



# The Beacon

Church of England (V.A.) Primary & Pre-School  
(John 10:10)

*Living life in all its fullness*

## The Beacon Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary & Pre-School 'Achieving together in a Christian school'

Policy discussed by staff .....	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
Policy discussed and approved by Full governing board .....	9th February 2026
Review date .....	February 2029

### School Vision and Aims

Our vision is for **"Living life in all its fullness"** (John 10:10). We aim to work together with parents and carers to provide learning and play experiences which will engage children's interests; inspire them to want to know more; motivate them to persevere with their learning and empower them to develop skills of independence. In **'achieving together in a Christian school,'** underpinned by our core values, they will become:

- **Confident individuals** who can positively face the successes and challenges of life.
- **Successful learners** who can take their place in a constantly changing world.
- **Responsible citizens** who are able to make a positive contribution to today's diverse society.
- **Appreciative and respectful of other people's uniqueness and talents** and recognised and celebrated for their own.

We want each child to enjoy coming to school because they take joy in learning, they know they are valued and unique and they take pride in themselves and our school.

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## Teaching and Learning Policy

### Introduction

All children have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. The policy covers both the National Curriculum, which provides the legal foundation and secures an entitlement for all pupils, and all that is learned in school, formally and informally, and within and beyond the school day.

Our vision is to promote aspirational, independent children who are happy, respectful and have self-belief. Our aim is that all children in The Beacon become creative, active and reflective learners, enabling them to be successful in and out of school, both now and into the future. We see learning as the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. Learning is achieved through a wide range of teaching routines, strategies, activities and experiences and through the development and application of positive attitudes and learning behaviours.

### Policy Aims:

- To demonstrate a commitment to high quality teaching
- To enable high standards of progress and attainment, and promote an enjoyment of learning
- To underline our commitment to providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum

This policy is organised into 5 parts: Effective Teaching and Learning, An Effective Learning Environment, Monitoring and Developing Teaching and Learning, and Appendices.

### PART 1: EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

**We believe that successful learners have particular skills and as staff we aim to enable children to:**

- Take responsibility for their own learning, knowing effort leads to success;
- To show resilience, resourcefulness and reflectiveness;
- Have appropriate self-confidence and a positive self-image;
- Feel emotionally secure, safe, relaxed and mentally healthy;
- Be actively engaged, to be self-motivated, interested and curious;
- Be willing to take risks, seeing mistakes as positive learning opportunities;



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- Be able to work collaboratively, interacting positively, and be able to work independently;
- Understand what they need to do to move forward in their learning;
- Use 'talk' to further their learning, by listening, communicating and questioning effectively;
- Be able to access information, resources and the environment appropriately;
- Be able to express their needs and feelings appropriately;
- Interpret and transfer skills in new contexts and remember and apply them to their learning;

## **In order to enable children to become successful learners we must:**

- Ensure that all children are competent in basic skills;
- Ensure that children experience a rich and challenging curriculum that allows them to apply and further develop basic skills and become successful learners;
- Foster children's self-esteem based on genuine recognition of their uniqueness and talents, so that they become confident individuals;
- Enable children to become better thinkers so that they can solve problems creatively;
- Help children to build positive relationships with other people;
- Develop children's self-respect and encourage them to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- Show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- Enable children to understand their community and help them to feel valued as part of this community;
- Help children grow into responsible citizens, capable of making a positive contribution.

