Teaching and Learning Policy

St Vincent's School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

'We Love, Live, Learn and Grow.'

Approved by:	Mr. L. Green	**Date:** 19/09/2025
Last reviewed on:	09/2026	
Next review due by:	09/2028	

School Mission Statement

Mission:

'Inspired by the example of St. Vincent we strive to create a safe and caring teaching and learning environment where all love, live, learn and grow in community to serve God and the Common Good'.

Vision:

Our vision is to nurture and empower our young people to lead fulfilled and independent lives by providing outstanding education and care. We work to make this vision a lived reality through.

- Inclusive Education: Provide a broad, rich and accessible curriculum that meets the needs of all children and young people with sensory impairments.
- Preparation for Adulthood: Prepare all young people with the essential life skills to live confidently and independently.
- Independence and Habilitation: Provide expert habilitation work of an excellent standard for children and young people.
- Community Engagement: Foster a sense of belonging through partnerships with families, community organisations and wider support networks.
- Technological Empowerment: Embrace adaptive and assistive technology that allows them to connect, communicate, and explore the world as visually impaired young people - being responsive to emerging and changing technologies.

This vision is underpinned by our Catholic faith, expressed through daily collective worship, assemblies, school routines, curriculum and policies which reflect Gospel values such as faithfulness, honesty, dignity, compassion, gentleness, justice, forgiveness, holiness, tolerance, peace and service.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how we create an environment at our school where pupils learn best and love to do so
- Summarise expectations to ensure everyone is committed to achieving a consistent approach to teaching and learning across our school
- Promote high expectations and raise standards of achievement for all pupils in our school
- Involve pupils, parents/carers and the wider school community in pupils' learning and development
- Ensure our curriculum and teaching align with the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and meet the specific needs of pupils with sensory impairments and other complex needs
- Provide a clear framework for evidence-based, effective teaching that supports all pupils to achieve and thrive

2. Our guiding principles

Pupils learn best at our school when they:

- Have their basic physical needs met
- Feel secure, safe and valued
- Feel a sense of belonging to the group
- Are engaged and motivated
- Have the physical space and the tools needed
- Have access to the necessary materials in accessible formats
- Are guided, taught or helped in appropriate ways at appropriate times
- Can apply the learning in both familiar and new contexts
- Can persevere when learning is hard
- Can manage their emotions if things are not going well
- Recognise that all learners make mistakes and mistakes can help us learn
- Are taught using evidence-informed, consistent teaching strategies
- Receive timely, accessible and meaningful feedback

3. Roles and responsibilities

Teaching and learning in our school is a shared responsibility, and everyone in our school community has an important role to play.

3.1 Teachers

Teachers at our school will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards, including the requirement to safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn, and identify children who may benefit from early help
- Plan and deliver high-quality lessons using the whole school teaching strategies outlined in this policy
- Have expert knowledge of the subjects they teach and, where gaps exist, seek support to ensure pupils are not disadvantaged
- Use assessment effectively to check understanding, identify gaps and adapt teaching accordingly
- Provide accessible, timely and meaningful feedback that helps pupils make progress
- Differentiate and adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with sensory impairments and other complex needs
- Create a calm, purposeful learning environment with clear routines and high expectations
- Actively engage parents/carers in their child's learning through newsletters, the website, letters, open days/mornings, activity weekends and the school PTA
- Update parents/carers on pupils' progress via weekly journals, annual written reports and Annual Reviews
- Meet the expectations set out in relevant policies, including the curriculum policy, behaviour policy, marking and feedback policy, and safeguarding policies
- Contribute to the school's culture of professional learning by engaging with CPD and sharing good practice

3.2 Support staff

Support staff will:

- Know pupils well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs
- Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness
- Assist teachers with agreed assessment for learning strategies
- Use effective marking and feedback as required and directed by the teacher
- Engage and collaborate with teaching staff to provide inspiring lessons and learning opportunities
- Ask questions to ensure they have understood expectations for learning
- Identify and use resources to support learning
- Have high expectations and celebrate achievement
- Support pupils to develop independence over time
- Work closely with specialist staff (e.g., QTVIs, therapists) to implement strategies that meet pupils' sensory and communication needs

3.3 Subject leaders

Subject leaders at our school will:

