Learning and Teaching Policy:

Agreed by governors: February 2017
Implementation date: February 2017
Review date: February 2019

School Aims and Implementation
Birches Green Infant School aims to provide children the opportunity to develop towards their full potential; academically, emotionally and socially by:

- creating a caring, well disciplined and safe learning environment.
- providing a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum which enables all pupils to lead a healthy lifestyle, achieve their full potential and encourages a lifelong love of learning.
- providing equality of opportunity and to foster respectful attitudes towards the environment and others, which recognises and values individual differences.
- enabling all pupils to have confidence in their own ability to be successful and develop as self-motivated learners.
- developing positive working partnerships with parents and carers, outside agencies and the wider community.
- ensuring that all members of the school community are valued, mutually respected and encouraged to promote high standards of achievement.

Learning and Teaching Policy Introduction
a) Learning and teaching are the key functions of our School.
b) At Birches Green Infant School we work towards the aims of the School through providing high quality learning experiences within all we do; in the discreet and hidden curriculum, in the School environment and the interactions between all members of the School community. We believe that we teach the children through all that we do: through the implementation of the policies, systems and practice that determines the curriculum and school day; learning and teaching should not just be seen as an isolated activity that happens in a classroom.
c) We believe that:
   1. Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone i.e. learning should be fun and enable children to make expected or accelerated progress;
   2. Teaching needs to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary in order that they can play an increasingly useful and positive role in society and make informed choices about their lives both now and in the future;
   3. High quality teaching and learning experiences support children to be able to lead happy and rewarding lives, now and in the future;
   4. High expectations of learning behaviours are evident through explicit teacher modelling.
Aims

a) General
To ensure all staff, children, parents/carers and Governors are aware of the aims for Learning and Teaching at Birches Green Infant School and that these are consistently applied in order to:

- Promote high quality teaching and learning across the school;
- Promote the school values of Respect, Friendship, Honesty and Excellence;
- Raise standards by ensuring consistency and continuity of teaching and learning;
- Ensure all children are included, motivated and engaged by their learning;
- Promote high quality learning experiences that focus on the development of skills, knowledge and understanding;
- Promote the idea of lifelong learning for all members of the School community: children, parents/carers, staff and Governors.

School Staff
To support the aims of the School through:

- Promoting positive relationships between all members of the School community including: children and children, children and staff, children and their parents/carers and staff and parents/carers;
- Providing a secure, stimulating environment where all children are supported in responding to the challenges involved in moving towards their full potential;
- Providing a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum which is appropriately differentiated according to the needs of the children;
- Addressing issues of entitlement to ensure equality of opportunity for all children;
- Rewarding children for all the good things they do both in School and in the wider community;
- Promoting a positive self-image whereby children are encouraged towards a sense of responsibility for themselves and others;
- Providing the skills which encourage children to become confident, independent learners.

Children
To support the aims of the School through:

- Promoting positive relationships between all members of the School community including: children and children, children and staff, children and their parents/carers and staff and parents/carers;
- Attending school regularly with a positive attitude, eagerness to learn and to behave in a way that allows themselves and others to learn;
- Working well independently and collaboratively; remembering what they have learnt and having the confidence to apply skills and knowledge in new contexts;
- Persevering with their learning and knowing that when they find it difficult they can ask for help;
- Taking pride in their work, always trying their best and aiming to get better all the time.

Parents and Carers
To support the aims of the School through:

- Promoting positive relationships between all members of the School community including: children and children, children and staff, children and their parents/carers and staff and parents/carers;
- To be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching and sign the School’s Home-School Agreement;
- To attend and contribute to Parent Evening Meetings;
- To support their children with their homework activities including reading and helping their children improve skills in memory needed for learning through practising a concept, memorising Reception High Frequency Words; Year One and Year Two Exception Words; or knowing the multiplication tables;
• To praise their children for the good things that they do in school;
• To communicate and work with the school whenever their child needs further social or emotional support or
to develop their child's skills and understanding.

Governors
To support the aims of the School through:
• Promoting positive relationships between the Governing Body and all other members of the School
community including: children, their parents/carers and staff;
• To appoint a designated Curriculum Committee who will:
  • meet with the Head Teacher and members of the Leadership Team at least once a term to find out about:
    • the school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress;
    • the allocation, use and appropriateness of resources;
    • how the standards of achievement are changing over time.
• Promote and support the positive involvement of parents within the school;
• Attend training and other related events;
• Report to the full governing body with recommendations, if appropriate;
• Work with Senior Leaders to review the School's Learning and Teaching Policy biennially.