## **In effective lessons:**

- Children feel valued, and believe the teacher is interested in them and cares about them as an individual.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are conducive to learning. Children feel secure in taking risks in their learning, and in seeking guidance;
- Children understand what they are learning and know how to approach learning questions and achieve their next steps;
- Previous learning is built upon to promote new learning, and skills are practised to embed them and increase fluency.
- Children are engaged and motivated, supported and appropriately challenged. Everyone is included and all needs are met - provision is inclusive.
- Become actively involved, developing practical and 'in-context' skills, knowledge and understanding;
- Children use paired, group and whole class 'talk' to further their learning and show a good ability to listen to others. Dialogue is embedded within the classroom culture (see Appendix 1 – Dialogic learning)
- Tasks and activities are fit for purpose - activities are carefully chosen to optimise learning by actively engaging children in their learning, encouraging them to think deeply (see Appendix 3 – Magenta Principles), take decisions and evaluate their learning;
- Children have opportunities to be independent in their thinking and learning, make choices and take risks;
- Learning behaviours are good - any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively in line with the school's Belonging Policy;
- Pupils' understanding is regularly checked by staff who listen carefully and intervene appropriately so as to positively impact on learning. Misconceptions are addressed and are used as opportunities for learning – questions are asked to progress knowledge and deepen understanding;
- Children receive effective feedback, from staff and each other, enabling them to improve their performance - they have opportunities for self-evaluation and reflection. Pupils respond to marking and feedback;
- All children learn and make good progress - children achieve;
- Children are enabled to think deeply, encouraged to question and are given opportunities to problem solve;
- Children are helped to make links between their learning and are able to transfer skills;
- The organisation and pace of lessons promotes high performance and allows thinking time;
- Adults and children have high expectations of their teaching and/or learning;
- Resources are accessible, selected carefully, are appropriate and of a high quality;
- Teaching assistants and other adults are deployed well and impact positively on learning;
- Genuine praise and recognition of good learning behaviours and achievement are evident;



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- Staff consistently model and demonstrate good standards of personal, social and academic behaviour.
- Children receive at least good teaching to outstanding teaching, guidance and support;

**Effective Teaching:** We believe effective teaching is exhibited when:

- The teacher uses a dialogic approach which is:
  - **Collective:** teachers and children address learning tasks together, whether as a group or a class;
  - **Reciprocal;** teachers and children listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints;
  - **Supportive;** Children articulate their ideas freely, without fear of embarrassment over 'wrong' answers; they help each other to reach common understandings;
  - **Cumulative:** teachers and children build their own and each other's ideas and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry;
  - **Purposeful;** teachers plan and steer classroom talk with specific educational goals in view.
- Children are actively engaged in the learning experience;
- The teacher has good subject knowledge and explains clearly;
- Children are aware of what they are learning as the teacher plans, explains & delivers clear learning intentions;
- The teacher uses the Magenta Principles (see Appendix 3) to allow children to gain a deeper understanding and use a variety of methods/strategies which enable all pupils to learn effectively;
- The teacher models and scaffolds learning, making clear what is expected and supporting children to achieve;
- Children move towards independence in applying skills and knowledge, and practise these to ensure competence;
- Children are given opportunities to, and encouraged to use transferable knowledge and skills;
- The teacher has a clear understanding of the progression and breaks this down into small steps;
- Time and resources (which includes the teacher/ support staff) are effectively used to maximise learning;
- Staff in class listen carefully and intervene appropriately to deepen thinking and further learning;
- Feedback, marking and assessments are used in a timely and effective manner to help pupils learn.
- The teacher understands how to achieve an effective classroom climate to raise achievement and learning;
- The children can show independence, creativity and perseverance;
- The teacher challenges and inspires pupils at all levels whilst supporting them in their next steps;
- The teacher has high expectations and helps pupils to achieve these;
- The teacher undertakes focussed assessment of children's work, and uses this to build learning through strategies such as pupil conferencing;
- Teachers implement focussed pupil support as necessary, recording on Focussed Pupil Support Record sheets.
- The teacher uses displays and homework to enhance and reinforce learning;

## **Children's books and work examples**

- All teachers will be expected to use the agreed individual pupil books as follows:
  - Learning Journey using Tapestry online – Reception Class only
  - Writing Books for all writing including across the curriculum.
  - Maths - No Problem! Workbooks.
  - Maths Journals for all maths including across the curriculum.
  - Handwriting book (Y1 – 3 or beyond as appropriate)
  - Art book (art-paper)
- Every piece of work will be dated.
- Marking, feedback and assessment by staff will be undertaken as set out in the Assessment and Marking Policy;



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- Blue pen (not biro) is to be used by those with neat writing unless pencil is required, for example in Maths and for diagrams, drawings, illustrations etc.

**Teaching and learning is organised into three stages:** The Foundation Stage (N2 and Reception). Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Within classes, pairings/groupings are flexible and include mixed ability and ability groups. There will be a mixture of individual work, paired work, small group teaching, and whole class teaching. Teachers will choose the most appropriate way of delivering each aspect of the curriculum.

