



Nurture Growth & Inspire Learning at Hillhead Primary



Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy

This policy is underpinned by the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan which sets out a Vision for Education as:

- **Excellence through raising attainment and improving outcomes:** ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the knowledge and skills necessary to shape their future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
- **Achieving Equity:** ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

This document should be read in conjunction with East Dunbartonshire Council's Equalities and Diversity Procedure Manual and the Including Every Learner Strategy to ensure that all learning, teaching and assessment meets the needs of all learners. Staff should consider barriers to involvement in learning arising from additional support needs, language, disability, gender, race, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Rationale

Hillhead Primary is committed to raising attainment and ensuring excellence and equity for all our children. This policy captures how we plan to achieve and sustain effective learning and teaching across all curricular areas and ensure we develop the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for our pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. We strive to close the gap between the least and most disadvantaged children and providing them with the skills for learning, life and work.

There are a number of key inter-related elements, which need to be in place to ensure success:

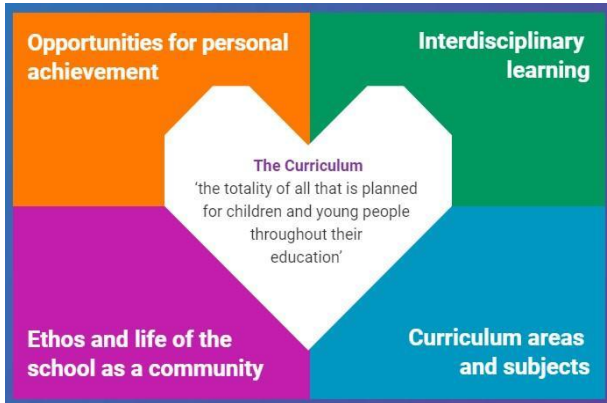


- *School vision, values & aims*
- *Effective pedagogy for learning and teaching*
- *Effective approaches to raising attainment and achievement*
- *Curriculum design, pathways, courses and programmes of study*
- *Systems & processes of planning, assessment, moderation, monitoring & tracking*
- *High quality professional learning for teachers and practitioners.*
- *Effective interventions for equity*
- *Parental engagement and involvement.*

Learning, teaching and assessment is our core business. Establishing and maintaining high quality learning and teaching, together with close monitoring and tracking of all learners' progress, ensures that every young person has the opportunity to experience success in the classroom.

At Hillhead Primary there are three principles that underpin our learning, teaching and assessment strategy: meeting learners' needs; monitoring and support of all learners' health and wellbeing and supporting the development of all learners' skills for learning, life and work.

The Curriculum



Curriculum is defined as the totality of all that is planned for children and young people from early learning and childcare, through school and beyond. That totality can be planned for and experienced by learners across four contexts:

- Curriculum areas and subjects
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Ethos and life of the school
- Opportunities for personal achievement

Scotland's curriculum places learners at the heart of education. At its centre are four fundamental capacities. These capacities reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning. They:

- recognise the need for all children and young people to know themselves as individuals and to develop their relationships with others, in families and in communities
- recognise the knowledge, skills and attributes that children and young people need to acquire to thrive in our interconnected, digital and rapidly changing world
- enable children and young people to be democratic citizens and active shapers of that world.



