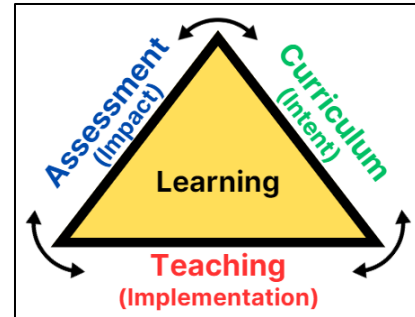




BIRCH COPSE PRIMARY SCHOOL
TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Introduction

Learning is at the very heart of what we do at Birch Copse and teaching is a crucial aspect of this. It does not stand-alone but is one of three central components – **curriculum, teaching and assessment**– of the **learning** process (as shown in the diagram). As such, this policy should be read in conjunction with our Curriculum, Assessment and Feedback Policies to get a full picture of the **learning** process at Birch Copse.



At Birch Copse, we aim for exceptional teaching and learning where teachers have high expectations of children, strong subject and pedagogical knowledge and plan learning to match the needs of different groups of children.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Summarise our expectations to ensure a consistent approach to teaching across the school
- Promote high expectations for all children, ensuring they receive the appropriate level of challenge and support
- ensure that the children are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement and attitude

Guiding Principles

Our school Vision Statement is **“Together, we plant the seeds for success”**. At Birch Copse, we believe that success in school starts with great teaching, excellent learning attitudes and high aspirations and leads to the best possible outcomes for our children. That is why **‘high expectations’** is at the core of our philosophy for teaching and learning.

| High Expectations | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| High Expectations of teaching | High Expectations of children | High Expectations of outcomes | High Expectations of themselves |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All lessons are consistently high quality • Rosenshine’s Ten Principles of Instruction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and teach to the top • The Pygmalion Effect means high expectations lead to increase in performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of attainment in all subjects and all achievements recognised • Produce work of quality – Berger’s Ethic of Excellence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow our Learning School Values to establish excellent learning behaviours • Encourage a Growth Mindset – Carol Dweck |

1. High Expectations of Teaching

All lessons are consistently high quality.

To achieve this, teachers need to have excellent subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and subject pedagogy. We have high expectations of teaching at Birch Copse, regularly monitored by school leaders.

At Birch Copse, lessons should:

1. Have high quality outcomes
2. Be challenging and support all children.
3. Contain an adequate amount of high-quality direct teaching and guided practice.
4. Have opportunities for independent or collaborative learning.
5. Include a variety of activities over time, which engage, enthuse and enrich the learning experience.
6. Be well managed to ensure behaviour is of a high standard.
7. Use a range of questioning to gain an awareness of how well children are learning.
8. Contain assessment for learning opportunities and be adapted where necessary.
9. Have assessment opportunities, which allow for and demonstrate pupil progress.
10. Utilise a stimulating, well-organised and learning focused classroom environment

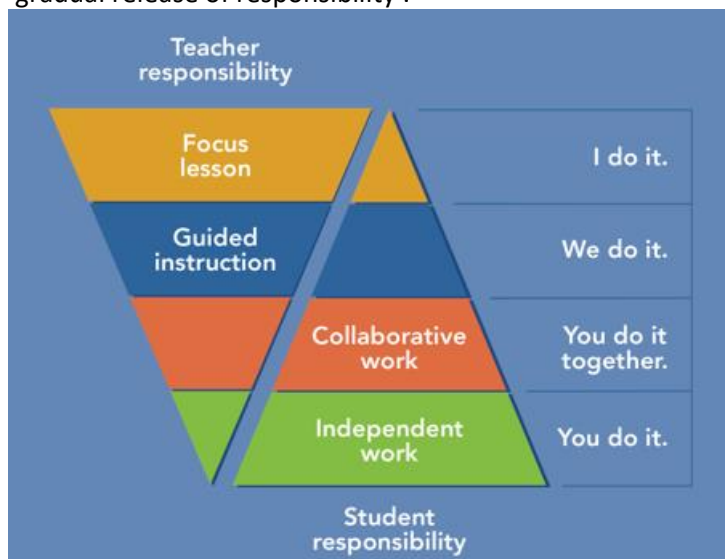
Rosenshine's Ten Principles of Instruction

Barak Rosenshine summarised over 40 years of research conducted on effective instruction in education. The research came from three sources:

- a) Research on how our brain acquires and uses new information
- b) Research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- c) Findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.

