



# Bentham Community Primary School

## Teaching and Learning Handbook

*Delivering Excellent Teaching from Age Two to Year Six*

### Introduction

This handbook should be read alongside the Bentham Community Primary School Teaching and Learning Policy which sets out our educational philosophy and shared principles, this handbook describes what those principles look like in practice.

It recognises that no single lesson structure or teaching strategy is appropriate for every subject, age group or learning context. Instead, it provides a shared framework that supports consistency whilst valuing professional judgement. Our approach is informed by educational research, the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, the SEND Code of Practice and our commitment to ensuring that every child receives ambitious, inclusive and responsive teaching.

### Section 1

#### Planning for Learning

Planning begins with the curriculum rather than activities. Teachers plan from the agreed curriculum sequence, ensuring that learning builds progressively over time. Planning is designed to help pupils know more, remember more and apply learning with increasing confidence.

Effective planning considers:

- the intended learning
- prior knowledge
- likely misconceptions
- essential vocabulary
- opportunities for retrieval
- adaptive teaching
- assessment opportunities
- progression towards independence.

Planning remains flexible and responsive to pupils' needs.

Teachers should ask themselves:

- What do I want pupils to know?
- Why is this important?
- What do they already know?
- What misconceptions might arise?
- How will I know they have learned it?
- How will I respond if they have not?

## Section 2

### The Bentham Lesson

Whilst every lesson is different, effective teaching at Bentham commonly follows six phases.

#### Connect

Learning begins by revisiting prior knowledge. Children retrieve previous learning through discussion, quizzes, practical tasks or questioning. This strengthens memory and helps children connect new learning with what they already know.

#### Explain

Teachers introduce new learning clearly.

They:

- define the learning intention
- explain key vocabulary
- break learning into manageable steps
- make links with previous learning.

#### Model

Teachers demonstrate success.

Modelling may include:

- worked examples
- thinking aloud
- live writing
- practical demonstrations
- mathematical reasoning
- reading fluently.

Children should clearly understand what successful learning looks like.

### **Guided Practice**

Children practise with support.

Adults:

- question
- scaffold
- provide feedback
- address misconceptions
- encourage discussion.

Support gradually reduces as confidence grows.

### **Independent Application**

Children apply learning independently. Tasks should allow children to demonstrate understanding rather than simply complete work.

Children are encouraged to:

- think independently
- persevere
- self-correct
- explain their thinking.

### **Reflect**

Learning concludes with reflection. Teachers use assessment to:

- celebrate success
- identify misconceptions
- inform future planning
- strengthen memory.

Reflection may include retrieval, discussion or self-assessment.

## **Section 3**

### **Teaching in the Two-Year-Old Provision**

The Two-Year-Old Provision provides the first stage of the Bentham learning journey. Learning is rooted in secure relationships, responsive care and purposeful play. Children learn through:

- exploration
- curiosity

- movement
- talk
- sensory experiences
- routines
- songs
- stories
- imaginative play.

Adults recognise that every interaction contributes to children's development. Teaching focuses particularly on:

- communication and language
- personal, social and emotional development
- physical development
- independence
- self-regulation
- early mathematical thinking
- early literacy experiences.

### **High-Quality Interactions**

Adults:

- get down to children's level
- follow children's interests
- extend language
- model vocabulary
- encourage sustained shared thinking
- respond sensitively
- allow children time to think and respond.

### **Care Routines as Learning**

Daily routines are recognised as teaching opportunities.

During snack time, toileting, dressing and personal care, adults promote:

- language
- independence
- confidence
- social interaction
- emotional security.

Children are never hurried through developmental milestones.

## **Section 4**

### **Nursery and Reception Pedagogy**

In Nursery and Reception, children continue to learn through a carefully balanced combination of:

- purposeful play
- direct teaching
- adult interaction
- continuous provision
- outdoor learning
- carefully planned enhancements.

Adults:

- observe carefully
- respond to children's interests
- model language
- extend thinking
- provide appropriate challenge.

Learning environments promote exploration, creativity and independence.

## Section 5

### **Adaptive Teaching**

Adaptive teaching is central to high-quality teaching.

At Bentham, adaptation means removing barriers whilst maintaining ambitious expectations.

Teachers adapt:

- explanations
- questioning
- modelling
- vocabulary
- resources
- pacing
- grouping
- scaffolding
- recording methods.

Support should be proactive rather than reactive.