- Help to create well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum plans that build knowledge and skills progressively
- Ensure the curriculum is at least as ambitious in breadth and depth as the National Curriculum and meets the needs of pupils with sensory impairments
- Sequence lessons in a way that allows pupils to make good progress from their starting points
- Use their budget effectively to resource their subject, providing teachers with necessary resources for learning, including accessible materials
- Drive improvement in their subject, working with teachers to identify any challenges
- Moderate progress across their subject by systematically reviewing progress against a range of evidence and qualitative and quantitative performance data
- Improve on weaknesses identified in monitoring activities
- Create and share clear intentions for their subject (curriculum intent)
- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice
- Ensure subject-specific teaching approaches are evidence-informed and effective
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subject area

3.4 Senior leaders

Senior leaders will:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone
- Hold staff and pupils to account for their teaching and learning
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across the school
- Manage resources, including digital technologies, effectively to support high-quality teaching and learning
- Provide support and guidance to other staff through coaching and mentoring
- Plan and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Ensure the professional learning programme is evidence-informed, of high quality and designed to build expertise
- Protect time for professional learning and collaboration
- Promote team working at all levels
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly
- Support staff wellbeing and ensure workload is manageable

- Monitor the implementation of this policy through quality assurance processes
- Ensure systems are in place to protect staff from bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

3.5 Pupils

Pupils will:

- Take responsibility for their own learning and support the learning of others
- Always meet expectations for good behaviour for learning, respecting the rights of others to learn
- Follow classroom routines and expectations that support learning
- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn, with any necessary equipment for the lesson
- Be curious, ambitious, engaged and confident learners
- Know their targets and how to improve
- Put maximum effort and focus into their work
- Complete home learning activities as required
- Engage with feedback and act upon it to improve their work
- Ask for help when they need it
- Develop independence and resilience

3.6 Parents and carers

Parents and carers of pupils at our school will:

- Value learning
- Encourage their child as a learner
- Make sure their child is ready and able to learn every day
- Support good attendance
- Participate in discussions about their child's progress and attainment
- Communicate with the school to share information promptly
- Encourage their child to take responsibility for their own learning
- Support and give importance to home learning
- Work in partnership with the school to support their child's development

3.7 Governors

Governors at our school will:

- Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to teaching and learning

- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies on pupils' progress and attainment
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Ensure other school policies promote high-quality teaching and that these are being implemented
- Ensure the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined and take account of context
- Support and challenge leaders appropriately, giving due regard to leaders' and staff wellbeing and workload

4. Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact

4.1 Curriculum Intent

At St Vincent's School, we offer a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that includes full access to the National Curriculum from Key Stages 1 through to 5 and all areas of the Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment (CFVI).

Our curriculum is designed to:

- Ensure pupils with sensory impairments access the full breadth of the National Curriculum while developing specialist skills in areas such as braille literacy, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, and communication strategies
- Give all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing, the knowledge and skills they need to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life
- Build secure foundations in communication and language, reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils can access the rest of the curriculum and gain later success, including academic achievement, good health and wellbeing
- Develop pupils' independence, resilience, character and cultural capital
- Prepare pupils for adulthood, including further education, employment and independent living
- Promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

All pupils at KS4 and 5 study a range of qualifications from Entry Levels to GCSEs and BTECs, ensuring appropriate challenge and progression for all learners.

4.2 Curriculum Implementation

Our curriculum is implemented through:

- Well-sequenced learning: Knowledge and skills are carefully sequenced and built upon over time, ensuring pupils develop secure foundations before moving to more complex concepts
- Long-term planning: Designed throughout departments and cross-key stage to ensure our curriculum is broad, balanced and builds on previous learning

- Medium-term planning: Written for half term or a full term depending on content and curriculum requirements, addressing the requirements for individual subjects
- Short-term planning: Lessons are planned to ensure good progress in each session, with clear learning objectives and success criteria
- Accessible resources: All teaching materials are provided in formats appropriate to pupils' needs (braille, large print, audio, tactile, assistive technology)
- Specialist teaching: Teachers have expert knowledge of sensory impairment and how to adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs
- Evidence-based practice: Teaching approaches are informed by the best available educational research and evidence
- Regular review: Planning is reviewed regularly and adapted where needed to keep content up-to-date and appropriate for different classes and pupils

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have access to subject curriculum files that incorporate all planning documents for subject evaluation and monitoring purposes.