Rosenshine found that there is no conflict between the results from each of these three sources. In other words, these three sources supplement and complement each other and the fact that they do, gives us faith in the validity of these findings. From this, Rosenshine formulated ten principles of the best practise in teaching alongside its practical application in the classroom (see below).

Rosenshine explains broad philosophies for what constitutes great teaching and learning. They reflect the importance of progressively transferring the responsibility of learning from the teacher to the child. Direct instruction and modelling leads to guided practice. Questioning and checking for understanding and working with peers help ensure children are ready to work independently. Fisher and Frey call this the 'gradual release of responsibility'.



Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2008). *Better learning through structured teaching: A framework for the gradual release of responsibility*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

| Rosenshine's ten Principles of Instructions | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1 | Begin a lesson with a short review of previous learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily review can strengthen previous learning and can lead to fluent recall. • five to eight minutes on something covered previously • If needed, review the knowledge and concepts relevant to that day's lesson |
| 2 | Present new material in small steps with student practice after each step | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids overloading the working memory • Only present small amounts of new material at any time, and then assist students as they practice this material. • Proceed to the next step only when they know the first one (Mastery approach) |
| 3 | Ask a large number of questions and check the responses of all students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions help children practice new information and connect new material to their prior learning. • Involve all children in answering questions (e.g. talk partners, whiteboards, thumbs up/down) |
| 4 | Provide models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing students with models and worked examples can help them learn to solve problems faster. • Modelling could be live teacher demonstration, de-constructing a pre-prepared examples or comparing more than one model – possibly a good and poor example |
| 5 | Guide student practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful teachers spend more time guiding children's' practice of new material. • Close supervision, feedback and correcting misconceptions are crucial during children's first attempts with new learning |
| 6 | Check for student understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking for children's understanding at each point can help them learn the material with fewer errors. • Teachers should check the understanding of all children, not just one or two, before moving on • Use process questions – e.g. "How did you work it out?" or "Why do you think that?" |
| 7 | Obtain a high success rate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important for children to achieve a high success rate during classroom instruction. • Rosenshine suggests a success rate of around 80% is optimum • If children are making too many mistakes, they are learning errors and once errors have been learned, they are difficult to overcome. |
| 8 | Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher provides children with temporary supports and scaffolds to assist them when they learn difficult tasks. • Gradually withdraw the scaffold as children gain confidence • Can include modelling, working walls, learning mats, checklists and writing frames |
| 9 | Require and monitor independent practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children need extensive, successful, independent practice in order for skills and knowledge to become automatic • Homework set linked to learning in the classroom |
| 10 | Engage students in weekly and monthly review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children need to be involved in extensive practice in order to develop well-connected and automatic knowledge. • This practised should be spaced out to enhance memory and recall |

Appendix 1 is a poster outlining the ten principles. Rosenshine's original paper can be found here: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Educational_Practices/EdPractices_21.pdf

2 - High expectations of all children

Plan and Teach to the top

Planning and teaching to the top means we setting consistently high expectations for all children and therefore ensuring that all children achieve the highest possible outcomes for themselves.

In practise, it means that the **starting point for planning** are the capabilities of the **highest attainers** in the class and that learning is **supported and scaffolded** for everyone else where appropriate. This way, the expectations for all are high and there is no 'glass ceiling' to what children can achieve.

