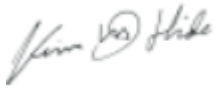


Teaching and Learning Policy

Reviewed by	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Date Amended	October 2026
Next Review	October 2028
Governor Signature:	



TEACHING AND LEARNING

AT JOHN SCURR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Communication. Belonging. Knowledge. Practice. Success.



Teaching and Learning at John Scurr Primary School

Every Child. Every Lesson. Every Day.

At John Scurr Primary School, we believe that great teaching changes lives.

Our pupils arrive with a wide range of experiences, strengths and starting points. Almost all speak English as an Additional Language, many are disadvantaged and a significant proportion require additional support to access learning successfully. These factors do not lower our expectations. Instead, they strengthen our commitment to providing every child with the highest quality education possible.

Great teaching is the single most important factor in securing strong outcomes for pupils. It is through expert teaching that children develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and aspirations needed to succeed both in school and beyond.

Whilst teaching styles may vary, there are key principles that underpin effective teaching across John Scurr Primary School. These principles reflect our values, our context and our belief that every child can achieve.

★ Every Child. Every Lesson. Every Day. ★

At John Scurr Primary School, we believe that **great teaching changes lives.**



★ **Strong communication, a sense of belonging, rich knowledge and purposeful practice lead to success for every child, every lesson, every day.** ★

How Children Learn at John Scurr

At John Scurr Primary School, we believe that learning is a change in long-term memory. Children learn when they acquire new knowledge, connect it to what they already know and can successfully retrieve and apply it over time.

Whilst engagement, participation and enjoyment are important, they are not the end goal. Our focus is on ensuring that children know more, remember more and can do more as a result of teaching.

Teaching is therefore carefully designed to help pupils build secure knowledge, develop understanding and apply learning with increasing confidence and independence.

We recognise that knowledge is not acquired instantly. Children need opportunities to revisit, practise, discuss and apply learning over time. Teachers therefore use retrieval practice, questioning, discussion, modelling and deliberate practice to help pupils transfer learning from short-term memory into long-term memory.

Communication plays a crucial role within this process. Children cannot fully access learning, explain their thinking or develop understanding without language. This is particularly important within our context, where many pupils are learning English as an Additional Language and enter school with more limited English vocabulary and language experiences.

We therefore place communication, vocabulary and oracy at the heart of teaching across the curriculum.

Learning at John Scurr is underpinned by five connected principles.

1. Communication

Language is the gateway to learning.

We deliberately develop vocabulary, conversation and oracy because they enable children to access knowledge, express ideas and participate fully in learning.

Communication is not an additional part of learning. It is the foundation upon which learning is built.

2. Belonging

Children learn best when they feel safe, valued and connected.

Strong relationships, restorative approaches, coaching circles and a culture of belonging create the conditions in which pupils are ready to learn, take risks and contribute.

Belonging does not mean lowering expectations. It means creating the trust and security needed for pupils to meet ambitious expectations.

3. Knowledge

A carefully sequenced, knowledge-rich curriculum enables children to build secure foundations and make meaningful connections between new and existing learning.

We prioritise what children learn, not simply what they do. Learning is not measured by activity, task completion or presentation alone. It is measured by the knowledge pupils gain, retain and apply over time.

4. Practice

Children need opportunities to rehearse, retrieve, apply and refine learning.

Practice strengthens understanding, develops fluency and supports long-term retention. This includes oral rehearsal, guided practice, independent practice, retrieval, quizzing and repeated opportunities to apply learning in different contexts.

5. Success

When children feel that they belong, can communicate effectively, possess secure knowledge and are given opportunities to practise, they experience success.

Success builds confidence, motivation and a belief in their own potential.

We believe that every child can succeed. Our role is to provide the teaching, support and opportunities that enable this success to happen.

We Build Strong Relationships

Learning flourishes in classrooms where children feel safe, valued and respected.

At John Scurr, strong relationships sit at the heart of everything we do. We know that pupils learn best when they feel that they belong, when they trust the adults around them and when they know that their contributions matter.

Teachers take time to know their pupils as individuals. They understand their strengths, barriers, interests and aspirations. They establish clear routines, maintain consistent expectations and create classrooms where pupils feel confident to participate, take risks and make mistakes.

Strong relationships do not mean low expectations. On the contrary, they enable high expectations because children know they are supported, challenged and cared for.

We create classrooms where every child feels known, heard and understood.

1. WE BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Learning flourishes in classrooms where children feel safe, valued and respected.

BELONGING
We create a sense of belonging where everyone feels they matter.

