Call*, *No Opt Out*, and *Show Call* ensure full participation, high levels of thinking, and clarity in pupil responses.
- **Warm/Strict Relationships:** Lemov's emphasis on combining warmth with firm, fair expectations supports our Catholic ethos of respect, dignity, and compassion.
- **Practical, High-Impact Techniques:** TLAC provides staff with concrete, actionable methods that strengthen behaviour, engagement, and academic challenge across the school.

### 4. The Teaching and Learning Playbook

- **Consistent, High-Quality Classroom Practice:** The Playbook provides a shared, whole-school framework for what excellent teaching looks like every day. It ensures that all staff work from a common set of evidence-informed practices, promoting consistency and clarity across subjects and phases.
- **Practical, Actionable Strategies:** Each element of the Playbook breaks down effective teaching into clear, replicable techniques that teachers can implement immediately. This supports staff in translating research into classroom reality, strengthening the impact of their practice.



- **Focus on Core Instructional Routines:** The Playbook emphasises routines that maximise learning—such as explicit instruction, guided practice, structured talk, and purposeful independent work—ensuring that pupils experience high-quality teaching in every lesson.
- **Equity and Inclusion at the Centre:** By outlining approaches that support all learners—including those with SEND and those facing disadvantage—the Playbook reinforces our commitment to ensuring every pupil can access, engage with, and succeed in the curriculum.

## How We Translate This Into Daily Teaching Practice

### 1. Lesson Planning and Delivery

- Lessons are meticulously planned, embedding EEF-endorsed strategies such as retrieval practice, scaffolding, and deliberate practice.
- Adaptive teaching ensures all learners, including those with additional needs, are supported and challenged effectively.

### 2. Feedback and Assessment

- Teachers provide high-quality feedback, following the EEF's guidance to promote student progress and develop metacognitive skills.
- Assessment for learning is central to lessons, enabling responsive teaching that addresses misconceptions and consolidates understanding.

### 3. Classroom Environment

- Classrooms are calm, structured, and focused, fostering an environment where students can thrive academically.
- Routines and behaviour management strategies, rooted in Lemov's research, maximise learning time.

### 4. Student Engagement and Mastery

- Regular retrieval practice, low-stakes quizzing, and spaced learning, as recommended by Rosenshine and the EEF, support long-term retention.
- Lessons are mastery-focused, ensuring students achieve fluency and independence in key concepts.

## Structure of a Typical Lesson

### 1. Do Now / Retrieval

- **What it looks like:** A short, independent task completed immediately as pupils enter the room.
- **Why we do it:** This activates prior knowledge and strengthens long-term memory and creates a calm, purposeful start.

### 2. New Learning / Concept Introduction (I Do)

- **What it is:** The teacher introduces the new concept, skill, or knowledge for the lesson, beginning with 'I do' modelling.
- **Why we do it:** This provides clear, concise explanations and ensures pupils understand the purpose of the lesson. It also allows teachers to model high-quality thinking and language, supporting Rosenshine's "small steps" and Lemov's "I Do" phase.

### 3. Guided Practice (We Do)

- **What it is:** Teacher and pupils work through examples together, with scaffolds in place.
- **Why we do it:** This reduces cognitive load by practising with support and allows the teacher to check for understanding in real time. Guided practice also builds confidence before children begin independent work.

### 4. Independent Practice (You Do)

- **What it is:** Pupils apply the new learning independently.
- **Why we do it:** This gives pupils the opportunity to transfer learning without scaffolds. During this time, teachers can circulate, support, and address misconceptions.

### 5. Challenge / Deepening Tasks

- **What it is:** Opportunities for pupils to extend, apply, or reason more deeply.
- **Why we do it:** This ensures high expectations for all learners and encourages reasoning, problem-solving, and creativity. It also supports mastery by deepening understanding, not accelerating content.

## 6. Review / Plenary

- **What it is:** A short, purposeful end-of-lesson check.
- **Why we do it:** A plenary or review reinforces key learning and vocabulary and provides feedback on what pupils have understood. It also helps teachers plan the next steps.

### Why We Use This Structure Across All Subjects

- **Consistency reduces cognitive load** — pupils know what to expect.
- **It aligns with evidence-based practice** (Rosenshine, EEF, Lemov).
- **It supports inclusion** — predictable routines help all learners, especially those with SEND.
- **It builds teacher expertise** — staff share a common language and approach.
- **It strengthens behaviour** — routines create calm, focused classrooms.
- **It ensures high expectations** — every lesson is structured for success.

## Teaching and Learning Non-Negotiables (Aligned with The St Gregory's Way)

### 1. High Expectations

Why it matters:

High expectations signal belief in every child's potential. When teachers consistently demand precision, effort, and high-quality work, pupils rise to meet those standards. This directly supports The St Gregory's Way by encouraging pupils to show independence, take pride in their learning, and demonstrate respect for themselves and others.

### 2. Calm and Purposeful Start

Why it matters:

A focused beginning sets the tone for the entire lesson. Calm entry routines and immediate engagement (e.g., a Do Now) maximise learning time and help pupils transition into a learning mindset. This reflects The St Gregory's Way by promoting self-discipline, readiness, and respectful behaviour.

### 3. Retrieval Practice

Why it matters:

Regular retrieval strengthens long-term memory and prevents forgetting. Revisiting prior learning helps pupils build secure foundations and make meaningful connections. This supports independence, as pupils become increasingly confident in recalling and applying knowledge.

### 4. Clear Routines

Why it matters:

Predictable routines reduce cognitive load and create a safe, structured environment. When pupils know what to do and how to do it, they can focus on learning rather than instructions. Clear routines also reinforce The St Gregory's Way by modelling respectful behaviour, responsibility, and effective communication.