Implementation of the Learning and Teaching Policy
A. What is 'good learning'?
At Birches Green Infant School we believe that children learn best when:
• They are encouraged to form positive relationships with their teacher, peers and other members of the
school community;
• They have clear direction and are praised for all the good things that they do;
• They are actively involved in their learning at an appropriate level to match their learning needs;
• They are encouraged to become increasingly autonomous learners;
• They are appropriately challenged with learning experiences which are relevant to their lives and interests
and are inspiring, motivating and engaging;
• They are working in an environment which is safe, caring, supportive and stimulating;
• Their learning is well structured and delivered;
• Their learning is effectively differentiated;
• Their learning encompasses the values of the school in aiding the development as future effective citizens;
• Their learning enables appropriate and pertinent aspects of personal, social, moral, spiritual, cultural and
emotional development in order to demonstrate the School's values.

B. What is 'good teaching'?
At Birches Green Infant School we believe that good teaching is when teachers (and other School staff):
• Form positive relationships with the children in their class and other members of the school community;
• Plan lessons effectively which take children's prior learning and current assessment into account and are
appropriately differentiated in order that the lessons consolidate, build upon and extend learning for all
children;
• Insist on high expectations of learning and social behaviours;
• Ensure that effective direction and support is given in order that the children make good progress;
• Demonstrate secure subject and pedagogical knowledge in order to inspire children and build their
understanding;
• Apply a range of teaching styles which appropriately match the children's learning styles in order to sustain
their concentration, motivation and application;
• Develop and sustain good links and focussed communication with parents/carers in order to support the children's learning, including developing a Growth Mind-set;
• Develop and maintain safe, secure and inspiring classroom and learning environments;
• Demonstrate effective lesson organisation;
• Effectively assess and monitor children's progress in order that they can extend children's learning both within individual lessons and over time;
• Use resources effectively, including other adults, to support children's learning;
• Use computing and technology effectively in order to support children's learning;
• Develop the range of reading skills required to access all the curriculum effectively;
• Use questioning effectively to gauge and extend children's skills, knowledge and understanding;
• Are reflective regarding their professional practice and the overall provision the School offers.
• Ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants are equipped with the necessary skills, resources and knowledge needed in order to provide the children with the best possible learning experiences both in class and when undertaking interventions.

C. What is a good lesson? (please also refer to the Teacher Standards)
At Birches Green Infant School we believe that a good lesson should comprise of the following elements;
• Planning - Before the lesson
• Explanation of the purpose to the lesson
• Quality First Wave teaching
• Group teaching and independent activities, including personalisation to ensure challenge for all
• Plenaries and mini plenaries within the lesson
• Use of assessment and evaluation - before, during and after the lesson.

C1 Planning - Before the lesson teachers will:
• Use formal and on-going assessments in order to determine where the children are in their learning and their next steps;
• Establish a clear learning objective ‘Mr. Challenge’ in ‘child friendly’ language arising from this assessment, the Success Criteria ‘Little Miss Helpful’ in child friendly language, that will enable the children to achieve the learning and opportunities for both children and the teacher to assess progress against these;
• Establish an initial ‘hook’ that will motivate and engage the children;
• Contextualise the learning either by making it relevant to the lives and/or interests of the children, and where appropriate making cross curricular links e.g. within the Cornerstone topic unit
• Plan an appropriate structure of differentiated and challenging activities (Chillies) that will enable the children to engage in their learning and meet the learning; including the use of other adults and the timings of the lesson; ensuring maximum learning opportunities and catering for all learning styles.

C2 Explanation of the purpose to the lesson - A good explanation to a lesson will include:
• Recapping on prior learning, allowing time for the children to RIP (Read, Initial or Practise) their feedback or complete a GT (Gap Task) from the previous learning;
• Sharing the learning objective with the children and referring to at different stages throughout the lesson to keep learning focussed;
• Sharing the learning objective and lesson's success criteria with the children so that they know exactly what they need to do in order to achieve the learning and where appropriate enabling the children to develop own success criteria through clear modelling;
• Introducing subject specific language which is modelled by the teacher during the session with an expectation that the children will use the vocabulary in their verbal and written responses;
• Putting the learning into context; explaining to the children why they are learning what they are learning;
• Using appropriate resources, including computing and other adults, in order to support children’s learning;
• Ensuring there is a good balance between teacher and child talk and that all children are actively involved, engaged and challenged in meaningful activities;
• A wide range of assessment strategies (self and peer) are used by both the children and the teacher in order to ascertain progress made and assessed in line with the National Standard for Age Related Expectations (ARE) for Reading, Writing and Mathematics;
• Evidence of positive relationships between children, their teacher and the other adults in the room; everyone displaying good social and learning behaviours.