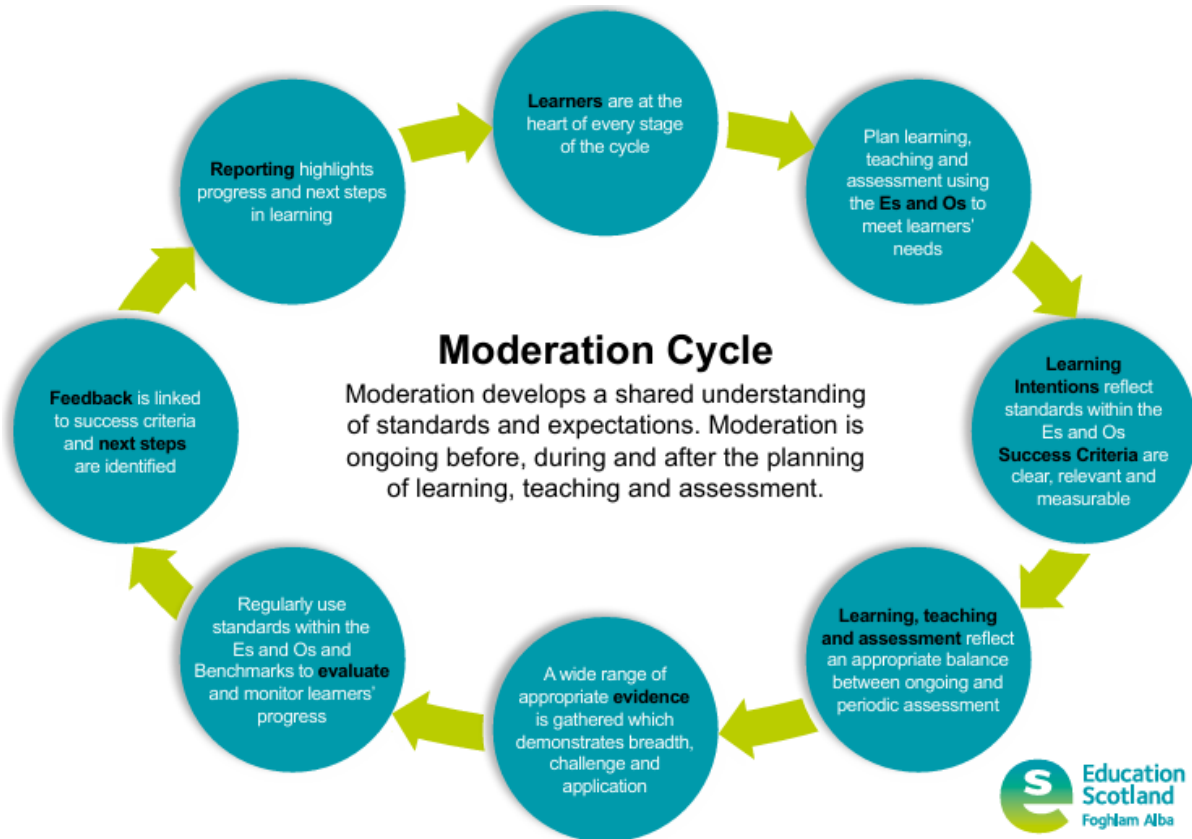
At Hillhead Primary we have developed clear curricular frameworks to support teachers' planning, which takes account of the principles for curriculum design: challenge and enjoyment; breadth; progression; depth; personalisation and choice; coherence; relevance and the four contexts of learning: Curriculum Areas and Subjects, Interdisciplinary Learning, Ethos and Life of the School, and Opportunities for Personal Achievement.

Skills progression pathways are evident within each of the curricular areas and take into account our school's local context. We identify and address typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills and ensure the curriculum reflects the school's vision, values and aims. We have developed and continue to develop a curriculum which is flexible and aspirational, and which is tailored to the needs and interest of the school community.

Evaluation of the curriculum and pedagogy forms an integral part of self-evaluation processes which are at the heart of our commitment to school improvement. Our quality assurance practices and tracking, monitoring and assessment calendar support these processes.

Moderation

Moderation is an ongoing process at Hillhead Primary which features at all stages of the learning, teaching and assessment cycle. National guidance stipulates that learners should be at the heart of the moderation process as it develops a shared understanding of standards and expectations, engage in professional dialogue to reach valid, reliable decisions on learners' progress. It ensures fairness and consistency in assessment and is a focus for self-reflection. Moderation is ongoing before, during and after the planning of learning, teaching and assessment.



Teachers at Hillhead Primary agree to improve the quality of their practice and professional judgement through Working Time Agreements, collegiate moderation activities at school, cluster and local authority level.

