

# Teaching and Learning Policy

St Vincent's School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs



Approved by:	Mr. L. Green & The Governing Body	Date: 19/09/2025
Last reviewed on:	09/2025	
Next review due by:	09/2026	

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

Explain how we'll create an environment at our school where pupils learn best and love to do so

- Summarise expectations to make sure 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

## 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
- 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

### 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.

This is how we will create the above conditions for pupils' learning at all times:

#### 3.1 Teachers

Teachers at our school will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the [Teachers' Standards](#)
- Actively engage parents/carers in their child's learning - for example, via newsletters, website, letters, open days/mornings and activity weekends and school PTA.
- Update parents/carers on pupils' progress - for example, via weekly journals, and annual written reports and Annual Reviews.
- Meet the expectations set out in relevant policies – for example, curriculum policy, behaviour policy, and marking and feedback policy.

#### 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 on 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 make sure they've understood expectations for learning
- Identify and use resources to support learning
- Have high expectations and celebrate achievement

#### 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
- 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
- Drive improvement in their subject/phase, working with teachers to identify any challenges
- Timetable their subject to allocate time for pupils to:
- Achieve breadth and depth
- Fully understand the topic
- Demonstrate excellence
- Moderate progress across their subject by, for example, systematically reviewing progress against a range of evidence and reviewing qualitative and quantitative performance data

- Improve on weaknesses identified in their monitoring activities
- Create and share clear intentions for their subject
- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice

### **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 to support high-quality teaching and learning
- Provide support and guidance to other staff through coaching and mentoring
- Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Promote team working at all levels
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly

### **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
- 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

### **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

### **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
- Make sure other school policies promote high-quality teaching, and that these are being implemented

## 4. Planning

At St Vincent's School we offer a broad and balanced 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).

All pupils at KS4 and 5 study a range of qualifications from Entry Levels to GCSEs and BTECs.

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

Long term planning is designed throughout departments and cross key stage to ensure that our curriculum is broad, balanced and builds on previous learning.

Medium term plans are written for half term or a full term depending on the content and requirements of the curriculum. Medium Term planning addresses the requirements for the individual subjects of the curriculum.

## 5. Learning environment

When pupils are at school, learning will take place in areas such as 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.

They will be arranged to promote learning through:

- Clearly braille-labelled, comfortable, and attractive zones such as reading corners and quiet areas
- Posters and notice boards of material pupils have previously learned about and can identify
- Accessible resources for learning such as audio-books, braille worksheets, minotered diagrams and other equipment
- A seating layout that is appropriate to the learning needs of the group
- Displays that celebrate and support pupils' learning

## 6. Differentiation & 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.

Our approach includes:

For pupils with visual impairments:

- Ensuring information is presented in formats appropriate for pupils with sensory impairments, including providing modified materials

- Using tactile resources, large print materials, and assistive technology such as screen readers and magnification software
- 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

For pupils with hearing impairments:

- Ensuring spoken instructions are also written down
- 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

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
- 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 (QTVI's), therapists, pupils, and their parents/carers to establish appropriate levels of support and ensure pupils make good progress

Collaboration and planning:

We will ensure teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide the support and interventions set out in pupils' plans, and that all staff who work with pupils are informed of their needs, outcomes sought, support provided, and required teaching strategies

## 7. 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's most effective when done in a supportive, secure environment, with focused time set aside. This also includes for those pupils in the residential setting.

All home learning will be made available as a physical copy. Each home learning task will be entered into the pupils Home Journal.

Home learning will be reasonable in challenge and length, and its purpose will be clearly outlined alongside each task.

## 8. Marking and feedback

Marking and assessment have two purposes.

1. It allows students to get feedback which they act on to make progress over time.
2. It informs a teacher's future planning and teaching

Effective marking should be meaningful, manageable, and motivating for the recipient whilst simultaneously being manageable and sustainable for the teacher.

It will be given in line with the Marking and Feedback policy in a combination of written/braille and verbal feedback.

## 9. Assessment, recording and reporting

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment through ongoing formative assessment, and formal summative assessment at the end of each Key Stage.

We will provide regular targets for pupils and provide verbal reports against these at parents' evenings. Pupils will receive a written report twice per year, once at Annual Review and once at Monitoring Evening.

## 10. 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.

Aims of monitoring and evaluation:

- To make secure judgements of teaching and learning across the school
- To monitor and evaluate the progress of students
- To evaluate the performance of individual teachers against the Teacher 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

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

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Gathering input from the school council
- Planning scrutinies
- Book scrutinies

## 11. Review

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

## 12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour policy
- Curriculum policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Home-school agreement
- Assessment policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- Home – school agreement

