



# Learning Environment Policy

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles and practices that shape a holistic, supportive, and aesthetically pleasing learning environment for our pupils. Our goal is to create a space where academic and character development are equally prioritised, fostering a well-rounded and engaging educational experience.

## **Overview and Rationale**

A carefully designed learning environment is crucial for the cognitive, emotional, and social development of young learners. This policy emphasises the importance of clean, organised, and visually appealing spaces that minimise distractions and support focused learning. The incorporation of natural elements, soft lighting, and neutral tones creates a calming atmosphere conducive to both individual and collaborative work.

## **Aims**

- To cultivate a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment that supports the holistic development of each child.
- To engage and motivate learners by showcasing their achievements and learning processes.
- To foster mental health and wellbeing through a thoughtfully designed physical environment.
- To reflect and celebrate cultural diversity, promoting respect and global citizenship.
- To integrate sustainability into our practices, teaching pupils the importance of environmental stewardship.
- To promote a love of reading and foster oracy development as fundamental skills that underpin learning across the curriculum.

## **Metacognition and Cognitive Overload Considerations**

Our learning spaces are designed with an understanding of cognitive development. We implement strategies to foster metacognitive awareness, helping pupils become active participants in their learning. By keeping classrooms visually organised and focused, we avoid cognitive overload and ensure that learners can engage deeply with manageable challenges.

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The emotional and mental well-being of our pupils is central to our learning environment. We create spaces that encourage relaxation, emotional expression, and resilience. The use of soft lighting, natural colours, and greenery contributes to a tranquil atmosphere that supports mental health.

## **Cultural Competence and Global Citizenship**

Our school environment will reflect cultural diversity and promote global citizenship. Displays and resources will highlight diverse cultures, histories, and perspectives, encouraging respect and inclusivity.

Through thematic displays and classroom discussions, pupils will learn about social justice, environmental responsibility, and the importance of cultural competence.

## **SMSC and British Values**

Our curriculum and environment will incorporate spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development while promoting British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect. These principles will be integrated into daily activities, displays, and classroom discussions to reinforce their importance in our school community.

## **Celebrating and Showcasing Academic and Character Strength Development**

We are committed to regularly showcasing both academic achievements and character strengths. Displays will celebrate pupil work and personal growth, fostering a sense of pride and motivation. Achievements will be highlighted through classroom displays, corridor exhibitions, and digital platforms, ensuring that every child feels recognised and valued.

## **Sustainability and Environmental Awareness**

Sustainability is embedded in our learning environment. We aim to reduce our environmental impact by incorporating eco-friendly practices into the design and maintenance of our spaces. Educational activities will encourage pupils to participate in recycling, conservation, and other sustainability initiatives.

## **Hessian/Neutral Walls Approach**

Classrooms will use hessian or neutral-coloured walls to create a calm, adaptable, and visually cohesive environment. This "natural look" with light brown, cream-backed boards, and warm furnishings helps minimise distractions and maintain a focus on learning. The approach allows for dynamic displays that can be easily updated without overwhelming the space.

## **Working Walls and Scaffolds/Worked Examples**

Each classroom will feature working walls that prioritise scaffolds and worked examples, which are integral to our teaching and learning approach. These walls will serve as ongoing reference points, helping pupils understand key concepts and processes. The focus will be on clarity and usefulness, ensuring that the displays actively support pupils' learning.

## **Corridor Displays**

Corridor displays will serve as a showcase for pupil work across all year groups, from Nursery to Year 2. Each subject leader will have a dedicated display area, that promotes their subject and showcases the learning journey. These displays will highlight the entire learning process, reflecting progression and depth of understanding, and will contribute to a visually appealing and informative school environment.

## **Lighting Considerations**

Lighting in our learning environments will be carefully planned to support pupil engagement and reduce fatigue. Natural light will be maximised where possible, supplemented by soft, adjustable artificial lighting to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere. This approach not only supports wellbeing but also enhances the overall aesthetic of the school.