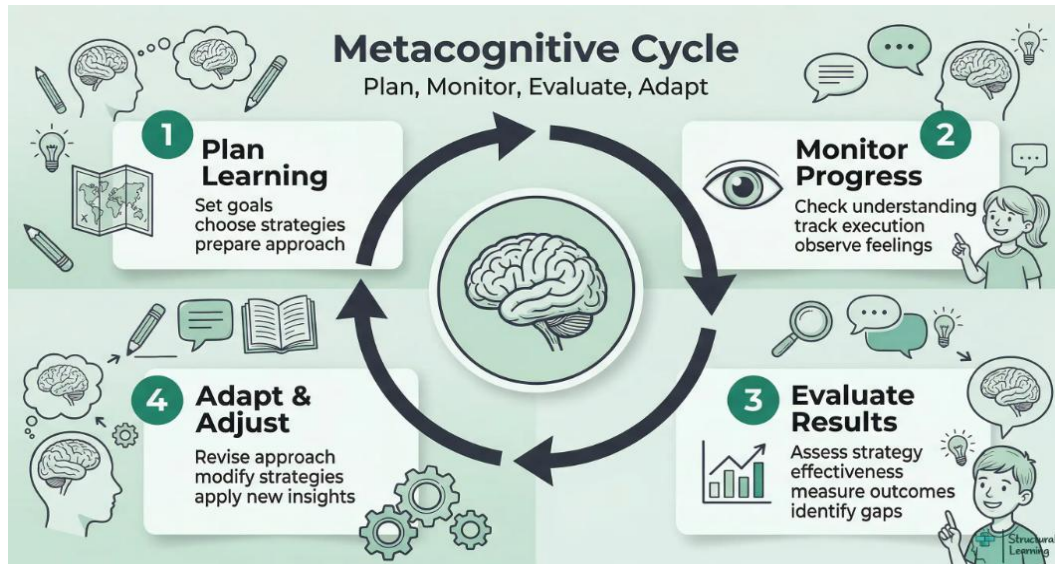
Our Learners

“.....all learners should be involved in planning and reflecting on their own learning.”
Building the Curriculum 3

We aim to provide high-quality and well-moderated planning, learning, teaching and assessment, meet the needs of all, providing appropriate pace, support and challenge. All learners are actively involved in planning their learning. They understand the purpose and relevance of their learning and can confidently talk about it. Teachers at Hillhead Primary use metacognition to support our learners. Metacognition is crucial for turning passive learners into active thinkers, helping them learn faster, retain more information, and become more independent problem-solvers.

The Key Aspects of Metacognition are:

- **Metacognitive Knowledge (Awareness):** Understanding your own strengths and weaknesses as a learner (e.g., "I know I learn better by writing notes than by reading").
- **Metacognitive Regulation (Management):** Actively controlling your thinking to meet a goal, which includes:
 - **Planning:** Deciding how to approach a task (e.g., "I'll break this project into three smaller steps")
 - **Monitoring:** Checking in during a task (e.g., "Am I actually understanding this, or just reading words?")
 - **Evaluating:** Reviewing the outcome (e.g., "Did my study strategy work? What should I do differently next time?").



When learners improve their metacognitive skills, they are more likely to embrace a growth mindset, have increased independence, demonstrate resilience and learn from their mistakes. These are essential for thriving in an every changing world, therefore developing these skills as part of everyday learning and teaching will empower children enabling them to reach their full potential throughout their learning journey and beyond.

Experiences and Outcomes

Experiences and Outcomes are the core learning statements in Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence that describe what learners should *experience* and what they should *be able to do* as they progress through each curriculum level.

Benchmarks are national statements that clearly set out *what learners need to know and be able to do* to achieve a Curriculum for Excellence level. They work alongside Experiences and Outcomes to support consistent, reliable assessment.

Taken as a whole, experiences and outcomes embody the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities; Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors. They apply to the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people including the ethos and life of the school and interdisciplinary studies as well as learning within curricular areas and subjects. This means that they apply beyond curriculum subjects; they are considered in all.

The Experiences and Outcomes for a curriculum area illustrate the expectations for learning and development in:

- Expressive Arts
- Languages
- Health and Wellbeing
- Mathematics
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

Teachers plan by bundling experiences and outcomes, designing learning that provides breadth, challenge and application, and then using benchmarks to judge progress and ensure consistent standards. Planning, teaching, assessment and moderation all happen together—not as separate steps.

What Formative Assessment Means at Hillhead Primary

Formative assessment is part of everyday classroom practice. It helps pupils understand how they learn, track their progress and recognise their achievements and works best when pupils are actively involved and talking about their learning.

Teachers and pupils work together to ensure:

- **Pupil involvement in planning** learning.
- **Clear Learning Intentions (LIs)** and **co-created Success Criteria (SC)** so pupils know what good work looks like.
- **Effective questioning** that deepens thinking.
- **Timely, improvement-focused feedback** (self, peer and teacher).
- **Modelling of success** and strategies for improvement.
- **Regular reflection** on learning, next steps and personal goals.
- **Moderation** within and across schools to ensure shared standards.
- Formative assessment contributes meaningfully to **professional judgement** and understanding of progress.