C3 Quality First Wave Teaching - will include:
• Informing the children of the learning, success criteria and specific language to be used;
• Teacher and Teaching Assistant modelling the process and task which is expected of the children;
• Using resources which stimulate, sustain and support children’s learning;
• Appropriately differentiated questioning;
• Good pace to the lesson; ensuring that it is not too quick that children are not understanding their work and are being left behind; but pacey enough that children remain engaged;
• Deep subject knowledge and understanding, demonstrated by the class teacher;
• Fluid grouping and fluid intervention;
• All children actively involved and engaged in their learning;
• High expectations of children both in terms of their work and their learning and social behaviours;
• Praise for the children when they do the right thing, achieve well and make progress;
• A wide range of assessment strategies which are used by both the children and the teacher;
• Evidence of positive relationships between children, their teacher and the other adults in the room; everyone displaying good social and learning behaviours.

C4 Group teaching and independent activities - will include:
• Differentiated challenging activities (Chillies) through prescribed outcome, support, resources which match the learning and success criteria;
• Opportunities provided for the children to talk about learning, experimenting with concepts, asking questions and learning in preferred learning style (plenary cards);
• Use of ‘Walkabout’ to gauge which children need further intervention
• The teacher normally teaching focus groups; moving the groups’ learning forward and maximising all opportunities for learning;
• Effective use of other adults both class based TAs and Intervention TAs, in order to support learning and move it forward;
• Mini plenaries, to either move learning on, consolidate learning or address misconceptions;
• Children receiving positive and specific feedback about their effort and learning, and their next steps;
• Time reminders to indicate to the children how long they have left to complete activities;
• A purposeful learning atmosphere dependent on the task the children are completing.

C5 Plenaries and mini plenaries within the lesson - will include:
• Reference to the learning that has taken place and success criteria;
• Teachers and children making assessments which will inform future learning;
• The use of a range of assessment strategies; allowing children time to reflect on their learning, checking to see if they have met the lesson’s learning using the lesson’s success criteria;
• Children receiving positive and specific feedback about their effort and work;
• Consolidation on the lesson’s learning, reflecting on whether the success criteria have been achieved, moving learning forward, addressing misconceptions, further peer or teacher modelling of work, making links to future learning.

C6 Assessment and evaluation – after the lesson good assessments made by the teacher will include:
• Evaluating whether all the children or groups of children achieved the learning and met the lesson’s success criteria, and whether the children’s learning moved on and if it didn’t, why not?
• Reflecting on which parts of the lesson went well, which parts were the children most engaged in; and which parts of the lesson did not go so well and why;
• Reflecting on whether the work needs to be revisited at the start of the next lesson or does the learning objective need to be completely revisited again as a group intervention;
• Diagnostically marking the children’s work, clearly stating what they have done well and what the next steps in their learning are (using the School’s Marking Policy);
• Using assessment to inform future planning and next steps in learning and the Age Related Expectations (Target Tracker’s I can statements) for Reading, Writing and Mathematics to regularly moderate and ascertain whether the child is at national standard and what is needed in order for them to achieve this.

D. Curriculum Planning
1) Birches Green Infant School’s planning is based on the following requirements:
• The new Primary National Curriculum 2014;
• the Cornerstone Thematic scheme;
• the new Primary curriculum Programme of Study for Science;
• the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework;
• the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education;
• Core task assessments for Physical Education;
• the Rising Stars’ ‘Switched on Computing’ Scheme of Work;
• and most importantly, the needs of the children we are teaching.
2) Long Term Planning
• Our ‘Whole School Curriculum Map’ and individual Year group Maps (Nursery – Year 2) plots the content covered from nursery to year two for each individual year group and each curriculum area;
• It enables us to ensure balance and progression across the school and to identify cross curricular links and opportunities for educational visits.
3) Medium Term Planning.
• For English and Mathematics we use the planning provided by the National Curriculum Programme of Study for each subject, although we alter sections in order to meet the needs of our own children.
• For Phonics we use ‘Letters and Sounds’, complemented by the Jolly Phonics scheme
• For English we use the engaging Talk For Writing approach to immerse children in a language rich environment, where the use of model texts, text maps, purposeful writing and hooks develop children’s love of writing. In EYFS and Year 1, we follow the Letters and Sounds phonics scheme, which sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonics skills. In Year 2, SPAG is taught in specific English lessons.
• For mathematics we use the White Rose Mathematics Hub scheme which has been developed in line with the expectations set of the 2014 Primary Curriculum;
• For Place Value and the four operations we use the ‘Visual Maths’ approach;
• For the foundation subjects our medium term planning is based on the Cornerstone units, we ensure appropriate curriculum and skills coverage
• In the Early Years Foundation Stage, our medium term plans are based on guidance within the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

4) Short Term Planning
• Detailed, daily flipchart short term plans are drawn up by year groups for all subjects each week, unless a unit of work is being taught as a block when it will be planned accordingly. The plans identify the learning objective, success criteria, key vocabulary, assessment opportunities, direct teaching input, key questions, differentiated activities at different levels and resources for learning.
• Flip Chart Planning is monitored by the Leadership Team on a half-termly basis according to school improvement priorities each term.