This does not mean that we expect all children to achieve at the same rate and to the same level; rather it means that the learning for the more able has not been softened because of concerns about the less able learners. All children have different starting points, learn at different rates and need different levels of challenge or support

Challenge, scaffolding and support could include (but is not limited to):

- Adult support – for individuals or groups, for the whole lesson or part of it
- Peer support
- Additional resources – this could be an example sheet, a writing frame, a vocabulary list or concrete resources – anything that would give children extra support to achieve the objective
- Differentiated learning activities –with the same learning focus
- Self-levelling resources – where children can move on to more difficult content after accurately self-assessing their work (having mark sheets available in maths is a simple version of this)
- Extension tasks – available for every child

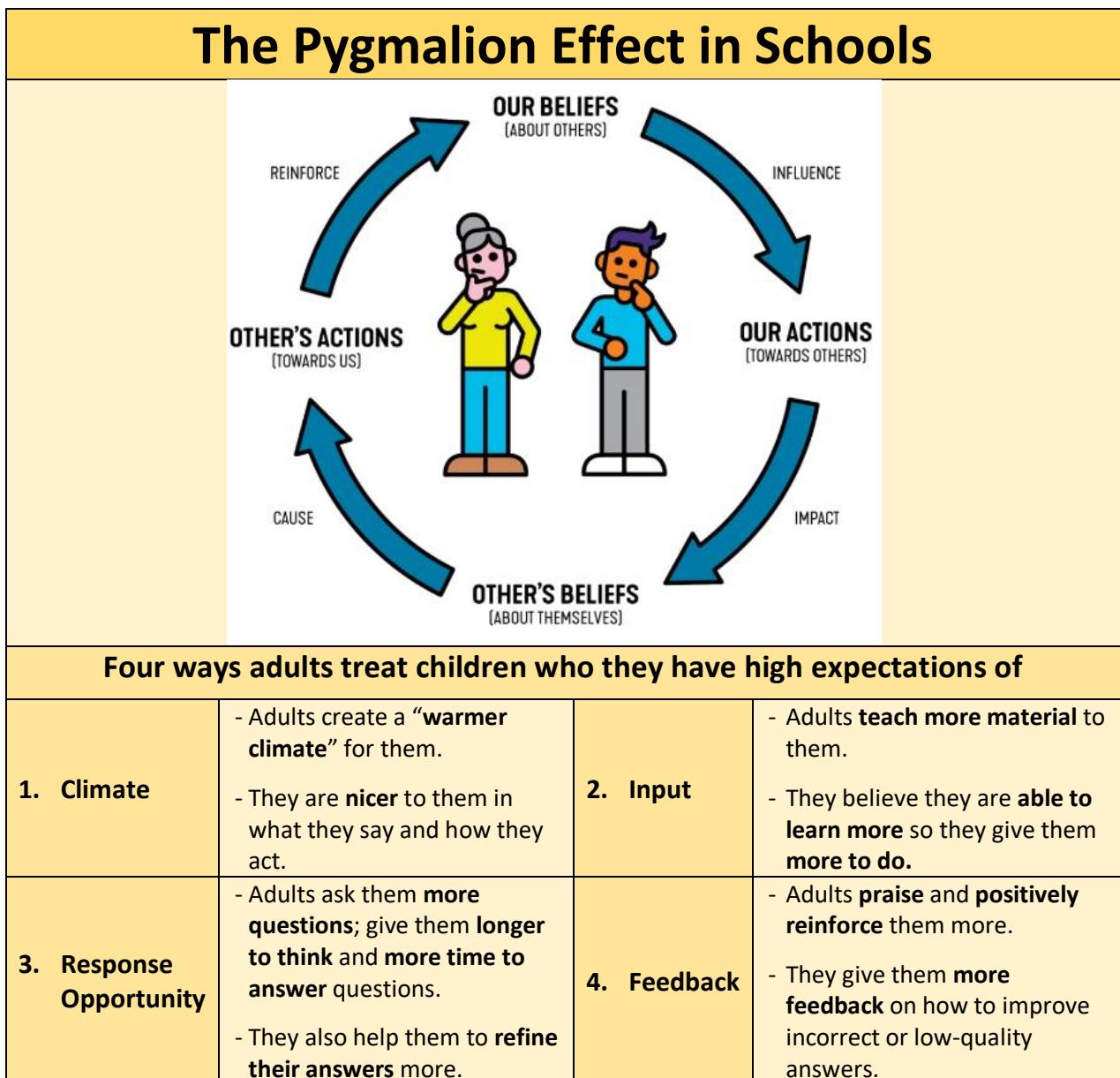
Having high expectations for all children is crucial in developing children's self-belief, learning behaviours and ultimately, their outcomes.