4.3 Curriculum Impact

We measure the impact of our curriculum through:

- Pupil progress: Pupils make good progress from their starting points across all subjects
- Achievement: Pupils achieve well in qualifications and assessments appropriate to their needs
- Knowledge retention: Pupils remember what they have been taught and can apply it in new contexts
- Preparation for next steps: Pupils are well-prepared for their next stage of education, employment or training
- Personal development: Pupils develop independence, confidence, resilience and the skills needed for adult life
- Pupil voice: Pupils can articulate what they have learned and how it is relevant to their lives

5. Whole school teaching strategies

At St Vincent's, we use consistent, evidence-based teaching strategies across all subjects and key stages. These strategies are adapted to meet the needs of pupils with sensory impairments and are informed by educational research, including guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

5.1 Explicit instruction and modelling

- Teachers demonstrate new concepts, skills and processes clearly before pupils attempt them independently
- Models and examples are provided in accessible formats (braille, large print, audio, tactile)
- Teachers use appropriate sensory channels (tactile, auditory, visual with adaptations) to ensure all pupils can access demonstrations
- Worked examples are shown to pupils before asking them to attempt similar tasks

5.2 Checking for understanding

- Teachers use regular, systematic questioning to assess understanding throughout lessons
- Questions are accessible to all pupils, with appropriate wait time and support
- We use a range of methods including verbal responses, tactile responses, mini-whiteboards, and assistive technology
- Misconceptions are identified and addressed promptly
- Teachers adapt teaching based on pupils' responses

5.3 Building on prior knowledge and retrieval practice

- Lessons begin with retrieval of previously learned content to strengthen long-term memory
- We make explicit links between new and existing knowledge
- Regular review and practice strengthen pupils' ability to recall and apply knowledge
- Low-stakes quizzes and retrieval activities are used routinely
- Time is available within the curriculum for revisiting content and dealing with gaps in knowledge and skills

5.4 Vocabulary development

- Subject-specific and academic vocabulary is explicitly taught and reinforced
- Vocabulary is made accessible through braille, audio, visual supports and tactile resources
- We ensure pupils can read, understand, spell and use key terminology
- Teachers focus on the vocabulary pupils need to understand new concepts, keeping explanations clear and precise
- All teachers are teachers of literacy and develop pupils' language carefully and deliberately, with plenty of repetition

5.5 Scaffolding and gradual release of responsibility

- We provide appropriate levels of support through visual, verbal, written and tactile scaffolds
- Support is gradually reduced as pupils gain confidence and competence
- All pupils are challenged to think deeply and work towards independence
- Scaffolding may include task planners, lists of instructions, word banks, sentence starters, writing frames, and modelling
- Teachers break tasks down into small steps and provide frequent checks for understanding

5.6 Dual Coding and assistive technology

- All teaching materials are provided in formats appropriate to pupils' needs
- We make effective use of assistive technology to support access and independence (e.g., screen readers, magnification software, braille displays, audio recording tools)
- Resources are carefully selected to support sensory learning

- Teachers ensure pupils have the physical space and tools needed for learning
- The learning environment is adapted with appropriate lighting, contrast, positioning and acoustic conditions

5.7 Effective use of additional adults

- Additional adults in the classroom are deployed to enable all pupils to access high-quality teaching from their class teacher
- Support staff help develop pupils' independence over time rather than creating dependency
- Clear communication ensures all staff understand pupils' needs and the strategies required

5.8 Purposeful practice and consolidation

- Pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning
- Practice activities are carefully designed to reinforce key knowledge and skills
- Teachers provide enough teaching and practice for pupils to become fluent in foundational skills (e.g., braille reading, word reading, spelling, handwriting, number facts)
- Pupils are given time to apply learning in both familiar and new contexts

5.9 High-quality questioning and dialogue

- Teachers use questioning to promote deep thinking and develop understanding
- Pupils are encouraged to articulate their ideas and reasoning
- Classroom dialogue is structured to allow all pupils to participate
- Teachers help pupils articulate what they know and understand by scaffolding, modelling, extending and developing their ideas

5.10 Feedback and response

- Pupils receive timely, accessible and meaningful feedback (see Section 11)
- Time is provided for pupils to engage with and respond to feedback
- Feedback focuses on helping pupils improve and make progress

5.11 Cognitive Load Theory

- Pupils’ information in small bitesize chunks
- Reducing of unnecessary cognitive load
- Understanding that working memory has a limited capacity.

5.12 Rosenshein’s Principles of Instruction

- Daily review of previous learning
- Ask questions and check for understanding
- Provide models and working examples
- Guide student practice

6. Planning

Lessons are planned well to ensure good short, medium and long-term progress. Planning is reviewed regularly and adapted where needed to keep content up-to-date and appropriate for different classes and pupils.

