



Forward Together

☒ War-rag War-barth

Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy Agreed by Governing Body	September 2022
Policy to be reviewed again on:	September 2023

Our Penpol School Vision:

Penpol pupils are **curious**, **creative** and **courageous** learners.
Our school community believes in **authenticity** as the
foundations of deep-rooted learning.

Our team is cohesive, reflective and outward-facing. Consequently, we are ever-poised to learn and grow. This policy serves as a collaborative and adaptive tool, designed to develop and evolve alongside us in response to evidence of what works best for our pupils. Every member of our team has a role to play in shaping this policy and in further honing our provision at Penpol School.

Our ambitious work is underpinned by a number of key principles, each outlined below.

We build positive relationships with all.

At Penpol School, we are committed to empowering every pupil with an enduring *belief* in themselves, in their own capacity for growth and in that of the world around them. We understand that it is our duty to demonstrate unconditional positive regard to every child in our care, particularly when this feels most challenging.

We foster an authentic understanding of every child in order that we can best meet their needs and so that they feel proud of who they are. This often requires a deeper learning of their individual contexts, working closely and creatively with families and, critically, recognising the power that our every word and action as trusted adults can have.

Our Relationships and Safe Touch Policy provides further guidance here: <https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/2020/09/13/relationships-and-safe-touch-policy/>

We are a restorative school.

We gained Registered Restorative Organisation status with the Restorative Justice Council in July 2022. We are proud of the impact that this approach has upon all in Penpol and are determined that, wherever children make mistakes with their behaviour, they are treated with dignity and respect and supported to learn. Our Behaviour for Learning Policy can be found here: <https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/2022/07/12/behaviour-policy/>.

We maintain high expectations for every child.

Without exception, we provide challenge to each child in every lesson. This is supported by the following tools:

- Deliberate, tailored and well-paced lesson design, ensuring that not a second of children's valuable time is wasted. Teachers in each year group plan together to make the most of their own time, resources, creativity and expertise.
- Detailed provision mapping (using the Provision Map software), ensuring best use of resources and intervention.
- Rigorous application of our Feedback for Learning Policy, ensuring that planning is clearly focused upon pupils' existing understanding:

<https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/2022/09/16/feedback-on-learning-policy/>

- A forensic focus upon the learning needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with additional learning needs, aided by regular progress reviews.
- Where appropriate, children with additional learning needs may be regularly supported by skilled teaching assistants. This does not replace the input of the class teacher who also remains responsible for planning and resourcing.
- Our suggested curriculum adaptations document provides helpful examples of classroom strategies related to each area of learning need:

<https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/2022/09/21/send-provision-in-national-curriculum-subjects/>

- We regularly consult with specialist colleagues within and beyond the school.
- We communicate effectively with parents so that our high expectations are shared and supported at home.
- We replace the noun 'work' with 'learning' where possible, maintaining a focus upon cognitive development rather than task-completion.
- Pupils from different year groups support one another, through buddy reading, learning buddies and other initiatives.

Oracy is the golden thread which runs through every lesson.

Penpol pupils use talk in each lesson to corroborate, secure and extend their understanding. Teachers plan carefully for talk and all colleagues support children in their learning *through* talk and their learning *to* talk – with confidence, clarity and openness.

Our Oracy Policy details specific strategies used across the school such as the *Agree, Build, Challenge* approach:

<https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/2022/06/29/oracy-policy/>

We understand the power of vocabulary.

Developing a broad and varied vocabulary can help every child to unlock the world of learning and beyond. However, some children start school having heard thirty million fewer words than their peers (Hart and Risley, 2003). Too often, a child's available vocabulary can influence how others perceive their capacity to learn and grow. We work hard to counter this.

Our team plan for the direct instruction of vocabulary across the curriculum, with a particular focus upon 'tier two' vocabulary –

challenging words which appear in a range of contexts. Each time we speak is an opportunity to *model* the use of such vocabulary.

Children not yet developing vocabulary in line with their peers are provided with support and intervention which accelerates their progress.

Children write every day, across the curriculum and frequently at length.

Our pupils love to write and are provided with daily opportunities to do so at length, across the curriculum. To this end, teachers plan carefully for extended writing opportunities, with a focus upon the learning process rather than completion.