TRUST
We build trust through kindness, consistency and listening.

KNOWN
We take time to know each child as an individual.

GROWTH
We understand strengths, barriers, interests and aspirations.

ROUTINES
We establish clear routines and consistent expectations.

CHALLENGE
We have high expectations and challenge every learner.

CONFIDENCE
We create a safe space to take risks, learn and make mistakes.

HEARD
Every child's voice is listened to and valued.

Strong relationships are the foundation for learning, progress and success.

WE CARE | **WE SUPPORT** | **WE CHALLENGE** | **WE BELIEVE** | **WE THRIVE**

We Prioritise Communication

Language is the gateway to learning.

Because of our context, communication is everyone's responsibility. We recognise that children cannot access knowledge, explain their thinking or participate fully in learning without secure language development.

Teachers deliberately develop vocabulary, conversation and oracy throughout the curriculum. They model high-quality language, explicitly teach ambitious vocabulary and provide regular opportunities for discussion, explanation and oral rehearsal.

Approaches such as ShREC, Language of Learning, Shared Book, oracy and explicit vocabulary instruction help pupils develop the language needed to succeed across the curriculum.

We understand that communication is not an additional part of learning. It is the foundation upon which learning is built.



We Teach Explicitly

We do not leave learning to chance.

At John Scurr, new knowledge, concepts and skills are taught through clear explanation, careful modelling and guided practice. Teachers break learning into manageable steps and ensure pupils understand what success looks like before working independently.

Effective teaching follows a deliberate sequence:

- Connect
- Explain
- Example (Model)
- Attempt (Guided Practice)
- Apply (Independent Practice)
- Challenge and Checking for Understanding runs through the lesson

Teachers think carefully about what pupils need to know, how this should be taught and what misconceptions may arise.

Explanations are clear, concise and precise. Teachers activate prior knowledge, introduce new learning in small steps, use models and examples, check understanding regularly and respond quickly when pupils need further support.

By making learning explicit, we help all pupils access ambitious content successfully.



We Prioritise Vocabulary and Knowledge

Knowledge sits at the heart of our curriculum.

We believe children become successful learners when they possess secure knowledge that can be remembered, connected and applied.

Teachers explicitly teach the vocabulary, concepts and content pupils need to succeed. Important knowledge is revisited regularly and connected to prior learning so that it becomes increasingly secure over time.

Vocabulary is planned, taught and revisited across all curriculum areas. We recognise that vocabulary is one of the strongest foundations for future academic success and therefore cannot be left to chance.

Children who know more can learn more.

We Check Understanding Continuously

Assessment is part of teaching, not something that happens afterwards.

Teachers continually check what pupils know, understand and remember. They use questioning, discussion, mini whiteboards, retrieval practice, quizzing, observation and pupil responses to gather information about learning.

Checking for understanding allows teachers to identify misconceptions quickly and respond before gaps become embedded.

Assessment informs teaching decisions in real time. It helps teachers know when to revisit learning, provide additional modelling, increase challenge or offer further support.

At John Scurr, assessment exists to improve learning.

We Adapt Teaching, Not Expectations

Every pupil is entitled to access an ambitious curriculum.

Adaptive teaching ensures that barriers to learning are removed without reducing challenge. Teachers carefully consider the needs of pupils with SEND, pupils who speak English as an Additional Language and pupils who may require additional support.

Support may include:

- pre-teaching vocabulary
- oral rehearsal
- additional modelling
- visual supports
- scaffolds
- adapted recording
- guided practice

- opportunities to revisit and practise key knowledge

We adapt the way learning is taught, not the ambition of the curriculum.

Our approach can be summarised simply:

Keep Up, Not Catch Up

We aim for pupils to access learning alongside their peers wherever possible, with the right support at the right time. We do not want children waiting until gaps become too wide before support is provided.

We remove barriers early, maintain dignity and build independence over time.



We Ensure Every Child Participates

Learning is not a spectator sport.

All pupils are expected to think, contribute and engage actively during lessons.

Teachers create opportunities for every child to participate through partner talk, questioning, discussion, oral rehearsal, collaborative learning and purposeful classroom routines.

Participation is particularly important within our context because spoken language supports vocabulary development, confidence and understanding.

Every pupil's voice matters.

Every pupil's thinking matters.

Every pupil is expected to contribute.

We Develop Independence

The ultimate goal of teaching is independence.

Teachers provide support when it is needed and remove it when it is no longer required. Scaffolds are used deliberately and gradually withdrawn so that pupils become increasingly confident and self-sufficient.

