



Buxlow School

Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy
September 2025

Aims

At Buxlow School, we are committed to delivering high-quality teaching and learning that supports the progress and achievement of every pupil.

We ensure that each child is given every opportunity to reach their full potential—both academically and holistically—fostering the development of the whole child. The quality of teaching and learning is central to achieving this aim.

Principles of Teaching and Learning

At Buxlow School, we aim to:

1. Provide a supportive, positive, healthy, caring, and safe environment that holds high expectations and values every member of the school community.
2. Recognise the individual needs and aspirations of all pupils, offering opportunities for them to make the best possible progress and achieve their highest personal potential.
3. Create a nurturing space where pupils can grow educationally, emotionally, morally, and socially.
4. Ensure pupils become literate, numerate, and technologically competent individuals through a broad, balanced, exciting, and challenging curriculum.
5. Deliver a curriculum that promotes spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental, and emotional development.
6. Deliver a curriculum that develops communication and social skills through; speech, Makaton signing, gesture, use of visuals.
7. Encourage all pupils to be enthusiastic, motivated, and committed learners, fostering their self-esteem, self-worth, and emotional well-being.
8. Develop pupils' confidence and their ability to learn and work both independently and collaboratively.
9. Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life, equipping them with the skills and values they need for the future.

Learning and learning styles

The curriculum is designed to promote learning styles which reflect a practical and hands on approach which will support pupil's self-confidence, resilience, independence and personal emotional and social development.

These include:

Role play	Problem solving	Working individually, in pairs and in groups
Learning through real life situations	Practical activities	Experimenting

Creative thinking Repetition Visual/auditory learning

Research Links to the local environment Independent learning

Projects/investigations Physical activities Talking, discussing and asking questions

Use of ICT/digital resources as an integral aspect of everyday life

Learning styles are personalised and customised to meet each individual's needs and all staff are involved in this process, ensuring that priority targets (e.g. communication, independence, sensory) are built in to planned activities.

Learning – effective learning takes place when:

- Pupils are happy, healthy, and alert – they are receptive, engaged, and have a positive attitude toward learning.
- They are interested and involved – learning is relevant, stimulating, and connected to their experiences.
- The purpose of each task is clear – pupils understand why they are doing it and how it supports their progress.
- They feel secure – emotionally and physically safe within the school environment, with positive relationships that support their learning.
- They feel valued – staff show care and commitment to their development as individuals and as learners.
- They have opportunities to explore and take risks – in a safe, supportive environment that encourages curiosity and experimentation.
- They are actively involved in their learning – making choices, taking responsibility, and participating in decision-making.
- They have a sense of control and independence – with opportunities to self-direct aspects of their learning.
- They receive positive feedback and praise – achievements are recognised, celebrated, and used to build confidence.
- The learning environment is well-organised – resources are accessible, and the space supports engagement and focus.
- Tasks are appropriately differentiated – matched to each pupil's needs, abilities, and learning profile.
- New learning builds on prior knowledge – with clearly defined, manageable steps that ensure progress.
- They have opportunities to talk about their work – reflecting, discussing, and sharing ideas with peers and adults.
- They are given clear, achievable targets – with success criteria and realistic timeframes to support motivation and success.

Teaching

Teachers are expected to be creative, flexible, and patient in their approach, adapting their methods to meet the individual needs of each pupil. This is supported by small teaching groups, opportunities to work 1:1 and the support of Higher-Level Teaching Assistants, allowing for highly personalised learning.

A wide range of evidence-based strategies will be used, tailored to the learning profiles of the pupils. These may include:

- Discussion and questioning (both open and closed, as appropriate)
- Modelling of language, commenting, OWLING, language groups and other specific intervention groups
- Positive reinforcement and praise to build confidence and motivation
- Brainstorming to encourage idea generation and collaborative thinking
- Repetition and reinforcement to embed key concepts
- Modelling of tasks and behaviours
- Role play and hot seating to deepen understanding through experience
- Pausing for reflection and response, allowing pupils time to process and articulate their thoughts and allowing extra processing time dependent on needs of pupil.

Effective teaching must take into account each pupil's prior learning, ensuring a sense of continuity and progression throughout their educational journey.

Therapeutic Support

Pupils receive targeted support through weekly sessions with a Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) and Occupational Therapists (OT), in accordance with the provision specified in their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

To ensure continuity and maximise the impact of these interventions, a member of the class teaching team attends each in-school session. Their involvement allows them to observe and actively participate, gaining a clear understanding of the strategies and approaches used by the therapists. This enables staff to reinforce and embed therapeutic strategies throughout the school week as part of each pupil's daily learning and support.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

All pupils joining Buxlow School will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) identifying their specific special educational needs. In preparation for their admission, staff thoroughly review all available records to develop a clear understanding of each pupil's background, strengths, and areas for development.