The Pygmalion Effect

It has been proven that having high expectations of children leads to improved performance. This is known as the Pygmalion effect (Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson). It explains that our beliefs about children influence how we act towards them, which in turn influences their belief in themselves. How children feel about themselves, affects their actions, which reinforce our beliefs. This then becomes a self-perpetuating cycle.

It is important to note that it works both ways. Positive beliefs (high expectations) lead to increased performance but negative beliefs (low expectations) lead to a decrease in performance.

Rosenthal and Jacobson analysed what teachers do when they demonstrate high expectations of children and discovered four common areas regarding how they treated children for whom they had high expectations of:



3 – High Expectations of Outcome

High levels of attainment in all subjects and all achievements recognised

At Birch Copse, we value learning across all areas of the curriculum. Our Curriculum is carefully designed to ensure adequate time is given to every subject and that every subject is covered in each of the three terms throughout the year. Our high expectations of teaching (section 1) are applicable across all areas of the curriculum and are monitored by both Subject and Senior Leaders.

We actively value the achievements all areas and encourage the children to be proud of them. These achievements might be:

- learning completed in lessons
- from school enrichment activities (e.g. sports teams, clubs or competitions)
- leadership or citizenship (e.g. school council, Birch Copse Buddies, class monitors, ambassadors)
- from outside of school (e.g. a club or competition)

The school and teachers will value these achievements in a variety of ways depending on the child and the achievement including (but not limited to):

- Sharing with peers
- Sharing with other members of staff
- Sharing with senior leaders
- In assembly
- Placing it on display (e.g. in class, great work display, on a hall board)
- Wow forms or Wall of Fame to share achievements from home

Produce work of quality – Berger’s ‘Ethic of Excellence’

Ron Berger was a classroom teacher and carpenter in his spare time. He wanted to translate the craftsmanship inherent in carpentry to the work his children produced in the classroom. He believed that

“Work of excellence is transformational. Once a student sees that he or she is capable of excellence, that student is never quite the same ... they’re never quite satisfied with less.”

His approach led to the construct of five key principles to encourage children to produce works of excellence in a school, which he published in his book “An Ethic of Excellence: Building a Culture of Craftsmanship with Students” (2006). His five key principles are outlined below.

| Ron Berger: An Ethic of Excellence | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Assign work that matters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning that challenges them • Learning that inspires them or they find interesting |
| 2 | Study examples of excellence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-prepared teacher examples (models) • Children’s work from previous years • The work of a professional (e.g. artist or writer) |
| 3 | Build a culture of critique | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment and peer assessment • Be kind, be specific and be helpful |
| 4 | Require multiple revisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique should lead to improvement • A final or finished piece of work can be achieved |
| 5 | Provide opportunities for public presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives children pride and purpose in what they do • Share work with other adults, other children or parents • Enter competitions, send work to someone or display it in the class |

Berger’s article “Fostering an Ethic of Excellence” is a summary of his book and can be found here: <https://www.jaymctighe.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Ron-Berger-Article.pdf>

4 - High Expectations of Themselves



Follow our Learning School Values to establish excellent learning behaviours

Birch Copse has six school values – three focused on being a good citizen and three focused on being a good learner. Our three **Learning School Values** encourage children to have high expectations of themselves and help establish effective learning behaviours:

1. **Try our best**
2. **Challenge ourselves**
3. **Persevere**

Encourage a Growth Mindset approach

At Birch Copse, we encourage children to have a Growth Mindset approach to their learning. Based on the work of Carol Dweck, research has shown that people who believe their intelligence can be developed (thus demonstrating a growth mindset) outperform those who believe their intelligence is fixed (fixed mindset). When children learn that they can “grow their brains” and increase their intellectual abilities, they do better.