Our English Teaching Sequence can be found here:

<https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/2020/02/14/english-teaching-sequence/>

Children learn how they learn best.

We recognise that children's learning takes root when they are able to recognise and use strategies that they know work for them. Staff plan experiences which explicitly teach metacognitive processes, supporting each child to make conscious choices about the strategies they use.

Following the Education Endowment Foundation's *seven-step model* (linked below), lessons are planned to include the *modelling* of thinking about learning and the deliberate shifting of responsibility from the teacher to the pupil.

The seven-step model can be found here:

https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/metacognition/Seven_step_model_1.0.pdf?v=1644475400

Well-balanced mental health is a prerequisite for effective learning.

We recognise the great challenges placed upon the mental health of children and their families at present and understand that, in order to be ready to learn, children need to feel safe and heard. We take the time to talk openly and constructively about mental health and wellbeing during the school day.

Each classroom hosts an '*I wish my teacher knew*' box, allowing children to communicate worries to their teacher without the potential barrier of a face-to-face conversation.

Teachers work closely with our wellbeing and leadership teams to ensure that every child is well supported in their mental health.

Our ambitious curriculum is knowledge informed; skills rich.

Precise and perceptive planning ensures that each lesson counts for every child. The world is amazing and we are committed to instilling in each of our pupils a sense of wonder and a thirst to discover as curious, creative and courageous learners.

Our children learn best when lessons are exciting, challenging, creative, collaborative and reflective. Our lessons inspire children to ask further questions and to assume ownership of their individual learning journey.

We deliver the National Curriculum:

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425601/PRIMARY_national_curriculum.pdf)

At Penpol, our curriculum is carefully mapped into key concepts which pupils revisit regularly (thus embed effectively) throughout their time in primary school. This spiral curriculum enables the deep and enduring mastery of concepts. More details of our curriculum mapping can be found here: <https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/curriculum/>

Teachers support children to break learning intentions down into achievable success criteria which, in turn, support pupils to assess their own learning.

Responsibility for curriculum delivery sits with each member of our team and is underpinned by the expertise of our skilled and passionate subject leaders. Teachers plan together in year-group pairs and make regular use of the input and feedback of our support staff.

There is more to every school than the National Curriculum. Our wider offer is enshrined as a firm entitlement for all through our 360° Curriculum. Through this, each child challenges themselves to **adventure** further than ever before, to jump in at the deep end with new **experiences**, to get to grips with nature in **Forest School** and to contribute to the wider world through **citizenship** projects. Details of our 360° Curriculum are here: <https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/360-degree/>

We are a proudly inclusive organisation.

Representation matters, particularly in areas with relatively less visible diversity such as Cornwall. Our teachers select key figures, examples, names, images, stories and visitors with great care to ensure that all those at risk of marginalisation feel explicitly recognised.

We adopt the social model of disability – recognising that it is our duty to adapt and evolve to meet the needs of those in our community, rather than the other way around.

We are deeply mindful of the journey towards equality upon which our society is travelling and of the progress still to be achieved. We remain ever open and ready to learn as a staff team.

More information about our equality and diversity work can be found here: <https://www.penpolschool.co.uk/diversity-and-inclusion/>

Some of the best learning happens outdoors.

We plan for lessons across the curriculum to take place outdoors for a number of reasons:

- Time connecting with nature supports good mental health.
- Children often feel more comfortable when they are able to move and be active, aiding the learning process.
- The space in which a lesson takes place influences how readily it is remembered. By harnessing the power of special spaces around our site, we help children to build enduring memories of learning activities.

Children are grouped flexibly; we avoid streaming at Penpol.

We recognise the detrimental impact that streaming by prior attainment can have upon children's self-esteem and belief in themselves, particularly where groupings are perceived by children to be fixed. Webster et al (2017) found that attainment grouping can have a negative impact upon pupil motivation.

We understand also that children have much to gain from learning alongside peers with a different understanding to them, building confidence and honing skills of articulation.

The Education Endowment Foundation recommends flexible grouping as a part of its 'High Quality Daily Teaching: Five a Day Approach'.