## **Promoting a Love of Reading and Oracy Development**

We are committed to promoting a love of reading and fostering oracy development as foundational skills for lifelong learning. Leaders will continuously seek opportunities to display materials that support these areas throughout the school. This includes themed book displays, reading corners, and oracy-focused boards that encourage children to engage with books and develop their speaking and listening skills. The school library, classroom reading areas, and corridors will be rich with

resources and visual prompts that inspire a passion for reading and articulate communication.

## **Use of Technology**

Technology will be thoughtfully integrated into our classrooms and learning spaces. We will use digital tools to enhance learning experiences while ensuring that screen time is balanced with hands-on activities. Technology will be age-appropriate and used as a complement to traditional learning methods, not a replacement.

## **Parent, Carer, and Community Engagement**

We will foster strong relationships with parents, carers, and the broader community through regular communication, workshops, and events. Families will be invited to participate in the educational process, contributing to the learning environment and supporting their children's development.

## **Collaboration and Professional Development**

Collaboration among staff will be encouraged, with ongoing professional development opportunities provided to ensure educators are equipped with the latest best practices. Staff will share insights and strategies to continuously improve the learning environment.

## **Staff Responsibilities**

### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):**

- Provide overall vision and direction for the learning environment policy.
- Ensure adequate resources and support for the implementation of the policy across all year groups.
- Monitor the effectiveness of learning environments and lead regular evaluations.

### **Year Group Leaders:**

- Collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure that the learning environments meet the developmental needs of pupils in their year group.
- Facilitate communication and sharing of best practices among staff within their year groups.
- Lead initiatives to update and enhance displays and resources in their areas.

### **Subject Leaders:**

- Ensure that subject-specific displays and resources are current, relevant, and reflective of the curriculum.

- Provide training and support to classroom teachers on effective use of subject-related materials in the learning environment.
- Regularly review and assess the impact of learning environments on subject engagement and achievement.

**Classroom Teachers:**

- Create and maintain an organised, inviting, and inclusive classroom environment that supports pupil learning.
- Regularly update working walls and displays to reflect ongoing learning and achievements.
- Foster a classroom culture where pupils feel valued and encouraged to express themselves.

**Support Staff:**

- Assist in maintaining a clean and well-organised learning environment.
- Support teachers in implementing learning activities that utilise the environment effectively.
- Engage with pupils to encourage positive behaviours and interactions.

**Lunchtime Supervisors:**

- Promote a positive dining experience by ensuring the dining area is welcoming and well-managed.
- Encourage healthy eating habits and positive social interactions during lunch.
- Monitor pupil behaviour and wellbeing in the dining hall and playground areas.

**Admin Team:**

- Support the learning environment by ensuring necessary resources and materials are ordered and available.
- Assist in maintaining communication with parents/ carers and the community regarding initiatives related to the learning environment.

**Premises Manager:**

- Ensure that the physical learning environment is safe, well-maintained, and conducive to learning.
- Coordinate regular inspections and maintenance of facilities to uphold health and safety standards.
- Manage the setup and configuration of learning spaces for special events and activities.

**School Business Manager:**

- Oversee the budget and allocation of resources for enhancing the learning environment.

- Ensure that financial decisions align with the school's objectives for creating a positive learning atmosphere.

**Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer:**

- Monitor and support pupil wellbeing within the learning environment.
- Provide training and resources to staff on maintaining a safe and supportive atmosphere for all pupils.
- Ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed in all learning spaces.

**Kitchen/Catering Team:**

- Prepare and serve nutritious meals that contribute to pupil health and wellbeing.
- Maintain cleanliness and organisation within the dining area.
- Engage with pupils during mealtimes to promote a positive dining experience.