Adaptation should increase participation rather than separate children from learning.

## Section 6

## **Retrieval Practice**

Learning depends upon remembering. Retrieval becomes a routine part of teaching.

Strategies include:

- mini whiteboards
- quizzes
- flashcards
- oral rehearsal
- vocabulary review
- previous lesson summaries
- cumulative questioning.

Retrieval is low stakes and designed to strengthen long-term memory.

## **Section 7**

### **Questioning**

Effective questioning promotes thinking rather than simply checking recall.

Adults use:

- cold call
- think-pair-share
- hinge questions
- probing questions
- wait time
- no hands up
- partner discussion.

Questions increasingly encourage pupils to justify, explain and evaluate.

## **Section 8**

### **Vocabulary and Language**

Every adult is a teacher of language.

Teachers explicitly teach vocabulary by:

- introducing new words
- modelling pronunciation
- revisiting vocabulary frequently
- encouraging pupils to use new language in speech and writing
- displaying key vocabulary.

Vocabulary teaching is especially important for pupils with SEND, speech and language needs and those learning English as an Additional Language.

## **Section 9**

### **Reading, Writing and Oracy**

Reading is the gateway to learning.

Writing enables children to communicate ideas.

Talk enables children to think.

Teachers ensure all three are developed across every curriculum area.

Children should regularly:

- discuss ideas
- explain reasoning
- read ambitious texts
- write for authentic purposes
- use subject-specific vocabulary.

## **Section 10**

### **Assessment and Feedback**

Assessment informs teaching rather than interrupts it.

Teachers gather evidence through:

- observation
- questioning
- discussion
- retrieval
- written work
- quizzes.

Feedback is:

- timely
- specific
- manageable
- focused on improvement.

Verbal feedback during learning often has the greatest impact.

Marking follows the school's Marking and Feedback Policy.

## Section 11

### Effective Deployment of Teaching Assistants

Teaching assistants are educators.

Their role is to maximise learning whilst promoting independence.

Teaching assistants:

- reinforce teacher explanations
- support adaptive teaching
- facilitate communication
- encourage pupils to think independently
- observe learning
- provide feedback to teachers
- deliver agreed interventions.

### Effective Support

Adults should:

- ✓ prompt before telling
- ✓ question before explaining
- ✓ encourage thinking
- ✓ reduce scaffolding gradually
- ✓ celebrate independence

### Avoiding Over-Support

Adults should avoid:

- completing work for pupils
- becoming the sole source of support
- reducing challenge unnecessarily
- creating dependence.

The class teacher remains responsible for every child's learning.

## Section 12

### SEND and Intervention

High-quality classroom teaching remains the first response to meeting additional needs.

Interventions should:

- complement classroom teaching
- be evidence-informed
- have clear outcomes
- be reviewed regularly
- promote independence.

Provision follows the graduated approach:

Assess → Plan → Do → Review.

## Section 13

### Professional Development

Excellent schools are built by excellent learners.

All adults engage in ongoing professional development through:

- coaching
- lesson study
- peer observation
- moderation
- curriculum development
- professional reading
- research-informed practice.

## Section 14

### Monitoring Quality of Education

Monitoring is designed to improve teaching.

Evidence includes:

- learning walks
- lesson visits
- book scrutiny
- pupil voice
- curriculum reviews
- assessment information
- professional discussion.

Monitoring focuses on long-term learning rather than individual lessons.

## **Appendix A – The Bentham Teaching Toolkit**

Every classroom should demonstrate:

- clear routines
- ambitious learning
- adaptive teaching
- effective modelling
- purposeful questioning
- retrieval practice
- explicit vocabulary instruction
- responsive assessment
- high expectations
- warm relationships.

## **Appendix B – The Bentham Inclusion Checklist**

Before every sequence of learning, adults should ask:

- Can every child access this learning?
- Have barriers been removed?
- Is vocabulary explicitly taught?
- Are expectations ambitious for all?
- Are scaffolds temporary?
- Does support promote independence?
- Have I planned for pupils with SEND?
- Have I planned challenge for pupils who are ready to deepen their understanding?

## **Appendix C – The Bentham Teaching Principles**

Every child belongs.

Every child can succeed.

Every adult is a teacher.

Every interaction is a learning opportunity.

Language unlocks learning.

Relationships enable learning.

High expectations and high support go hand in hand.

Inclusion begins with excellent teaching.

Independence is the goal of all support.

Together we achieve more.

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