Learning Intentions are directly linked to Experiences & outcomes and benchmarks. They describe what pupils should know, understand or be able to do by the end of a lesson or series of lessons. They focus on learning, not tasks or activities. They must be clear and appropriate to the learners' age and stage to support engagement and make feedback more meaningful.

Success Criteria describes what pupils need to do to achieve the Learning Intention. They help guide learning throughout the lesson and support self and peer assessment. They should be:

- Clear, relevant and measurable
- Co-constructed where appropriate
- Written in pupil-friendly language
- Limited in number
- Differentiated to support and challenge all learners



A balance of visual and oral sharing is expected. Pupils **should not copy** Learning Intentions or Success Criteria but they must be visible throughout the lesson.

Effective Questioning is central to learning and assessment. Questions should be planned to promote:

- Deep thinking
- Higher-order skills
- Problem solving
- Reflection

Teachers should build in thinking time and encourage pupils to explain their thinking. Pupils should also ask questions as part of peer coaching and mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities.

In order to embed formative assessment teachers should be clear about:

- **Which strategy** they are using
- **Why** they are using it
- **What impact** it should have on learning

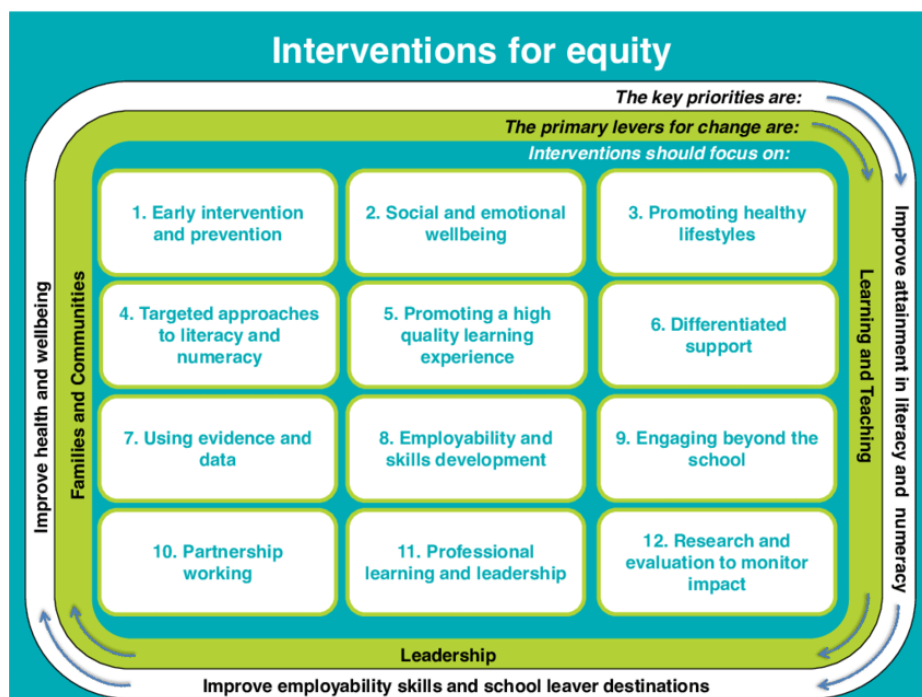
At Hillhead Primary we promote a culture of feedback. It should be regular, constructive and linked directly to the success criteria. Feedback should be heard, mistakes are welcomed; challenge is acted upon leaving pupils feeling empowered to improve their learning. In essence it must help pupils understand their progress and next steps.

Talking with pupils about their learning is essential. Regular discussions about learning should be built into teaching. Pupils should be supported to review their learning over time and set achievable targets. This should be manageable for both teachers and pupils.

Differentiation

Differentiation is a key aspect of equitable teaching and sits at the core of Universal Support for all learners. It involves adapting learning, teaching and assessment to meet the individual needs of each child. Rather than being a single strategy, differentiation encompasses a range of approaches, such as adjusting learning content, processes, products or the wider learning environment. It is an essential and ongoing part of effective learning and teaching. (Education Scotland, 2015)

Identifying and addressing barriers to engagement and learning, in line with Additional Support Needs legislation and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), contributes to improving the life chances of our most vulnerable learners. Effective and targeted approaches to tracking and monitoring progress supports the identification and removal of barriers to learning. At Hillhead Primary, decisions we make about the most appropriate interventions and approaches are based on effective self-evaluation and improvement planning, including robust measures of impact and progress.