6.1 Long-term planning

- Designed throughout departments and cross-key stage
- Ensures the curriculum is broad, balanced and builds on previous learning
- Identifies key knowledge and skills that pupils will develop over time
- Sequences learning logically and cumulatively

6.2 Medium-term planning

- Written for half term or a full term depending on content and curriculum requirements
- Addresses the requirements for individual subjects
- Identifies opportunities for retrieval practice and consolidation
- Annotates schemes of learning/progress maps to indicate which pieces of work will receive detailed feedback (maximum of three per term)

6.3 Short-term planning

- Ensures good progress in each lesson
- Includes clear learning objectives and success criteria
- Identifies how teaching will be adapted for different groups of pupils
- Plans for checking understanding and addressing misconceptions
- Considers how resources and the environment will be adapted for pupils with sensory impairments

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have access to subject curriculum files that incorporate all planning documents for subject evaluation and monitoring purposes.

7. Learning environment

When pupils are at school, learning will take place in a variety of areas including classrooms, outdoor spaces, hall/Chapel, C&N room, independence unit, swimming pool, gymnasium, fitness suite, music room, and ICT suite. All areas are accessible for pupils with sensory impairments.

These spaces will be kept safe, clean and ready for pupils to use them.

7.1 Physical environment

They will be arranged to promote learning through:

- Clearly labelled, comfortable and attractive zones such as reading corners, quiet areas and sensory spaces
- Accessible labelling using braille, large print, high contrast and tactile markers as appropriate

- Posters and notice boards displaying material pupils have previously learned about and can identify, presented in accessible formats
- Accessible resources for learning such as audio-books, braille worksheets, minoltered diagrams, tactile resources, assistive technology and other equipment
- A seating layout that is appropriate to the learning needs of the group
- Displays that celebrate and support pupils' learning, presented in accessible formats and regularly updated
- Appropriate lighting and contrast to support pupils with visual impairments
- Good acoustic conditions to support pupils with hearing impairments
- Clear pathways and organised spaces to support orientation and mobility

7.2 Classroom culture

Our learning environments are characterised by:

- High expectations for all pupils
- A culture of respect where pupils feel safe, valued and able to take risks with their learning
- Clear routines that help pupils feel secure and focus on learning
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils
- Celebration of effort and achievement
- A calm, purposeful atmosphere where pupils can concentrate

8. Differentiation and adaptive teaching

Teaching and learning at St Vincent's will take the backgrounds, needs and abilities of all pupils into account. As a non-maintained special school for sensory impairments, we recognise that our pupils have complex and diverse needs, primarily relating to visual and hearing impairments, alongside other additional needs. We will differentiate and adapt learning to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum and make good progress.

8.1 For pupils with visual impairments

- Ensuring information is presented in formats appropriate for pupils with sensory impairments, including providing modified materials in braille, large print, audio or tactile formats
- Using tactile resources, large print materials, and assistive technology such as screen readers, magnification software, braille displays and note-takers
- Adapting the learning environment with appropriate lighting, contrast, and positioning
- Using technology to support learning, such as allowing pupils to type or record their work rather than writing it down on paper
- Teaching specialist skills such as braille literacy, orientation and mobility, and use of assistive technology
- Providing additional time where needed for pupils to access materials and complete tasks
- Ensuring verbal descriptions are detailed and precise to support understanding

8.2 For pupils with hearing impairments

- Ensuring spoken instructions are also written down or provided visually
- Using visual supports, British Sign Language (BSL) or Sign Supported English (SSE) where applicable, and communication devices where appropriate
- Positioning pupils to optimise their access to visual and auditory information
- Using assistive listening devices and ensuring good acoustic conditions
- Minimising background noise and distractions
- Ensuring the teacher's face is visible for lip-reading
- Providing visual cues and demonstrations alongside verbal explanations
- Checking understanding regularly

8.3 For all pupils

- Breaking tasks down into small steps, providing written instructions, and modelling activities with frequent checks for understanding
- Providing scaffolding through visual supports (task planners, lists of instructions), verbal supports (questioning to identify misconceptions), and written supports (word banks, sentence starters, writing frames)
- Using support staff effectively to provide specialist support and intervention while promoting independence
- Using additional resources to support physical needs, such as pencil grips for fine motor skills
- Working closely with our SENCO, specialist teachers for visual impairment (QTVIs), teachers of the deaf, therapists, pupils, and their parents/carers to establish appropriate levels of support and ensure pupils make good progress
- Making reasonable adjustments or adaptations to the curriculum or teaching that are well-targeted, effective in reducing barriers, and focused on pupils' long-term success
- Considering the possible downsides of any adaptations and mitigating these
- Ensuring any additional adults in the classroom are deployed to enable all pupils to access high-quality teaching from their class teacher

9. Reading

Reading is a priority at St Vincent's School. We recognise that accurate and fluent reading is essential for pupils to access the whole curriculum and gain later success, including academic achievement, good health and wellbeing.