| A Growth Mindset Vs a Fixed Mindset | |
|---|--|
|  |  |
| Intelligence is static | Intelligence can be developed |
| Leads to a desire to <i>look smart</i> and therefore a tendency to: | Leads to a desire to <i>learn</i> and therefore a tendency to: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace challenge |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives up easily due to obstacles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persist despite obstacles |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See effort as fruitless | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See effort as a path to mastery |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignore useful feedback | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from feedback |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be threatened by others' success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inspired by others' success |

Children Recording Tasks/Activities

Whenever possible and practical, children's work should be recorded. There are specified books or folders for each area of the curriculum where work should be recorded or filed.

All members of staff should expect high standards of presentation and effort. Structures and routines should be in place to support this.

Planning

There are detailed schemes of work for every area of the curriculum (an overview of this can be found in the Curriculum Policy) and details of these can be seen on the school website:

<https://www.birchcopse.co.uk/curriculum/our-curriculum>.

Class teachers use the schemes of work to detailed medium term or weekly plans. Although these plans can be used year-on-year, teachers will adapt them to suit the needs of the children in their class.

Assessment and Reporting

Formative assessment should be on going and continuous within the learning sequence in order to inform future planning and learning. Summative assessment takes place on a regular basis throughout the year. Attainment is reported to parents, teachers, governors and outside agencies as appropriate. Details can be found in the school Assessment Policy.

Classroom Management

Classroom management should aim to establish a stimulating environment conducive to successful learning. Teachers should adopt a flexible approach, employing a variety of teaching styles and strategies appropriate to the age group and activities planned. Consideration should be given to safety, accessibility of resources, good use of space, and a procedure for management for children.

To achieve successful classroom management, it will be necessary to establish high standards of behaviour; create a tidy, well-organised classroom with sound management of resources, which encourages sufficient independence of learning to allow children to meet the demands of the National Curriculum; and make the most effective use of time as recommended.

Health and Safety

Pupils should be taught to respect and use properly the resources provided, and have an awareness of specific safety routines (e.g. P.E. Apparatus, glue gun etc.).

When involved in an activity pupils should be appropriately supervised. Current health and safety regulations should be adhered to and discussed with the children. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policy for details.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Defined as pupils who need to receive the curriculum in a more specific way because of physical, environmental, social and/or ability needs. Formative and diagnostic assessment will help determine any special needs. These children will receive appropriate support within the resources available. (More information can be found in the school's SEND Policy and Local Offer).

High Potential Learners

Defined as pupils who have high ability in one or more aspects of school life or the potential to do so. Teachers should identify and meet the needs of high potential learners through strategies and approaches as outlined in the High Potential Learners Policy.

Homework

We recognise that homework plays an important part in children's educational development, and home/school liaison has an important role in the monitoring of this. The type of learning completed at home will differ according to the age and ability of the child. Reference should be made to the Homework Policy.

Responsible officer

Headteacher

Date of last review: **December 2025**

Date of next review: **December 2028**

THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

TAKEN FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION

This poster is from the work of Barak Rosenshine who based these ten principles of instruction and suggested classroom practices on:

- research on how the brain acquires and uses new information
- research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.



01 DAILY REVIEW



Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.

02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS



Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.

03 ASK QUESTIONS



The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.

04 PROVIDE MODELS



Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.

05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE



Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarise new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.

06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING



Less successful teachers merely ask "Are there any questions?" No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.

07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE



A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.

08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS



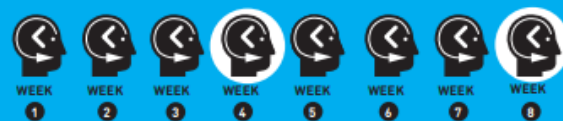
Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.

09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE



Independent practice produces 'overlearning' — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students' working memory.

10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW



The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.