At Penpol, children learn alongside peers with a range of prior attainment. They are drawn together flexibly for additional input according to specific levels of understanding around key concepts. For example, a teacher may lead a focus group with children working to develop their confidence in self-editing. We avoid regular grouping on set tables according to prior attainment.

An exception to this rule is our fidelity to the Read Write Inc. programme for early reading. Here, children are grouped according to half-termly assessments, ensuring that their input best matches their individual needs.

Each aspect of the learning environment matters.

The spaces a child learns in provide clear messages about the value placed upon their learning. We take great care in our presentation and upkeep of the learning environment so that classrooms are stimulating, challenging, focussed, warm and comfortable.

- Classrooms are well-designed, carefully planned and conducive to engaging and collaborative learning.
- Engaging and well-maintained displays support learning across the curriculum and celebrate children's achievements. Surface areas are incorporated into displays.
- Diversity is proudly represented throughout classrooms and shared areas.
- English and Maths learning walls display modelled learning and chart the learning journey.
- In Maths, the journey from physical through visual to abstract is clearly scaffolded.
- Vocabulary walls support the 'magpie-ing' and application of new Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary.
- Every classroom hosts an engaging, comfortable and well-resourced book corner.
- Resources are well organised and clearly labelled, allowing children to manage their learning independently.
- All resources on display are for children's use. Teachers' resources are stored in cupboards.
- Clear responsibilities are assigned to all colleagues and pupils to ensure that our learning environment remains at its best at all times.
- Classrooms for younger children are carefully designed to facilitate learning through play and exploration in line with the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

Children take pride in their learning.

Staff hold high expectations of children's presentation of learning in books, conveying the message that all learning matters. Book expectations are agreed for key subjects and for each phase and these are clearly modelled to pupils. Presentation is carefully monitored by teachers and, where pupils are not following expectations, this is challenged and supported swiftly.

Children are actively encouraged to edit and improve their learning clearly and tidily, taking care to support and encourage pupils' self-esteem.

Books are shared regularly in phase meetings and reviewed by the leadership team as an integral part of the performance management process.

Our values lead us.

Our school values are: respect, honesty, friendship, creativity, resilience and integrity.

We focus on these values in our learning across the curriculum and during assemblies. They form a key part of our Behaviour for Learning policy. Critically, they help to inform how we behave towards others and frame our understanding of the wider world. Each member of our team actively models and celebrates these values.

We are preparing children for a future which is impossible to predict.

Children at Penpol are provided with a wide range of rich *digital learning* opportunities. Regularly accessing a range of digital tools to access learning across the curriculum, children become increasingly fluent and discerning when selecting most appropriate tools to aid exploration, communication and discovery.

Effective digital learning at Penpol has the following characteristics:

- Children are taught to critically evaluate information streams. Lessons focus specifically upon exploring the reliability of information and upon balancing opinion with wider research.
- Children are given opportunities to communicate with others in unfamiliar parts of the globe, building a deep appreciation for the benefits that a connected world can bring.
- Through technology, children regularly visit international areas of interest, explore microbiological simulations, witness landmark moments throughout history and travel across space to inspire, extend and consolidate learning across the curriculum.
- Children become prolific digital creators, compiling, editing and communicating their learning in increasingly diverse ways.

Our youngest pupils receive the strongest start.

At Penpol School we believe that the balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities is vital. We take into account children's interests and offer suitable challenge for activities and learning.

Play (structured and self-initiated) and talk are key ways in which young children learn and consolidate their learning. Play and independent self-initiated learning is supported by well-resourced

provision. The classrooms are organised to give the children space to move about safely and with ease.

To provide high quality child-initiated learning we ensure that there is:

- Provision for a stimulating learning environment both inside and outside across all areas of learning with engaging and challenging learning outcomes.
- A variety of high quality, stimulating resources for children to experience and interact with.
- Planning which draws upon both the revised EYFS framework and the needs and interests of the children themselves.

We understand that parents and guardians are our pupils' first teachers.

Securing the strongest start in school relies heavily upon close and effective partnership working with parents and guardians from the very beginning. We are committed to building trusting, respectful and meaningful relationships with every family, allowing us to draw upon our pupils' earliest years of learning as they start school.