9.1 Teaching of reading

The teaching of reading is rigorous and sequenced, and develops pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment. At all key stages, reading attainment is assessed accurately and gaps are tackled quickly and effectively, so that all pupils can access the whole curriculum.

Our approach includes:

- Systematic synthetic phonics: For pupils learning to read print, we use a systematic synthetic phonics programme. For pupils learning braille, we teach braille literacy systematically and cumulatively.
- Daily reading practice: All pupils have opportunities to read daily, either independently or with support.
- Access to high-quality texts: We provide a wide range of age-appropriate, engaging texts in accessible formats (braille, large print, audio).
- Reading comprehension: We explicitly teach reading comprehension strategies to help pupils understand and engage with texts.
- Reading for pleasure: We promote a love of reading through daily story time, book recommendations, reading challenges and access to our library.
- Vocabulary development: We explicitly teach vocabulary to support reading comprehension across all subjects.

9.2 Reading across the curriculum

The curriculum is designed to extend pupils' language and vocabulary, both spoken and written, and increase their reading competency across all subjects.

All teachers are teachers of reading and will:

- Model reading in their subject
- Teach subject-specific vocabulary explicitly
- Provide opportunities for pupils to read a range of texts in their subject
- Support pupils to access texts in their preferred format

10. Home learning

Home learning, or homework, will support pupils to make the link between what they have learnt in school and the wider world. It is most effective when done in a supportive, secure environment, with focused time set aside. This also includes for those pupils in the residential setting.

10.1 Purpose of home learning

Home learning will:

- Reinforce and consolidate learning from lessons
- Provide opportunities for independent practice
- Develop pupils' independence and self-regulation
- Extend learning beyond the classroom
- Involve parents/carers in their child's learning

10.2 Expectations

- All home learning will be made available in accessible formats (braille, large print, audio, electronic)
- Each home learning task will be entered into the pupil's Home Journal

- Home learning will be reasonable in challenge and length, and its purpose will be clearly outlined alongside each task
- Teachers will consider pupils' individual needs when setting home learning
- Home learning will be acknowledged and, where appropriate, feedback will be provided

11. Marking and feedback

Marking and feedback are essential components of assessment for learning. At St Vincent's School we take a professional approach to the task of marking work and giving feedback. All children are entitled to regular and comprehensive feedback on their learning.

This section should be read in conjunction with our Marking and Feedback Policy, which provides full details of our approach.

11.1 Principles

Our approach to marking and feedback is underpinned by the following principles:

- Timeliness and relevance: Feedback should be timely and respond to the needs of the individual pupil
- Dialogue and engagement: A dialogue, both verbal and written, should be created between teacher and pupil
- Assessment for learning: Feedback is part of the school's wider assessment processes
- Pupil involvement: Pupils should be encouraged to assess their own work against learning objectives and success criteria
- Peer and self-assessment: These are valuable tools for learning that should occur regularly
- Workload management: There should be a maximum of three pieces of detailed feedback per term
- Accessibility: All feedback must be accessible and appropriate for pupils' sensory, communication and learning needs

11.2 Types of feedback

We use a range of feedback methods:

- Verbal feedback: The most frequent and immediate form of feedback, highly valued by pupils
- Written feedback: Provided directly onto pupil work in accessible formats
- Peer and self-assessment: Well-structured opportunities for pupils to assess their own and each other's work

11.3 Accessibility

As a specialist school for sensory impairment and other needs, we are committed to ensuring all feedback is accessible. Teachers will:

- Use appropriate font sizes, contrast and formats for pupils with visual impairments
- Ensure written feedback is clear and detailed when verbal feedback is not accessible for pupils with hearing impairments

- Make use of assistive technology including screen readers, text-to-speech software and audio recording tools

11.4 Pupil response

Feedback is only effective if pupils engage with it and act upon it. Teachers must:

- Allow dedicated time for pupils to read, listen to, or otherwise engage with feedback
- Ensure pupils complete improvement tasks or corrections as directed
- Check that pupils have engaged with feedback before moving on

Full details of our approach to marking and feedback, including marking codes, presentation expectations, and examples of effective feedback, can be found in our Marking and Feedback Policy.