Upon entry, pupils are assessed using a range of baseline assessments to establish current levels of attainment and engagement. These include assessments in Communication, Reading, Writing (including Fine Motor Skills), and Maths, as well as the use of the Engagement Model to assess

how pupils engage with learning. Relevant information and assessment data from previous settings are also taken into account, to ensure a holistic view of each pupil's abilities.

Following the completion of these assessments, each pupil is provided with a personalised Individual Education Plan (IEP). These plans outline specific, measurable targets that are aligned with the outcomes specified in the pupil's EHCP. Based on formative, summative and regular teacher assessments, teachers set individual targets for IEPs.

Target-setting is a collaborative process involving parents/carers, teaching staff, and external therapists, ensuring that all aspects of a pupil's development are considered. There are normally 3 or 4 targets in number and will include those for both communication, behavioural & social and curriculum subjects (Maths and English). Targets are detailed, specific and time related.

Targets should be shared with the child and parents to encourage partnerships in learning and the targets are reviewed every 6-8 weeks. Learning relating to individual targets is delivered through intensive one-to-one sessions or in small group settings (typically a 1:2 ratio), depending on the needs of the pupil.

Learning activities are carefully differentiated to ensure accessibility and challenge, and pupils are supported through regular assessment and monitoring to guarantee continuity, progression, and success.

Each child is encouraged with positive, individually tailored expectations, allowing them to be appropriately challenged and to experience frequent success across all areas of learning.

The Engagement Model

As outlined on the gov.uk website the areas of engagement are as follows:

Exploration

This shows whether a pupil can build on their initial reaction to a new stimulus or activity – for example, whether they display more than an involuntary or startled reaction to the activity. Additionally, the pupil may be interested in and curious about the stimulus or activity – for example, they may notice it or reach out to it. Exploration becomes more established when the pupil is still responsive to the same stimulus or activity when it is presented in different contexts or environments – for example, a different time of day, a different place or with different people. Exploration is important in identifying which stimuli or activities interest the pupil and motivate them to pay attention and investigate them further, so that they can develop new knowledge and skills.

Realisation

This shows how the pupil interacts with a new stimulus or activity or discovers a new aspect of a familiar stimulus or activity. They will display behaviours that show they want more control of the stimulus or activity – for example, by stopping it or trying to make changes to it. The pupil will often show what familiar adults consider to be 'surprise', 'excitement', 'delight', 'amazement' or 'fear'. Realisation becomes more established when the pupil uses the newly developed skills or knowledge in new ways and in different contexts or environments. This is important as it can keep the pupil excited in their education and prevents an activity from becoming routine.

Anticipation

This shows how much the pupil predicts, expects or associates a stimulus or activity with an event. They may anticipate that a familiar activity is about to start or finish by interpreting cues or prompts such as auditory (what they hear), tactile (what they feel) and visual (what they see). Anticipation becomes more established when the pupil shows awareness that a familiar activity is about to start or finish, even when cues and prompts are reduced. Anticipation is important in measuring the pupil's understanding of cause and effect – for example, if they do this, then something will happen. This prepares the brain and helps with the pupil's memory and sequencing.

Persistence

This shows whether the pupil can sustain their attention in a stimulus or activity for long enough that they can actively try to find out more and interact with it. Persistence becomes more established when the pupil shows a determined effort to interact with the stimulus or activity. They will do this by showing intentional changes, such as in their gaze, posture and hand movement. Persistence is important so that the pupil maintains an activity long enough to develop, reinforce, and apply their skills or knowledge so they can achieve their desired outcome.

Initiation

This shows how much, and the different ways, a pupil investigates a stimulus or activity to bring about a desired outcome. The pupil will act spontaneously and independently during a familiar activity without waiting for direction. Initiation becomes more established when the pupil shows they understand how to create an impact on their environment to achieve a desired outcome. Initiation is important to establish how well the pupil is developing independence, which is required for more advanced progression.

(Taken from The Engagement Model, Gov.uk April 2024)

Records of progress are kept for each pupil and are updated continually using IEPs and supplementary information. Records will form the basis of written reports to parents at the end of each academic year. Records are retained throughout the pupil's time at the school and appropriate records passed on to other schools when the pupils leave.

Written reports are provided for parents at the end of each academic year. Parents are invited to attend their child's annual review as part of their EHCP once a year and this meeting can be extended and used to discuss their child's overall progress at the school. Interim reviews/Parents Evening are held once a term or more often when necessary. As classes are small, teachers and teaching staff are in regular contact with parents during the year and updates can be given and plans adjusted during these times.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

Formal monitoring by senior staff will take place at least once a term. This will involve classroom observations/learning walks, book looks and scrutiny of planning. Pupils progress review meetings

will be held termly by the Head/SENDCo with class teachers and HLTAs. The results of monitoring will be evaluated and used to inform improvements in teaching and learning within the school.

Review This policy is a working document and therefore is open to change and restructuring as and when the need arises.

Signed by Amit Mehta, Proprietor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amit Mehta', with a stylized, cursive script.