**Cleaning Team:**

- Maintain cleanliness and hygiene standards throughout the school to ensure a safe and inviting learning environment.
- Regularly clean classrooms, corridors, communal areas, and outdoor spaces, ensuring all areas are well presented and conducive to learning.
- Monitor supplies of cleaning materials and report any maintenance issues to the Premises Manager.
- Support the school's sustainability goals by using environmentally friendly cleaning products and practices whenever possible.

All staff members are expected to collaborate and communicate effectively, ensuring a cohesive approach to creating and maintaining a positive and inclusive learning environment for all pupils. Training and support will be provided to help staff meet these expectations.

**EYFS Specific - Indoors and Outdoors**

Learning spaces for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) will be designed to support exploration, play, and inquiry. Both indoor and outdoor areas will be equipped with age-appropriate resources that encourage physical, social, and cognitive development. These spaces will be regularly refreshed to keep them engaging and aligned with learning objectives.

**KS1 Specific**

For Key Stage 1 (KS1), the learning environment will encourage independence and critical thinking. Classrooms will be organised to

facilitate collaborative learning, with resources easily accessible to support self-directed activities. Working walls will continue to be a central feature, providing ongoing support for pupil learning.

## **Self-Scaffolding Resources**

Resources that support self-scaffolding will be readily available in all classrooms. These may include visual aids, manipulatives, and checklists designed to help children independently navigate learning challenges and build problem-solving skills.

## **KS1 Playgrounds**

KS1 playgrounds will be designed to promote physical activity, social interaction, and imaginative play. The playgrounds will include a variety of equipment and spaces that inspire creativity and collaboration among pupils.

## **School Entrance**

The school entrance will be welcoming and reflective of our values and mission. Displays and signage will convey our commitment to inclusivity, learning, and community, creating a positive first impression for visitors, pupils, and their families.

## **Breakout Spaces Around School**

Breakout spaces will be provided for quiet reflection, small group work, and one-to-one support. These areas will be equipped with comfortable seating, calming decor, and resources to support learning and wellbeing.

## **School Library**

The school library will be a vibrant hub for reading and learning, with a wide selection of books and resources to encourage a love of reading. The space will be organised to support independent reading, group activities, and storytelling sessions, fostering a rich literary culture within the school.

## **Dining Hall**

The dining hall will be designed to provide a positive and enjoyable mealtime experience. It will be a space where pupils can relax, socialise, and develop healthy eating habits. The environment will be clean, welcoming, and conducive to fostering good manners and positive social interactions.

## **Phonics (RWI) Bases**

Phonics bases for Read Write Inc. (RWI) will be organised to support structured, effective phonics instruction. These spaces will be equipped with all necessary resources, including clear visual aids and accessible materials, to ensure a consistent and high-quality phonics learning experience.

## **Evaluating the Impact of Our Learning Environment**

We will regularly evaluate the impact of our learning environment on pupil engagement, achievement, and wellbeing. This will involve gathering feedback from pupils, staff, and parents, and making adjustments as needed to ensure our spaces continue to meet the needs of our school community.

## **Staff Workload and Wellbeing Considerations**

In designing and maintaining our learning environments, we will consider staff workload and wellbeing. Efforts will be made to ensure that expectations are realistic, and that staff are supported in creating and sustaining high-quality learning spaces.

## **Health and Safety Compliance**

All aspects of our learning environment will comply with health and safety regulations. Regular checks will be conducted to ensure that spaces are safe, clean, and fit for purpose, with any necessary repairs or adjustments made promptly.

## **Links to Other Policies**

This Learning Environment Policy is closely linked to several other key school policies that collectively ensure a comprehensive approach to pupil welfare, education, and overall school culture. These include:

- **Behaviour Policy:** Outlines the expectations for pupil behaviour and how a positive learning environment contributes to and reinforces these standards.
- **SEND Policy:** Details how the learning environment is adapted and differentiated to meet the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- **Equality Policy:** Ensures that our learning environment is inclusive and accessible to all pupils, regardless of background, ability, or personal characteristics.