We want pupils to:

- think independently
- solve problems independently
- communicate independently
- retrieve prior knowledge independently
- apply learning independently
- reflect on and improve their work

Success is not measured by how much support a child receives but by how successfully they can apply their learning without it.

We Maintain Ambition for Every Child

We refuse to place limits on what children can achieve.

Our pupils deserve access to the same rich, ambitious curriculum as children anywhere else in the country. We do not narrow the curriculum because of disadvantage, language acquisition or additional need.

Instead, we provide the support necessary for all pupils to access ambitious learning successfully.

We maintain high expectations because we believe every child has the potential to succeed.

We celebrate effort, perseverance and improvement whilst continuing to strive for excellence.

In Every Classroom

Consistency is key. At John Scurr, great teaching is not occasional and does not depend on individual style. These agreed approaches should be evident in every classroom, every day, adapted appropriately for pupils' age, subject content and individual needs. Consistent implementation ensures that all children experience the same high expectations, high-quality teaching and opportunities to succeed.

In every classroom, we expect to see:

- Strong relationships that help children feel safe, valued and ready to learn
- Purposeful talk that develops language, thinking and confidence

- Explicit vocabulary instruction so pupils can access and use ambitious language
- Clear explanations and modelling so pupils know what success looks like
- High levels of participation so every child is expected to think and contribute
- Regular checking for understanding so misconceptions are identified and addressed quickly
- Adaptive teaching that removes barriers without lowering expectations
- Ambitious learning that gives all pupils access to the full curriculum
- Increasing independence as support is gradually reduced
- Pupils who are engaged, confident and successful

These are not additional expectations. They are the everyday features of effective teaching and learning at John Scurr.



IN EVERY CLASSROOM

★ **Every Child. Every Lesson. Every Day.** ★
Be The Best That You Can Be

We are a community of learners who show our values every day:



RESPECT
We treat everyone with kindness and dignity.



RESILIENCE
We keep going, learn from challenges and never give up.



RESOURCEFULNESS
We are curious, creative and find solutions.



READINESS
We are prepared to learn and take on new opportunities.



REFLECTION
We think about our learning and how we can improve.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO:



GREAT TEACHING
Every lesson is well planned, ambitious and adapted so that every child can achieve.



STRONG RELATIONSHIPS
We build trust, belonging and high expectations in every classroom.



COMMUNICATION FIRST
Language is the gateway to learning. We speak, listen and use rich vocabulary every day.



EXPLICIT TEACHING
We explain clearly, model expertly and check understanding as we go.



HIGH EXPECTATIONS
We believe every child can succeed and we remove barriers to learning.

IN OUR CLASSROOMS, WE:



LISTEN ACTIVELY – We listen to others, take turns and value every voice.



WORK HARD – We are focused, try our best and take pride in our learning.



SUPPORT EACH OTHER – We help, encourage and celebrate each other's success.



BE SAFE – We keep ourselves and others safe in our words and actions.



USE VOCABULARY – We use rich words to learn, discuss and explain our ideas.



THINK DEEPLY – We ask questions, make connections and reflect on our learning.

★ **EVERY DAY COUNTS**

Arrive ready.
Focus fully.
Engage actively.
Make progress.
Be proud.

★
TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS.

★ **BE THE BEST THAT YOU CAN BE** ★

What Great Teaching Looks Like at John Scurr

Great teaching at John Scurr is built on strong relationships, expert instruction, purposeful adaptation and an unwavering belief that every child can succeed.

Great teachers at John Scurr:

Build Strong Relationships

They create safe, respectful classrooms where every child feels known, valued and ready to learn.

Teach Explicitly

They explain new learning clearly, model carefully and guide pupils towards independence.

Prioritise Vocabulary

They recognise that language is the gateway to learning and teach vocabulary deliberately and systematically.

Check Understanding

They continually assess learning, identify misconceptions and respond quickly.

Adapt Skilfully

They remove barriers to learning whilst maintaining ambitious expectations for all pupils.

Maintain High Expectations

They believe every child can achieve and refuse to let background, language or additional need limit success.

Ensure Every Child Participates

They create classrooms where every voice is heard and every pupil is actively engaged in learning.

Build Independence

They provide support when needed and remove it when pupils are ready, helping children become confident and successful learners.

Secure Success

They combine challenge, inclusion and consistency so that every child can achieve their very best.

At John Scurr Primary School, great teaching is characterised by strong relationships, expert instruction, purposeful adaptation and an unwavering belief that every child can succeed.

Together, we help our pupils to be the best that they can be.