#### **Teaching time:**

- Pre-School aged children – see the separate Governor-Run Pre-School Admissions Policy which sets out the times available.
- Foundation Stage & Key Stage 1 - 22.9 hours a week
- Key Stage 2 - 23.75 hours a week.

These figures exclude registration, break times and the daily act of collective worship.

**Classroom Support:** Teaching Assistants are deployed to assist teachers in meeting the learning needs of individuals and groups. We aim for the use of classroom based support staff to maximise learning. As a minimum, all classes have support during Maths and English lessons.

**Special Educational Needs and Disability:** Some children will have specific needs related to their education. Teachers give work to children which is appropriate to their learning capabilities, supporting, guiding and challenging children to achieve their best. See SEND Policy for more details.

## **PART 2: AN EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

**Appropriate behaviour** is a priority and is insisted upon at all times. As a school we help our children to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong; to feel safe, secure and valued; to develop understanding of how we are responsible for our own actions and behaviour, and to know our actions and behaviours can affect our own learning as well as the feelings, actions and learning of others. (see Belonging Policy)

**Self-confidence and self-esteem are important.** Pupils are recognised for a wide range of achievements ranging from having good manners, to making good improvements or achieving well across the whole range of school and community life. We work to ensure pupils experience success and are able to share these across the school, and are given praise where deserved. Good relationships and promotion of equal opportunities for all (see equalities statement) are seen as essential in establishing this ethos which aims to promote high self-esteem in all pupils. We survey children in KS1 and KS2 to help us better understand 'Pupils Attitudes to Self and School' and use this information to help us meet individuals' needs.

#### **Learning Environment:**

- Our whole school, including the external environment, is seen as a place for learning and is resourced and treated as such;
- Classrooms and other areas are effectively planned and managed;
- Resources are organised so that pupils can make choices whilst learning;
- Displays are relevant to current learning. They stimulate, enhance, assist and celebrate teaching and learning;
- Our policies and teaching strategies support pupils taking part in decisions relating to school resources (this is done on an individual, class and School Council level);
- Our whole school ethos demonstrates our commitment to high standards of achievement and progress;
- We promote self-responsibility and positively assert the expectation of appropriate behaviour;
- Our pupils understand that adults who work with them should be treated with equal respect;



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- The physical environment of the classrooms is conducive to learning – they will be clean, tidy and uncluttered. Everything in the room will promote learning, a growth mindset and wellbeing (we don't expect to see stickers or doodles on trays, books or anywhere in the classroom);
- Children have access to drinking water.

**The classroom:** We expect that all children will experience consistently high-quality learning environments. In every classroom there will be:

- The school Vision and Aims displayed;
- A visual timetable;
- Evidence of 'Is it safe, is it sensible, is it kind?' and class agreement;
- Visual behaviour aid;
- Individual storage for pupils containing their individual resources and equipment:
  - Pencil case and associated pens, pencils, crayons etc;
  - Maths equipment as appropriate;
  - Reading books and reading records;
- Displays that celebrate learning and act as a prompt and inspiration for further learning:
  - A writing wall which reflects current learning in literacy;
  - A Maths in context / maths across the curriculum display;
  - A reading corner/display;
  - A prayer corner and/or RE display, with prayer box;
  - Prompts and reminders relating to maths and English learning
  - Building Learning Power/Growth mindsets prompts
- Appropriate storage for necessary shared resources such as paints, aprons, dictionaries and thesauruses.

We expect that every aspect of the classroom should promote learning. We do not expect to see anything in a classroom that is not related to the children's learning experiences.

**Outside the classroom:** We expect everyone to take responsibility for keeping shared public areas and storage areas tidy.

- Each teacher / Teaching Assistant is responsible for a display in a public area and must keep it looking 'fresh';
- The range of displays will include writing, maths, reading, RE, values, rewards, pupil leadership, inspirational quotes (religious and famous), stimulating curriculum examples; one off displays such as sports day;
- Surfaces in shared areas (cupboard tops, piano and window sills) should be left clear and uncluttered;
- Shared equipment will be stored tidily and packed away promptly and safely, not left hanging around in the hall, corridor or playground.
- Corridors and peg areas should be kept tidy – children must hang things securely on pegs and staff will monitor and manage this;
- Class staff are responsible for checking the library is left tidily after children have selected books so that others can enter a tidy and calm space conducive to reading;
- Shared spaces such as the playground, hall, hub and library are tightly timetabled – staff will leave all clean, tidy and safe for those who follow and will have packed away equipment;
- Shared storage areas must be kept tidy and clear for safety – space is limited;
- Public / shared areas should provide a visual and apparent reinforcement of our school ethos.