12. Assessment, recording and reporting

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment to ensure all pupils make good progress from their starting points.

12.1 Formative assessment (assessment for learning)

Assessment is used effectively to inform teaching and learning, and to help pupils embed key concepts, use knowledge fluently and develop their understanding.

Formative assessment includes:

- Questioning: Systematic checking of pupils' understanding during lessons
- Observation: Monitoring pupils' engagement, understanding and progress
- Discussion: Dialogue with pupils about their learning
- Marking and feedback: Providing feedback that helps pupils improve (see Section 11)
- Self and peer assessment: Pupils assessing their own and each other's work
- Low-stakes quizzes: Regular retrieval practice to check retention

Teachers check pupils' understanding systematically, identify misunderstandings and adapt teaching as necessary to correct these. Any gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills are identified and tackled quickly.

12.2 Summative assessment

Summative assessment includes:

- End of unit/topic assessments: To measure pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of a sequence of learning
- Formal examinations: GCSEs, BTECs, Entry Level qualifications and other accredited qualifications
- Standardised assessments: Where appropriate, to measure progress against national standards
- Functional assessments: Regular assessment of pupils' sensory needs (e.g., functional vision assessments, hearing assessments)

12.3 Recording

- Teachers maintain accurate records of pupils' progress

- Assessment information is recorded in a format that is accessible and useful for planning next steps
- Records include information about pupils' starting points, progress over time, and any barriers to learning
- Assessment data is analysed to identify trends, gaps and areas for improvement

12.4 Reporting

We provide regular information to parents/carers about their child's progress:

- Home School journals: Communication about pupils' learning and progress
- Parents' evenings: Termly opportunities to discuss progress and targets
- Annual Reviews: For pupils with EHCPs, formal review of progress towards outcomes
- Monitoring evenings: Additional opportunities to discuss progress

13. Personal development and preparation for adulthood

We ensure that pupils build strong foundations for accessing the curriculum and for later success, including academic achievement, good health and wellbeing.

13.1 Personal development

Our curriculum and wider school activities support pupils to:

- Develop independence and self-care skills
- Build confidence and resilience
- Develop social and emotional skills
- Understand and manage their emotions
- Develop healthy relationships
- Understand how to keep themselves safe, including online
- Develop their character, including qualities such as perseverance, integrity and respect
- Appreciate diversity and develop cultural capital
- Develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding
- Participate in enrichment activities and wider opportunities

13.2 Preparation for adulthood

We prepare pupils for their next steps through:

- Careers education: High-quality careers guidance that helps pupils understand their options and make informed choices
- Work experience: Opportunities to learn about work and develop employability skills
- Life skills: Teaching practical skills for independent living

- Transition planning: Careful planning and support for transitions between key stages and to post-16 education, training or employment
- Independence skills: Developing skills such as orientation and mobility, use of assistive technology, self-advocacy and communication
- Relationships and sex education: Age-appropriate education about relationships, health and wellbeing

13.3 Wider opportunities

We provide a range of wider opportunities including:

- Extra-curricular clubs and activities
- Residential experiences
- Community engagement
- Volunteering opportunities
- Leadership opportunities (e.g., school council, bike ability / library monitor).
- Participation in local and national events and competitions

14. Behaviour for learning

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. Ofsted State-Funded School Inspection Toolkit

This section should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy, which provides full details of our approach.

14.1 Creating a positive learning environment

We create a positive environment for learning by:

- Establishing clear routines and expectations
- Modelling positive behaviour and high expectations
- Building positive relationships with pupils
- Recognising and celebrating good behaviour and effort
- Creating a calm, purposeful atmosphere
- Ensuring pupils feel safe, valued and able to take risks with their learning

14.2 Expectations for behaviour for learning

Pupils are expected to:

- Follow classroom routines and expectations
- Respect the rights of others to learn
- Be ready to learn with the necessary equipment

- Put maximum effort and focus into their work
- Ask for help when needed
- Respond positively to feedback
- Take responsibility for their own learning

14.3 Supporting positive behaviour

Staff will:

- Teach and reinforce expectations for behaviour
- Use positive reinforcement and praise
- Address low-level disruption quickly and calmly
- Use restorative approaches where appropriate
- Work with pupils to understand and manage their emotions
- Make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND
- Work in partnership with parents/carers

14.4 Links to safeguarding

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in our safeguarding policies.

