

IRIS School Teaching & Learning Policy

Effective Date: Sep 2025

Review Date: Sep 2026

Our Teaching and Learning Policy is the core policy of IRIS School. It informs best classroom practice that enables all pupils to make progress in all lessons. It has been designed by staff and approved by the Senior Leadership Team. It should be used regularly to help evaluate and adapt practices to ensure that here at IRIS School; we provide the best possible education for the pupils. This policy is supported by and promotes IRIS School equal opportunities practice. Our academic schedule is based on the National Curriculum with additional Islamic.

Aims and Objectives

Learning is a process of building knowledge and developing understanding. At IRIS School our aim is to stimulate an intellectual curiosity, empowering individuals to achieve academic excellence and exam success by encouraging diligence and ultimately inspiring a life-long interest in learning. We teach for progress. This means that we work to ensure that all pupils are improving skills, knowledge and understanding across all lessons and activities as a good Muslim socially and academically.

At IRIS School, we believe that learning will most effectively take place when:

- students are happy and feel safe;
- students' self-esteem is high;
- students understand the purpose of the learning and see relevance to their own experiences;
- students are challenged and supported;
- learning builds on prior knowledge and understanding;
- students are interested, curious and motivated;
- the success criteria is clear;
- students have a 'growth mind-set'; they reflect on their mistakes and use them as learning opportunities;
- student questioning, reflection, and discussion are encouraged;
- independent learning and thinking are facilitated and encouraged;
- there are opportunities for creativity and utilising different learning styles;
- students can self-assess, know what they need to do to improve and are set appropriate targets;
- students have opportunities to transfer skills, knowledge and understanding to other contexts.

Our Expectations

At IRIS School we expect:

- staff to have secure subject knowledge and understanding of their subject and where support is needed teachers may seek advice from Senior Leadership Team (SLT) or subject coordinators;
- staff to plan appropriately for all pupils in the group by incorporating a wide range of resources
- that every lesson has a clear Learning Objective (LO) which is explained and displayed to the class;
- that all lessons demonstrate key elements of Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices;
- that activities are varied and differentiated to ensure that all pupils explore, develop and practice new skills/ concepts;
- that staff cater for a range of differing learning styles and cultural diversity thus ensuring pupil participation and understanding, particularly challenging the more able;
- that staff have high expectations of presentation, quality of work;
- the Teaching Assistant's (where available) to be fully involved and active in lessons;
- support learning where necessary using Islamic resources to highlight key issues;
- promote SMSC.

The Learning Processes

Children enter school at different stages of development. Children learn in different ways and at different rates of progress. In the course of learning, children develop their skills through a variety of processes and learning styles.

These include:

- investigation;
- experimentation;
- listening;
- observation;
- talking and discussion
- asking questions;
- role play;
- retrieving information;
- imagining;
- problem-solving;
- making choices and decision-making.

At IRIS School we allow pupils access to these processes, and for them to develop their own strategies to gain knowledge and skills. We aim to provide opportunities to develop a wide range of learning styles. We recognise that each pupil has a unique way of learning and that

learning preference is affected by previous experience, competence, confidence, beliefs and values. We shall ensure that learning is accessed by as many means as possible.

We at IRIS School respect and celebrate differences and therefore in line with the Equality Act 2010 make reasonable adjustment for those pupils with individual needs, ensuring all pupils feel safe and supported irrespective of their differences. Our Islamic ethos is based on equality, respect/tolerance and community cohesion and aim to promote these values particularly through Citizenship lessons and interfaith events.

Principles For Teaching and Learning

The Basis

Everyone at IRIS School is committed to ensuring that learning and progress are the priority. As a staff team, the SLT have identified some key features of lessons that secure good learning. These are effective opening, teaching, independent learning, and review and reflection. While providing information for guidance, it is identified that these phases are not discrete but inter linked to provide a productive learning experience.

Effective Opening

At the start of a lesson, we should incorporate one or more of the following:

- use an engaging stimulus which should capture the attention of the pupils;
- review prior learning and connect it to new learning;
- explain the learning intention and encourage them to identify its relevance to the world;
- give pupils the ‘big picture’ by; describing what they will be doing; encouraging a sense of prediction, anticipation, curiosity, and positive expectation about the learning to come, providing graphic, pictorial previews and overviews of the topic to be studied.