## **PART 3: MONITORING AND DEVELOPING TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The minimum expectation for the quality of provision in each class is good. Management action including coaching and individual support will be offered to staff working below this level of provision. It is important that school leaders at all levels are aware of the current standards of teaching and learning within the school.



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**Monitoring of Standards:** Monitoring can be achieved in many ways as follows:

- Lesson observation
- Lesson conversation
- Talk for Teaching (T4T)
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Planning scrutiny
- Peer observation
- Pupil interviews
- Data analysis
- Pupil Progress Meetings (solution focussed approach)
- Peer Support Meetings (solution focussed approach)

Monitoring will be recorded and the outcomes shared with staff and governors. Staff will always be aware of how well they have performed against a criteria. Governors will always receive anonymous information and will be invited to participate as appropriate.

**Observation Schedule:** It is important that observations are carried out with staff wellbeing and positive outcomes in mind. The Headteacher and SLT are in classes throughout the school daily and provide in the moment feedback to support staff development and target learning needs. These observations form part of the view of the quality of teaching. Staff will receive further formal observations if the observation and / or triangulated evidence suggest that teaching and learning is less than good. If the collated evidence suggests teaching is less than good, the leadership team will work with the individual on a 'Performance Improvement Plan, with the aim to accelerate teaching to at least good within 6 weeks. Teachers' whose performance has improved to a good level from a lower starting point will be observed half-termly to ensure improved practice is embedded.

**Managing Action and Support:** A Performance Improvement Plan, otherwise known as informal capability, will use supportive strategies which may include peer coaching and observations, video observation, CPD to address subject knowledge issues, Learning Walks, Team Teaching and visits to other establishments. If there is no change this will move to formal capability. The capability process is a supportive action, detailing what needs to improve and identifying how this is to be achieved with clear success criteria (see Capability Policy).

**Conclusion:** In order for children to be successful in their learning they need to have good teaching. In order for this good teaching to be most effective, children need to feel secure in their teacher pupil relationship and to have self-belief. As a school staff it is our aim to provide each individual with every opportunity to succeed by meeting their individual needs, by inspiring a desire to learn and by providing high quality teaching in an environment that is conducive to learning.



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The term 'dialogic teaching' is now in regular use but like all such terms means different things to different people. As developed by Robin Alexander since the early 2000s, dialogic teaching harnesses the power of talk to stimulate and extend students' thinking and advance their learning and understanding. It helps the teacher more precisely to diagnose students' needs, frame their learning tasks and assess their progress.

It empowers the student for lifelong learning and active citizenship. Dialogic teaching is not just any talk. It is as distinct from the question-answer and listen-tell routines of traditional teaching as it is from the casual conversation of informal discussion. It requires:

- **interactions** which encourage students to think, and to think in different ways
- **questions** which invite much more than simple recall
- **answers** which are justified, followed up and built upon rather than merely received
- **feedback** which informs and leads thinking forward as well as encourages
- **contributions** which are extended rather than fragmented
- **exchanges** which chain together into coherent and deepening lines of enquiry
- **discussion and argumentation** which probe and challenge rather than unquestioningly accept
- **professional engagement with subject matter** which liberates classroom discourse from the safe and conventional
- **classroom organisation, climate and relationships** which make all this possible

In a nutshell, Dialogic teaching is:

- **Collective:** teachers and children address learning tasks together, whether as a group or a class;
- **Reciprocal;** teachers and children listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints;
- **Supportive;** Children articulate their ideas freely, without fear of embarrassment over 'wrong' answers; they help each other to reach common understandings;
- **Cumulative:** teachers and children build their own and each other's ideas and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry;
- **Purposeful:** teachers plan and steer classroom talk with specific educational goals in view.

Towards Dialogic Teaching: Rethinking Classroom Talk, by **Robin Alexander**



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## APPENDIX 3: THE MAGENTA PRINCIPLES (MIKE HUGHES)

The Magenta Principles is a phrase that refers to a philosophy and teaching approach developed, in conjunction with schools, by Mike Hughes. The Magenta Principles approach moves away from children receiving, retaining and regurgitating information and allows them to gain a deeper understanding through more exciting and engaging experiences.