Full details of our approach to behaviour management can be found in our Behaviour Policy.

15. Staff development and professional learning

Leaders have developed a highly effective culture of professional learning and expertise in which staff take responsibility for their own learning and are keen to continually improve their expertise.

The professional learning and expertise programme:

- Is evidence-informed, drawing on the best available educational research and evidence, including research relating to supporting disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing
- Is of high quality and designed to build expertise in terms of knowledge, skill and judgement
- Is precisely matched to priorities for whole-school improvement, subjects/teams/phases and individual needs
- Includes planned opportunities to apply and embed practice to build an effective team of teachers and staff, including Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and trainees, where relevant
- Provides opportunities for purposeful collaboration and for staff to receive effective feedback on their practice
- Protects time for professional learning and ensures staff have opportunities to work together

15.2 Areas of focus

Our professional learning programme includes:

- Subject and curriculum knowledge: Ensuring teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects they teach and how to teach them effectively
- Pedagogical approaches: Developing understanding of effective teaching strategies, including those outlined in Section 5 of this policy
- Specialist knowledge: Building expertise in supporting pupils with sensory impairments
- Assessment and feedback: Developing skills in formative and summative assessment
- Behaviour management: Understanding and implementing effective behaviour strategies
- Safeguarding: Ensuring all staff are trained in safeguarding and child protection, including online safety
- SEND and inclusion: Understanding how to meet the needs of all pupils
- Leadership development: Supporting staff to develop leadership skills at all levels

15.3 Induction

New staff, including ECTs, receive comprehensive induction that includes:

- Introduction to the school's vision, values and ethos
- Overview of key policies, including this Teaching and Learning Policy, the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and Marking and Feedback Policy
- Training on supporting pupils with sensory impairments
- Introduction to the curriculum and assessment systems
- Observation of experienced colleagues
- Regular meetings with a mentor or line manager

15.4 Continuing professional development (CPD)

All staff have access to high-quality CPD opportunities, including:

- Whole-school training: INSET days, staff meetings and briefings
- Subject-specific training: Led by subject leaders or external specialists
- Coaching and mentoring: One-to-one or small group support
- Collaborative planning and moderation: Opportunities to work with colleagues
- External courses and conferences: Access to specialist training and networking opportunities
- Research and reading: Access to educational research and professional literature
- Peer observation: Opportunities to observe and learn from colleagues

15.5 Monitoring and evaluation

The impact of professional learning is monitored through:

- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Work scrutiny and assessment data
- Staff and pupil feedback
- Self-evaluation and reflection
- Progress towards school improvement priorities

Leaders allocate enough time for staff to work together to achieve improvement priorities. Staff understand their role in improving and sustaining standards and make a consistently positive contribution to this

16. Monitoring and evaluation

We will monitor teaching and learning in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

16.1 Aims of monitoring and evaluation

- To make secure judgements of teaching and learning across the school
- To monitor and evaluate the progress of pupils
- To evaluate the performance of individual teachers against the Teachers' Standards and check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained
- To identify training needs across the teaching and support staff and drive the CPD programme
- To ensure this policy is implemented consistently and effectively
- To identify strengths and areas for development
- To drive continuous improvement

16.2 Methods of monitoring

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Learning walks
- Book scrutiny and work sampling
- Planning scrutinies
- Pupil progress meetings
- Pupil voice
- Lesson observations
- Data analysis
- Staff feedback and discussion
- Parent and carer feedback

16.3 Quality assurance cycle

Monitoring activities are planned across the year to ensure regular and systematic evaluation. The quality assurance cycle includes:

- **Autumn term**: Focus on curriculum implementation, assessment and early identification of pupils at risk of underachievement
- **Spring term**: Focus on progress towards targets, quality of feedback, and effectiveness of interventions
- **Summer term**: Focus on outcomes, preparation for transition, and evaluation of the year's work

16.4 Use of monitoring information

Information from monitoring activities is used to:

- Identify strengths and celebrate success
- Identify areas for development and plan improvement actions
- Inform the school improvement plan
- Plan professional development for staff
- Report to governors on the quality of teaching and learning
- Ensure all pupils are making good progress and achieving well

16.5 Feedback and support

Following monitoring activities:

- Feedback is provided to individual teachers, subject leaders and teams
- Strengths are celebrated and shared
- Areas for development are identified with clear next steps
- Support is provided through coaching, mentoring or CPD
- Progress is monitored and reviewed

Leaders use their detailed and insightful analysis of school performance to evaluate the effectiveness of provision. They accurately identify, monitor and act on priorities for improvement, leading to consistently strong standards across all areas of the school's work or rapid improvement in any areas where this is not the case.

17. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Assistant Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.

The review will consider:

- The impact of the policy on pupils' progress, achievement and wellbeing
- Feedback from staff, pupils, parents/carers and governors

- Changes to statutory guidance, including the Education Inspection Framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Changes to best practice and educational research
- The effectiveness of implementation and any barriers identified
- The impact on staff workload and wellbeing
- The specific needs of our pupils with sensory impairments and other complex needs

Following the review, any necessary amendments will be made and the updated policy will be:

- Approved by the Headteacher and governing body
- Shared with all staff
- Published on the school website
- Communicated to parents/carers

18. Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

Statutory policies

- Behaviour Policy: Sets out our approach to promoting positive behaviour and managing behaviour incidents
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy: Sets out our approach to keeping children safe
- SEND Policy and Information Report: Explains how we support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- Accessibility Plan: Sets out how we improve access to education for pupils with disabilities
- Curriculum Policy: Outlines our curriculum intent, implementation and impact
- Assessment Policy: Explains our approach to assessment, recording and reporting
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy: Sets out our approach to teaching RSE
- Health and Safety Policy: Ensures a safe learning environment

Non-statutory policies

- **Marking and Feedback Policy**: Provides detailed guidance on our approach to marking and feedback

Other relevant documents

- **Schemes of Work and Curriculum Maps**: Detail the content and sequencing of the curriculum

- **Teachers' Standards**: Set out the professional standards for teachers
- **Education Inspection Framework (EIF)**: Ofsted's framework for inspecting schools
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**: Statutory safeguarding guidance

Appendix A: What good teaching and learning looks like at St Vincent's

This appendix provides observable features of effective teaching and learning at St Vincent's School. It is designed to support staff in understanding expectations and to inform monitoring and evaluation activities.

Observable features of effective teaching

Planning and preparation

- Lessons are well-planned with clear learning objectives and success criteria
- Planning builds on prior learning and is sequenced logically
- Resources are prepared in accessible formats appropriate to pupils' needs
- The learning environment is organised to support learning

Teaching strategies

- Teachers use explicit instruction and modelling effectively
- New concepts are broken down into manageable steps
- Teachers check understanding regularly and adapt teaching accordingly
- Questioning is used effectively to deepen understanding
- Retrieval practice is used to strengthen memory
- Vocabulary is taught explicitly
- Scaffolding is provided and gradually removed as pupils gain confidence

Differentiation and adaptation

- Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils
- Resources and materials are provided in accessible formats (braille, large print, audio, tactile)
- Assistive technology is used effectively
- Additional adults are deployed effectively to support learning
- Reasonable adjustments are made for all pupils

Assessment and feedback

- Teachers assess pupils' understanding throughout lessons
- Misconceptions are identified and addressed promptly
- Pupils receive timely, accessible and meaningful feedback
- Time is provided for pupils to engage with and respond to feedback

- Assessment information is used to inform planning

Classroom environment and behaviour

- The classroom is calm, purposeful and well-organised
- Clear routines and expectations are established and maintained
- Positive relationships are evident between staff and pupils
- Pupils are engaged and focused on their learning
- Behaviour is managed effectively with minimal disruption

Pupil engagement and progress

- Pupils are actively engaged in their learning
- Pupils can articulate what they are learning and why
- Pupils demonstrate understanding and can apply their knowledge
- Pupils are making progress from their starting points
- Pupils show resilience and perseverance when learning is challenging

Observable features of effective learning

Pupil attitudes and behaviours

- Pupils arrive ready to learn with necessary equipment
- Pupils follow classroom routines and expectations
- Pupils are curious, engaged and motivated
- Pupils ask questions and seek help when needed
- Pupils persevere when learning is hard
- Pupils take pride in their work

Pupil understanding and progress

- Pupils can recall and apply previously learned knowledge
- Pupils can explain their thinking and reasoning
- Pupils make connections between different areas of learning
- Pupils can work independently as well as collaboratively
- Pupils respond positively to feedback and act upon it
- Pupils demonstrate progress over time in their work

Pupil independence and self-regulation

- Pupils take responsibility for their own learning
- Pupils can assess their own work against success criteria

- Pupils use resources and assistive technology independently
- Pupils can identify what they need to do to improve
- Pupils manage their emotions and behaviour effectively