Differentiating the Content (What is taught)

Content refers to the knowledge, concepts and skills learners are expected to develop through the curriculum. Differentiating the content may involve:

- Offering learners choices to deepen their understanding
- Providing additional or alternative resources suited to different levels of readiness
- Allowing varied amounts of time for tasks
- Using assessment to ensure learning experiences are well-matched to individual needs

Differentiating the Process (How learning happens)

Differentiating the process focuses on how learners make sense of ideas and information. It relates to the how of teaching—how learners engage with tasks and activities.

Differentiating the process may involve:

- Increasing the range of learning approaches and activities
- Introducing greater complexity or abstraction
- Encouraging critical and creative thinking

Differentiating the Product (How learning is demonstrated)

Differentiating the product allows learners to apply, demonstrate or extend their learning. Products are often tangible and show understanding—for example, speeches, performances, diagrams or leaflets.

Differentiating the product may involve:

- Providing challenge, variety and choice
- Allowing learners to show their understanding in different ways (e.g., write, make, say, do)
- Offering flexible working arrangements such as individual, paired or group tasks
- Adjusting the level of scaffolding provided

Differentiating the Learning Environment

The learning environment refers to the overall climate and tone of the classroom, including routines, layout, lighting, and organisational structures.

Differentiating the learning environment may involve:

- Creating a safe, positive and supportive atmosphere
- Allowing for different working preferences
- Considering the physical layout and feel of the classroom
- Varying where learning takes place

High Quality Assessment

Assessment should be planned alongside learning and teaching to ensure breadth, challenge and opportunities for pupils to apply their learning. Learning, teaching and assessment must be planned together using Experiences and Outcomes ensuring that assessment is built into planning from the start. High-quality assessment should group relevant Experiences and Outcomes, rather than assessing each one individually.

At Hillhead assessment is part of everyday classroom practice. Teachers should use a range of assessment approaches to identify strengths, learning needs and the support pupils require. There should be a balance between ongoing assessment and more formal, periodic assessment.

High-quality assessments should allow pupils to show breadth of learning, respond to challenge and apply their skills in new or unfamiliar contexts. Benchmarks clarify national standards and show progression from Early to Fourth Level. Staff should use them to support assessment and ensure consistency in professional judgement. Assessment provides evidence of how much and how well pupils have learned. Schools should use a balanced mix of formative and summative assessment to build a clear picture of progress.

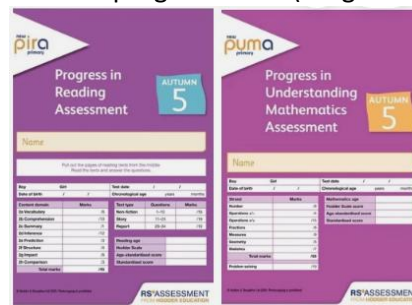
Standardised Assessment at Hillhead Primary

At Hillhead, pupils in Primary 1, Primary 4 and Primary 7 will take part in the National Standardised Assessments (SNSA). These should be administered in line with Scottish Government guidance. When planning and reviewing SNSA, staff should consider their diagnostic purpose and how the results will be analysed to support individual learners as well as whole-school priorities.



Information from standardised assessments forms just one part of the wider evidence used to inform learning and teaching. Alongside day-to-day classroom assessments, planned assessment activities and teachers' professional judgement, SNSA results contribute to building a comprehensive picture of each child's progress. PIRA (Progress in Reading Assessment) and PUMA (Progress in Maths Assessment) are termly standardised assessments completed at Hillhead Primary to monitor and track pupils' progress in reading and maths.

Both assessments are designed to align with the National Curriculum and inform teaching and learning decisions. These assessments are crucial in providing timely data and feedback to teachers and school management, enabling them to effectively plan next steps and targeted interventions.



Evidence

A broad range of evidence should be used when making judgements about a learner's progress within, or achievement of, a level. This evidence should reflect breadth, challenge, and application of learning.

Evidence should focus on demonstrating the learning, not simply the activity completed and link directly to the agreed success criteria. Learners should be involved in the process, proportionate to the purpose and the gathering of evidence needs to be manageable.

To support professional judgement of progress and achievement of a level, evidence should be drawn from a variety of sources, including:

- Day-to-day learning
- Coursework
- Observations of learners
- Periodic, high-quality assessments
- Information from standardised assessments

Teachers should apply their professional judgement, using curriculum benchmarks, to determine achievement of a level. Learners are not required to demonstrate mastery of every individual benchmark before progressing to the next level.