Effective Teaching

In our teaching, we will:

- implement clear subject protocols and teaching guidance;
- be clear about the learning intention and success criteria;
- ensure that we are clear about what the outcome will ‘look like’;
- identify what prior learning is required and what the next steps would be so that we can be flexible and adapt our planned teaching to the needs of the pupils;
- be secure in our subject knowledge;
- use assessment for learning techniques to ensure pupils make progress during lessons and over time;
- provide appropriate modelling and demonstrations;
- break the teaching content into logically arranged, manageable chunks;
- provide plenty of opportunities to practise;
- give clear, differentiated explanations and instructions;
- ensure that we draw out pupil’s responses and avoid too much teacher talk;
- be enthusiastic and motivated;

- fully engage classroom support staff (where available) in the teaching and assessment process;
- maintain good pace throughout the lesson;
- create a positive and pleasant working atmosphere using praise and positive language and model “good morality”
- use games, play, humour, activities, and competition to enliven our lessons where appropriate;
- use whole class questioning and targeted, differentiated, closed and open-ended questions (incorporating ‘what, how and why’);
- provide opportunities for pupils to be inspired, question and reflect;
- ensure all pupils are actively engaged in the learning process;
- cater for all learners by using a combination of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic strategies;
- maintain high expectations throughout;
- encourage and respond positively to pupil’s questions;
- adapt our teaching in the light of continued assessment of pupil’s progress.
- incorporate British values and elements of SMSC where possible.

Effective Independent Learning

To promote effective learning, we will:

- implement clear subject protocols and learning guidance;
- ensure that pupils use the success criteria to support their learning;
- encourage and guide pupils to be independent and to choose their own strategies for learning;
- encourage pupils to ‘take risks’ in order to facilitate their learning;
- engage pupils in a range of independent and collective/collaborative, group-based learning activities, including possible peer teaching, peer-assessment, talking/work partners, hot seating, role-play etc;
- ensure learning is appropriately differentiated to the needs of the class;
- use learning frames for pupils to structure and scaffold their thinking and work;
- provide activities involving problem solving and creative thinking;
- set clear expectations for learning outcomes;
- ensure all tasks have time deadlines;
- provide opportunities for pupils to use new knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts;
- ensure pupils are aware of their personal targets and are provided with guidance in order to achieve them.

Effective Review of Learning and Reflection

To enable effective review of learning and reflection, we will:

- implement the subject protocols and review guidance;
- pick up on misconceptions and clarify the learning;
- evaluate strategies for learning;
- use self and peer assessment;
- give positively worded, constructive oral and written feedback
- employ a range of assessment for learning techniques (AFL);
- give feedback related to agreed targets;
- praise, reward and share success;
- provide pupils with opportunities to review and reflect upon what they have learned and how their learning might be applied to new situations;
- enable individuals, pairs and groups to report back to others;
- enable pupils to ask questions of others;
- provide opportunities for pupils to consider future learning where appropriate.

Differentiation

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- content;
- task;
- relevance;
- resources;
- extension;
- autonomy;
- outcome;
- teacher/adult support (SENCO).

Learning objectives will be specified for all differentiated teaching and reference will be made in teaching plans where appropriate. Teachers will set individual targets each termly. This is in addition to the formative assessment targets the teachers communicate to the pupils on a regular basis where appropriate. These are shared with the child and parents/ carers in the end of term reports to encourage partnerships in learning.

SEND

The Equality Act 2010 defines ‘disability’ as: “a physical or mental impairment with a substantial long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” “A child or young person has Special Educational Needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she: has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same

age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

At IRIS School, we recognise that children who have been assessed as having a special educational need will require extra help and resources to fulfil their individual needs which could range from aspects such as processing and understanding, physical or sensory difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and language difficulties or social skills. However, due to the absence of such facilities and resources at the school, we are unfortunately not in a position to cater for children with SEND. It is because of our commitment to ensuring that learning and progress are the priority for all children, we advise parents/ carers to seek schools that can lead and manage SEND with the vision and a plan of action that is needed to enable progress and success for the children in the caring environment of the specialised school.

IRIS School SEND Policy has been developed to encompass all appropriate issues relating to special educational needs, learning difficulties and disabilities that ensure a pupil's individual educational needs are met effectively and allows the school to work with parents/ carers to provide them with the knowledge and pathways to assist children who are identified as needing special educational support. The school recognises the difference between a pupil who has a SEN and/or disability and one for whom English is an additional language (EAL), and in addition to be aware of those for whom both of these issues of concern. IRIS School supports pupils whom English is an additional language (EAL), by allowing access to additional education support if required.

Principles Of Assessment for Learning

The Basis

At IRIS School, we believe that regular and robust AFL are essential tools for ensuring successful teaching and learning and progress. Our staff team including the SLT have indicated that regular internal formal assessments are made of pupils work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform future planning and allow pupils to review their progress with staff on an ongoing basis. Assessment encompasses a variety of activities, formal and informal, summative and formative.

Formative internal assessments are used to guide the progress of individual pupils. This involves identifying each pupil's progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each pupil has learned and what next stage should be in his/her learning.

Formal summative assessment is carried out for example in primary, at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. Optional tests are also taken in Years 4 and 5. Termly teacher assessments are used to inform parents of their child's progress in school through the reports.

Suitable tasks for assessment may include:

- group discussions;
- short written tests;
- specific assignments and individual/group projects;
- individual presentations;
- self and peer assessment;
- regular teacher assessment of classwork;
- SATs;

- end of unit tests;
- end of term tests;
- controlled assessments;
- home learning;
- AFL.