### 5. High-Quality Questioning

Why it matters:

Questioning drives thinking and deepens understanding. Effective questioning checks for misconceptions, challenges pupils to reason, and ensures full participation. This nurtures communication skills and encourages pupils to articulate their thinking clearly and respectfully.

## **6. Adaptive Teaching (Not Differentiation by Task)**

Why it matters:

Adaptive teaching ensures all pupils access the same ambitious curriculum while receiving the support or challenge they need. This approach avoids capping expectations and instead promotes independence, resilience, and equity — key elements of The St Gregory's Way.

## **7. Live Feedback and Ongoing Assessment**

Why it matters:

Responsive teaching depends on real-time information. Live feedback helps pupils correct errors immediately and improves the quality of their work. This builds independence and encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning, reflecting the values of respect and self-improvement.

## **8. Clear Focus on Learning Objectives**

Why it matters:

Clarity about what pupils are learning (not just what they are doing) ensures lessons are purposeful and coherent. When objectives are explicit, pupils understand the direction of learning and can evaluate their own progress. This supports independence and helps pupils communicate their understanding confidently.

## **9. Positive Behaviour Management**

Why it matters:

Positive, consistent behaviour systems create classrooms where pupils feel safe, respected, and ready to learn. Warm/strict approaches, praise for effort, and clear boundaries protect learning time and reinforce The St Gregory's Way by modelling respect, kindness, and responsibility.

## Assessment Strategies

At St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, assessment is central to monitoring progress, identifying gaps in knowledge, and ensuring students achieve their full potential. We use a blend of formative and summative assessment methods to inform teaching and learning, support student development, and maintain high academic standards.

### Formative Assessment

**Why We Use It:** Helps teachers gauge depth of knowledge, clarify misconceptions, and stretch thinking.

### Use of Mini Whiteboards

- **What It Is:** Students use mini whiteboards to respond to teacher questions or complete short tasks during lessons.
- **Why We Use It:** Enables teachers to check understanding in real-time, identify misconceptions, and provide immediate feedback.
- **Impact:** Improves student engagement, provides instant insights into learning, and allows for responsive teaching.

### Targeted Questioning

- **What It Is:** Teachers use planned and probing questions to assess students' understanding of key concepts.
- **Impact:** Promotes active participation and deepens understanding.

### Retrieval Practice

- **What It Is:** Regular low-stakes quizzes or activities to revisit prior learning.
- **Why We Use It:** Strengthens memory retention and ensures knowledge is embedded in long-term memory.
- **Impact:** Builds confidence and fluency in key knowledge and skills.

### Why This Approach Works

**Real-Time Insights:** Formative methods like mini whiteboards and questioning allow teachers to adapt lessons dynamically to meet students' needs.

## **Summative Assessment**

### **1. End of topic assessments**

- **What They Are:** Assessments completed at the end of a specific unit or topic to evaluate mastery of content.
- **Why We Use Them:** Measures students' progress in relation to curriculum objectives and identifies areas for improvement.
- **Impact:** Provides detailed insights into student performance and informs future planning.

### **2. Ark Maths Assessments**

- **What They Are:** Regular arithmetic tests completed every half term using the Ark Maths framework, alongside termly assessments focused on reasoning and problem-solving skills. These assessments track fluency, conceptual understanding, and the application of mathematical thinking.
- **Why We Use Them:** Ensures consistent monitoring of pupils' mathematical development across the year. Arithmetic assessments highlight progress in core skills, while reasoning and problem-solving papers reveal depth of understanding and the ability to apply knowledge in unfamiliar contexts.
- **Impact:** Provides a balanced picture of attainment, enabling teachers to identify gaps in fluency or reasoning. This supports targeted intervention, informs planning, and ensures pupils are prepared for cumulative assessments and statutory expectations.

### **3. Use of Smartgrade for Question-Level Analysis**

- **What It Is:** A digital analysis tool that breaks down assessment outcomes at question level, highlighting strengths and misconceptions across classes, groups, and individuals.
- **Why We Use It:** Allows teachers to pinpoint specific skills or concepts that require reteaching. Patterns across cohorts can be identified quickly, supporting responsive teaching and curriculum refinement.
- **Impact:** Enhances the precision of feedback and intervention. Teachers can adapt future lessons based on real-time data, ensuring that teaching is tightly aligned to pupils' needs and that progress is accelerated through informed instructional decisions.

### **4. Testbase Assessments for SPaG and Reading**

- **What They Are:** Standardised assessments drawn from the Testbase question bank, used to evaluate pupils' attainment in spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) as well as reading comprehension. These assessments mirror the style and demand of national curriculum tests, providing high-quality, curriculum-aligned questions.
- **Why We Use Them:** Ensures pupils regularly engage with rigorous question formats that reflect statutory expectations. Testbase allows teachers to assess both knowledge and application, identifying how well pupils can interpret texts, apply grammatical understanding, and respond to varied question types.

- **Impact:** Offers reliable, comparable data across cohorts and year groups. Teachers gain clear insight into specific SPaG skills or reading domains that require further teaching. This supports targeted intervention, strengthens curriculum sequencing, and builds pupils' confidence with assessment-style questions.

### **Why This Approach Works**

- **Real-Time Insights:** Formative methods like mini whiteboards and questioning allow teachers to adapt lessons dynamically to meet students' needs.
- **Comprehensive Evaluation:** Summative assessments provide detailed data on student progress and ensure accountability at both individual and organisational levels.
- **Building Student Confidence:** Regular assessments, both formative and summative, develop students' ability to recall and apply knowledge effectively.