'...the phrase represents a pedagogy underpinned by an unshakeable belief that:

- Learning is the consequence of thinking...therefore our job is to get them to think
- Language is central to thinking...therefore our job is to get them to talk
- Learning is an active process...therefore our job is to get them doing'

'The Magenta Principles' Mike Hughes (2014)

When children therefore encounter information, with the Magenta Approach they would be asked to reduce it or change it or replace it etc. Children would have to 'do something' with the information in order to develop a deep understanding. The core principles, with examples, are as follows:

### REDUCE

Read page 12 and tell me which is the most important sentence.

Listen to this song – what are the key words?

Look at this painting – who do you think is the main character?

Read these sentences about an earthquake. What are the 3 most important words?

Here are 8 calculations – choose the three hardest.

### CHANGE

Read a passage about photosynthesis and change it into a mime.

Change your sentence to physical gestures (helps children with auditory memory difficulties).

What would have happened if Jack hadn't found an axe to chop down the beanstalk?

Use anything on your desk and turn them into a model (to demonstrate the water cycle, or a Hindu wedding or a map of the UK...)

### REPLACE

(Linking with the earlier reduce example) Get children to explain what causes earthquakes, without using these 3 key words.

Which verbs could you use to replace the word 'looked'?

Replace the adjective with a simile

### ADD

Add one thing to the explanation about earthquakes.

Add a final chapter to the story of Cinderella.

Add a newly discovered animal to the 'mammals' group – what features would it have?

### ARRANGE

The 2 main arrangement activities involve a diamond 9 (or 4) or an archery target. In a diamond 9, the children arrange information in the shape of a diamond, with what they believe to be the most important (or maybe interesting) information at the top and the least at the bottom. The target activity involves children putting what they believe to be the most important/relevant/interesting information in the centre and then arranging the rest of the information – with what they believe to be the least important towards the boundary.



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## SEQUENCE

Give the children a picture from the front cover of an unfamiliar book. What's it about? Then give 3 pictures to sequence. Give a selection of sentences from the book. Which is the final sentence? Why?

Look at a painting with multiple characters – in which order did they arrive in the room/on the scene?

Give the children a selection of cards with statements on – half it, multiply by 5, double it, subtract 7, add 2 etc. Give them a starting number. Which order would you follow the cards to get the biggest final number? Smallest? An odd number? An even number?

Each child in a group of 4 composes a 2bar rhythm in 4/4 time – come together and organise the rhythms in a sequence. Rearrange them. Does this change the composition? Use the individual rhythms as many times in succession or during the sequence as you wish to create a longer piece.

## ASSEMBLE

The main idea behind this principle/approach is that during an activity, not all of the necessary information is given in one go or in the same way, or to one person, or in a completed form. Children might be given 2 or 3 clues each in small groups to work out an 'answer'.

A grid might be provided and a list of words given. The clues would relate to word groups – the verb is in the centre, all word groups beginning with 'A' are in the bottom row...etc.

Shapes might be given instead of words and the clues would relate to properties.

Or numbers with clues such as all the multiples of 5 are in the top row, all the numbers in the corners are divisible by 10.

## CLASSIFY\*

Give the children a selection of pictures by the same artist and ask them to sort them into 2 piles – not giving them any criteria so that they are identifying a way to classify them. This could be done with pictures of animals – arrange them into groups.

Children could be given cards with mathematical information on – numbers or shapes etc – and asked to categorise them into piles/groups.

\*With classify activities, it is vital that the children justify their decisions.

## COMPARE

Compare the 'How to Train Your Dragon' book to the film.

Compare 2 time periods in History, or two rulers.

Compare two paintings or pieces of music or versions of a myth.

Look for the similarities between 2 characters from two very different texts.

## CONNECT

Snap, information dominoes, pairs, odd ones out.

Give children some photographs – which best represents a given character from a text?

Part way through a text, give children quotes from main characters and ask them to connect using their knowledge of the characters so far.

'The Magenta Principles' Mike Hughes, 2014



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**Appendix 4: Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset**



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## TWO MINDSETS

CAROL S. DWECK, Ph.D.

Graphic by  
Nigel Holmes