Intervention

As a result of our regular assessment, including those scheduled at the end of each term, teachers should aim to provide and plan support wherever possible, for students in order for them to move them on in their learning. Every term, our teaching and tutor team identify pupils that would benefit from additional support in core curriculum areas providing guidance to accelerate the achievement of these pupils.

Marking and Feedback

Our marking and feedback in line with the IRIS School marking policy is frequency; content and depth. We plan regular routines for pupils to respond to marking, so that it improves their learning. We give ongoing oral feedback to individuals and to groups of pupils throughout lessons. Our feedback is more often positive than negative and focused on the learning and aptitudes that we want to improve. The purpose of all our feedback, in marking, in target-setting and orally, is to give pupils precise and motivating information about how well they are doing and what they should do next to improve. Formative assessment carries with it the expectation that, when properly motivated and appropriately taught, all learners can reach a level of achievement which may currently appear beyond them. It provides a breadth of proven life-long learning skills based on an understanding of how we learn rather than what we ought to be learning. This includes:

- creating a positive learning environment;
- focusing all feedback on specific performance improvements which can be acted on;
- sharing an overview of content, process and benefits of the learning to come;
- engaging learners by posing problems and challenging thinking;
- providing opportunities for learners to meet the challenge in a variety of pairings and with multiple ways of representing their understanding;
- creating space for reflection and meaningful dialogue;
- review what has been learned and ensure that students have implemented teacher feedback comments;
- allowing pupils to take ownership of their learning.

Home Learning

We recognise the importance of pupils learning at home. We believe it helps them to consolidate and extend school learning as well as helping to involve families. This importance is relayed to parents/ carers in school meetings and parent's evenings. We plan regular and appropriate homework at each stage of our school and evaluate the effectiveness of our homework by the impact that it is having on pupils learning.

Homework is considered to be a valuable element of the learning process. By using homework diaries, we encourage parents/ carers to work with their children at home. These

are a more individual way to do homework and provide the pupils with an opportunity to reflect on their learning and to develop their independent thinking skills. Pupils are expected to take pride in their work and keep their homework learning diaries neat and have them signed by parents/carers. Additional, more formal activities may be set by the teacher depending on the needs of the pupils.

We believe that homework should be set:

- to involve parents/ carers in their child's learning;
- to help parents/ carers keep abreast of what their child can and cannot do;
- to take advantage of the home context to apply learning;
- to encourage pupils to talk about their work to their parents/ carers and explain what they are doing and how;
- enable pupils to practise and consolidate their skills and knowledge and strategies;
- to view learning as a life-long process and not just restricted to school hours.

PARTNERSHIP IN LEARNING

Learning and teaching is a shared responsibility of all members of the school community. The leadership will manage and resource the learning environment in such a way as to facilitate learning. Opportunities will be made for:

- whole class teaching;
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability);
- one to one teaching where possible;
- collaborative learning in pairs or groups;
- independent learning.

IRIS School reward policy aims at celebrating personal best in an area of learning. Each pupil is given an opportunity to have work displayed during the school year. IRIS School events including Islamic events and assemblies are seen as opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate their own best performance. Pupils are encouraged to believe that any exhibited work (performance or display) should represent their highest standards of personal achievement. 'Star of the Week' awards are given weekly to celebrate individual academic or behavioural achievement. Achievement Awards are aimed at celebrating personal best in an area of learning. Good news notes and postcards sent home are both ways of acknowledging pupil effort and attainment.

Teachers will endeavour to:

- provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to encourage all pupils to reach the highest standard of achievement;
- recognise and be aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude;
- ensure that learning is progressive and continuous;
- be good role models, punctual, well prepared and organised;
- keep up-to-date with educational issues;
- provide clear information on school procedures and pupil progress;

- have a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise;
- establish links with the local community to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life;
- work collaboratively with all involved in education to develop a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.

Parents/ carers are encouraged to support their child's learning by:

- ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health;
- ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing necessary equipment;
- providing support for the discipline within the school and for the teacher's role;
- supporting the work of educational targets and becoming actively involved in the implementation of any support programme;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour;
- support the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework;
- ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school;
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;
- actively support the school in this agreement.

In supporting the school's aims, pupils are encouraged to

- provide high levels of engagement, commitment and cooperation within learning time;
- respond well to teachers and ensure that lessons proceed without interruption;
- respond readily to the challenge of the tasks set, show a willingness to concentrate on them, and make good progress;
- follow Islamic etiquette and manners;
- be sufficiently confident and alert to raise questions and to persevere with their work when answers are not readily available;
- work hard based on set targets;
- work diligently with a sense of commitment and enjoyment.
- attend school in good health, maintained by an adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- attend school regularly and punctually;
- be organised, bringing necessary equipment, taking letters home promptly, etc;

- conduct themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- take responsibility for their own learning.