Tracking and Monitoring

Hillhead Primary has a tracking and monitoring system which is informed by high quality professional dialogue, assessment and evidence in all curricular areas. Tracking provides an overview of each learner's progress and achievement over time and supports analysis of the relative progress of different groups of learners across stages and the school as a whole.

Information on pupils progress can be easily accessed, for example; by gender; ethnicity; those with additional support needs; SIMD; Care Experienced, attendance. Our tracking system used is manageable and allows for identification of support and challenge of pupil learning. It supports professional dialogue to improve learning and teaching as well as identify areas of strength within the school and areas that require further development.

Reporting

The purpose of reporting is to support young people's learning and contribute to ongoing improvement. It should provide clear information about pupils' progress across the curriculum and highlight personal achievements gained both in and beyond school. They should outline next steps in learning, identify any additional support a child may require, and explain how parents/carers can contribute to their child's progress.

Reporting on pupil progress at Hillhead Primary take place throughout the year and actively involve parents/carers and learners. Teachers use a variety of approaches to report on learning at individual, group, class and whole-school levels including:

- Written reports
- Parents' Evenings
- Team Around the Child Meetings
- Ongoing feedback through classwork and Seesaw
- Evidence of progress and achievement gathered over time
- "Sharing the learning" events for parents
- Information sessions, the school website, Facebook and newsletters

CPD and Professional Dialogue

Our staff demonstrate a commitment to career long professional learning and development. On-going professional learning opportunities and robust self-evaluation procedures ensure that pedagogy and practice are current and in keeping with the needs of our school and community. In addition, opportunities are provided for staff to share good practice and engage in professional dialogue.

Pupil Voice



Our commitment to pupil voice enables us to gather the views of all learners. At Hillhead we know that pupil voice is about more than gathering opinions — it's about creating a culture where learners feel safe, valued, and able to influence their learning and the school environment. Method of collecting pupil voice include, surveys and questionnaires, pupil focus and leadership groups and visual and interactive tools i.e. Zones of Regulation check-ins. Through these means our children to shape and advise the learner experience and reflect on best practice and ways to improve.

What a Good Hillhead Lesson Looks Like...



NURTURE GROWTH & INSPIRE LEARNING AT HILLHEAD



WHAT A GOOD HILLHEAD LESSON LOOKS LIKE...

PLANNING



- Starting point – experiences and outcomes
- Plan with stage partner
- Focus on the 7 principles of design
- Ensure breadth, challenge and application
- Build in differentiation
- Take into account the 4 contexts for learning
- Use clear learning intentions and success criteria
- Co-construct success criteria
- Regular opportunities for moderation
- Clearly identified resources and engaging learning experiences

MEETING LEARNERS' NEEDS



- Ensure high expectations and aspirations for all learners
- Build in appropriate pace and challenge
- Use a variety of teaching approaches
- Set monthly individual learning targets
- Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning
- Make effective use of digital technology
- Include well timed interventions
- Teach stuck strategies.



LEARNING EXPERIENCES



- Build a positive and nurturing classroom ethos
- Promote a growth mindset
- Incorporate dialogic teaching strategies
- Provide opportunities for pupils to lead learning
- Use effective questioning
- Incorporate personalisation and choice
- Use modelling
- Provide opportunities to learn outdoors
- Ensure learning is within a real life context
- Promote high levels of pupil engagement.



ASSESSMENT & ATTAINMENT

- Include opportunities for summative and formative assessment
- Use AifL strategies
- Ensure there is regular tracking and monitoring
- Teachers own their data and use it to inform learning and teaching
- Teachers and learners use challenge questions
- Teachers track by exception
- Holistic planners used to assess application of learning.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



Focus on:

- Skills for Learning – develop thinking skills which will encourage deep learning
- Skills for Life – develop core skills required to enable learners to make meaningful contributions
- Skills for Work – skills developed in relevant and real life contexts
- Learners can talk about and apply their skills
- Skills development recorded monthly in their Learning Journals.

VISIBLE LEARNING



- Ensure regular teacher feedback (written and oral)
- Peer and self-assessment included
- Opportunities for learners to lead learning and learn from each other
- Learners are clear about their next steps in learning
- Learners can discuss their learning journey during learning conversations
- Use the Hillhead language of learning.



Enabling our learners to become...



SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS

EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