- **Teaching and Learning Policy:** Provides the framework for instructional practices, which are supported by the design and resources of the learning environment.
- **Safeguarding Policy:** Emphasises the importance of a safe and secure environment, which is integral to the physical and emotional safety of all pupils.

The principles outlined in this policy should be applied in conjunction with these related policies to ensure a cohesive, supportive, and effective approach to the education and welfare of all pupils.

## References

This policy is informed by:

- **Department for Education (DfE):** Guidance documents on educational standards and best practices.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework:** Guidelines for the development, learning, and care of children from birth to age five.
- **Ofsted Framework for Inspection:** Standards and criteria for assessing educational institutions in the UK.
- **Education Endowment Foundation (EEF):** Research and guidance on effective teaching strategies and the impact of learning environments on pupil outcomes.
- **National Institute for Teaching Excellence (NITE):** Research on effective teaching practices and professional development for educators.
- **The Teaching Standards:** Guidelines outlining the competencies and professional conduct expected of teachers in the UK.
- **Cognitive Load Theory:** Research by John Sweller and others on how to design learning environments that manage cognitive overload effectively.
- **The Hygge Approach:** A philosophy promoting comfort, coziness, and well-being in learning environments, encouraging a nurturing and supportive atmosphere.
- **My Happy Mind Programme:** A framework focused on character development, resilience, and positive mental health, fostering a growth mindset and emotional intelligence among pupils.
- **The School's Own Values and Objectives:** Specific goals and principles established by the school to guide educational practices and environment.

Key sources and references used in the development of this policy are available upon request, providing further context and evidence for the strategies and practices implemented within our learning environments.

# Staff Learning Environment Crib

This crib sets out the non-negotiables and expectations for creating and maintaining high-quality learning environments across the school. It should be used by all staff when setting up, maintaining, or reviewing classrooms and shared spaces.

## 1. Classrooms

### General Standards

- All classrooms must include a Rewards Display Space (see section 2).
- Classroom displays = Working Walls (see section 4).
- Nothing on walls unless on a display board, unless otherwise agreed.
- Exceptions (allowed on wall):
  - Diamond Promises
  - Values Poster
  - Classroom Leadership Roles
  - Must use school template, printed, trimmed, and backed on black card.

### Doors

- **Internal & External Doors:**
  - Door sign (school template) on both internal and external doors.
  - External door must also display PE Days sign (school template).
  - No additional items on external doors unless instructed.
- **Internal Door Displays:**
  - Attendance sign (trimmed and backed on black card).
  - First Aid, Team Teach, and Safeguarding posters – near classroom door, trimmed and backed on black card.
- **Emergency Card:**
  - A red emergency card (with class name) must be on the back of the internal door.

### Safeguarding Files

- Red safeguarding files to be stored in tall cupboards:
  - Reception & Y2 – tall cupboards
  - Year 1 – cupboard nearest door (left-hand side)
  - Nursery – first aid cupboard
- Collection permissions copy stuck inside cupboard door.

### Planning & Organisation

- M/T/W/Th/F drawers: Each classroom must maintain weekly drawers with printed resources for the week.
- Must be up to date for cover staff use.
- Planning/resourcing must be prepared at least 1 week in advance (adaptations allowed).
- Groupings must be displayed on cupboard doors using the school template

## Equipment & Layout

- KS1 scaffolds placed in the middle of tables with pencils for self-selection.
- Visual timetable: displayed horizontally near the front, ideally under the board.
- Easels must have a squared/lined overlay.
- Pencils, crayons, pens: sharpened, lids on, checked regularly.
- Cupboard tops and sides kept clear wherever possible.

## Rewards Space

- Every classroom must have a visible rewards display space.
- Celebrates: awards, certificates, dojo milestones, and personal successes.
- Must:
  - Be tidy, organised, and up-to-date.
  - Reflect class achievements.
  - Be inclusive and motivational.
  - Connect with whole-school rewards systems (e.g., Dojo).