E. The Role of Teaching Assistants
We have a number of support staff who play a central and specialised role in our learning processes. Key elements of their role are:
• To support the teaching; either through direct delivery or by enabling access for identified children;
• Supporting small groups within the classroom;
• Delivering intervention groups;
• Carrying out assessments;
• Preparing resources;
• Supporting children with SEN Support Plans/Continuum Targets/Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs) or EHCs.

F. Behaviour Management
We believe that excellent standards of behaviour are central to effective learning. Our Behaviour Policy outlines our procedures relating to behaviour both within the classroom and in the wider School environment.

G. Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting (please refer to the School’s Assessment Policy)
1. Children’s standards and achievements across the curriculum are assessed in line with the School’s Assessment Policy. Assessment for years 1-2 includes:
   a) On-going assessment practices within class and group sessions, including the sharing of and reference being made to Learning Objective and Success criteria and self and peer assessments of understanding, outcomes and progress.
   b) Marking of children’s work; against the shared Learning and for accuracy of answer (for all written work) and diagnostically (regularly in line with School expectations).
   c) Year 2, formal assessments from the Age Related Expectations for English and Mathematics during each term and further assessments for particular aspects of the curriculum as necessary. These are recorded within the School’s electronic assessment system Target Tracker.
   d) Year 1, formal assessments from the Phonics Screening Check each term.
2. Children’s standards and achievements in the Early Years Foundation Stage are assessed in line with the School’s Early Years Foundation Stage Policy. Assessment in Early Years Foundation Stage includes both on-going assessment and marking of children’s work as noted above but at an age appropriate level. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is used to assess children throughout and at the end of the academic year.
3. Assessments are used diagnostically by teachers and teaching assistants to evaluate learning and inform teaching, and by teachers and senior leaders within the accountability process to evaluate individual and groups of children’s standards and achievements and provision and to inform future provision and school development.
4. All children in years 1-2 have individual assessment targets both in terms of National Curriculum and within on-going assessment and diagnostic marking practices. Progress against these targets is reviewed regularly by the class teacher, Subject Leaders and other School Leaders. This information is used by each of these to affect provision and school development.
5. Assessment information across the curriculum; both standards and achievements, are shared with parents/carers at Parents' Evening Meetings, within Annual Reports and at the end of the academic year; which includes information about the next steps for learning in the core subjects.

6. Summative Assessment
The school’s arrangements for formal assessments throughout the year are outlined in the Assessment Policy. Results from these assessments are used for targeting and tracking purposes to ensure progress and achievement in learning.

7. Formative Assessment
a) Assessment opportunities are central to the planning and organisation of each lesson. Key elements of this are:
   - Recap of previous knowledge at the start of lessons;
   - Adult observation of children’s responses to questions;
   - Adult observation of children on task;
   - Use of success criteria against learning;
   - Continuous feedback throughout the lesson;
   - Self and peer assessment;
   - Plenary activities;
   - Marking linked to learning and success criteria and giving indicators for improvement of work.

b) It is an important aspect of our assessment that children are encouraged to be honest in their self-assessment. Children indicating they have not understood features of a lesson will be given additional support. Use of 'Traffic Lighting'; 'Text Me'; 'My Fantastic Mistake', Cold and Hot writes are encouraged.

8. Record Keeping
- Records are kept of all summative assessments undertaken and of other assessments throughout the year. Details of these are contained in the Assessment Policy.

H. Inclusion (please refer also to the School’s Special Needs Policy)
- Inclusion is about every child having educational needs that are special and the School meeting these diverse needs in order to ensure the active participation and progress of all children in their learning.
- Successful inclusive provision at Birches Green Infant School is seen as the responsibility of the whole school community, permeating all aspects of school life and applicable to all our children. It is in this way that we will turn the rhetoric into reality.
- In accordance with the school’s Single Equality Policy, all children will be given full access to the National Curriculum, unless their EHC plan indicates disapplication. Staff will actively support all children to reach their potential regardless of academic ability, race, gender or age.
- Children who receive additional or extra support, including those with EHCs, have learning plans specifically tailored to their needs. These are followed as far as possible as part of the normal classroom teaching but sometimes require specific input involving withdrawal from the main classroom environment for short periods of time.
- Inclusive practice across the curriculum should enable all children to achieve their best possible standard; whatever their ability, and irrespective of gender, ethnic, social or cultural background, home language or any other aspect that could affect their participation in, or progress in their learning.

Monitoring and Review
- The Head teacher, Assistant Head teachers and Phase Leaders will monitor the effectiveness of this policy throughout the academic year. The Head teacher and assigned Chair of the Curriculum Committee will report to the full governing body on the effectiveness of the policy biennially and, if necessary, makes recommendations for further improvements.