## Reading Areas

- Every classroom must have a calm, inviting, and well-organised reading area, reflecting the school's Hygge-inspired approach.
- Spaces must promote reading for pleasure, support literacy development, and provide diverse, high-quality texts.
- Features:
  - Multiple copies of English key texts and Storytime books.
  - Poetry collections, teacher and pupil recommendations.
  - Special community texts (*Carry Our Story, Carry with Care, Popper the Grasshopper*).
  - Books clearly labelled by genre, forward-facing for choice.
- Must be regularly updated with curriculum/pupil interests.
- Pupils must access weekly, including school-wide Reading Hour (every other Friday).
- The Reading Lead monitors quality/impact.

## Reading Area Setup – Checklist

Content	Details	Quantity	✓
English Key Texts	Designated key text	6 copies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storytime Texts	For read-aloud	6 copies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poems of the Term	Selected poems	Several	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educator Recommendations	Label: <i>Recommended for You</i>	5–10 books	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Recommendations	Label: <i>Recommended by You</i>	5–10 books	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Books Basket	Community texts	2–4 books	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labels	Fiction/Non-Fiction/Poetry	Clear labels	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forward-Facing Displays	Books displayed visibly	All	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hygge Setup	Soft lighting, comfy seating	Inviting space	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 2. Displays

### Purpose

- Must support learning, celebrate achievement, or showcase curriculum content.
- Accessible & inclusive (clear fonts, high contrast, thoughtful layout).
- Handwriting preferred (neat, high-quality, following handwriting guidance).
- Sassoon Primary Infant = standard typed font for pupils.

### General Standards

- Double-mounted (black as final layer).
- Neatly & securely fixed.
- Backed with hessian or light brown paper (depending on location).
- Titles/labels: on black card, gold/silver/white pens.
- Refreshed regularly
- Include pupil names and a range of abilities.
- Incorporate QR codes where appropriate.

### Working Walls (Classrooms)

- Required: English, Maths, and foundation subjects.
- Active/ evolving spaces used to model key knowledge, vocabulary, steps in learning.
- Standards:
  - Backed with light brown paper, covered with tacky back.
  - Black borders only.
  - Must include: vocabulary, teacher modelling, steps to success, reference points.
  - Updated frequently, relevant to learning sequence.
  - Subject headings in black lettering.
  - Consistent across all 4 classes in a year group.
- Subject leaders to guide and monitor.

### Corridor Displays

- Reflect curriculum intent, progression, and celebrate high-quality work.
- Checked and refreshed weekly where needed (e.g. torn border).
- Subject title (A3, double mounted – subject colour + black).
- Work double mounted (colour + black).
- Labels: handwritten on black card (gold/silver/white pen).
- Sassoon Primary Infant if anything needs to be typed.
- Work must be original (no photocopies).
- Include real books/ QR codes to digital media where possible.
- Consistent presentation, showing progression across year groups.
- Subject leaders responsible for content and quality.
- Organza or ivy may enhance borders:
  - Must link to theme/ colour.
  - Used in 2 opposite corners only.
- Subject titles in top-left corner of displays on A3 black card.
- Creative handwriting for title reflective of subject where possible.

### **Subject Colour Themes**

- Maths – Dark Blue
- English – Yellow
- Science – Light Blue
- Geography – Dark Green
- History – Orange
- RE – Brown
- PSHE – Dark Purple
- Computing – Silver
- PE – Dark Green
- Music – Gold
- Art – Pink
- DT – Light Purple

### **Shared Spaces**

- Table tops must be the same colour and the tables must be level.
- Chairs around each table must be the same colour.
- Easel with lined/ squared overlay.
- Must be left tidy – tables aligned, chairs tucked.
- Only items needed for current learning may be stored (extra storage must be approved by Year Group Leaders/ SLT).
- RWI charts displayed and sound charts available if RWI taught in the space.
- Pencil pots and whiteboard pens provided; sharpened/ready as in classrooms.

