



## MASTERY APPROACH TO TEACHING & LEARNING

The Mastery-learning model forms the basis of our approach to traditional teaching. This means spending greater time going into depth about a subject as opposed to racing through the things that all children should know. Previously, racing through content led to some children having large gaps in subject knowledge because the concept they had just learnt was either too big or learnt too quickly. As a primary school, it is our duty to ensure that children have an absolutely solid, concrete understanding of subject knowledge and skills as well as being emotionally resilient for secondary school.

At Valewood Primary School we have the confidence to take learning at a steadier and deeper pace, ensuring that no child is left behind, as well as providing deeper and richer experiences for children who are above the national expectation for their age.

We focus on all children achieving what is expected of their age group and not going beyond this. Evidence shows that children need to be able to understand a concept, apply it in a range of situations and then be creative to really understand it. Simply going beyond their age group does not guarantee they understand something, it just means they have heard it.

At our school only children who have mastered their year group curriculum will be taught content from the year group above them. All children will spend time becoming true masters of content, applying and being creative with new knowledge and skills in multiple ways.

In short, this means working towards:

- **Teach less, learn more:** less teacher talk and more evidencing learning and progress
- **No child left behind:** all children are enabled to keep up every day.
- **Space and time** to experience and apply, with all children entitled to additional support to ensure they do not fall behind or to go deeper
- **Understanding real life** applications wherever possible to make learning relevant and not abstract; nothing should be taught without a purpose.

At Valewood Primary School we always endeavour to plan meaningful lessons which allow children to think creatively, work and problem solve independently and collaboratively to apply knowledge and skills across the whole curriculum.

We will be doing more of this:

- Teaching all children in class, together, most of the time
- Verbal feedback during lessons, shorter comments in books and more ticking of correct concepts
- Spending longer time on one idea/concept
- Giving children who need it, additional support over shorter, more intense periods, like a day or week through precision teaching
- Daily or weekly mini assessments with half termly formal tests over the year

And less of this:

- Formal marking with lots of written feedback and highlighting
- Covering lots of ideas in one week
- Formal, long term interventions to boost them out of class
- Separating children into ability groups

This approach is seen as good practice. It is promoted by the government and seen as the best way to deliver the National Curriculum, 2014.

This diagram helps to clarify the concept of mastery and greater depth in the National Curriculum:

Shallow Learning	Surface Learning Temporary, often lost
Apprentice	With support is able to meet the objectives outlined in the National Curriculum
Confident (meeting expectations)	Obtaining a greater level of understanding and able to apply learning in different contexts
Expert (working at a greater depth)	Learning is transferred and applied in different contexts Pupils can explain their understanding to others

At Valewood Primary School we encourage collaborative team work to help build

- Stamina
- Resilience
- Problem Solving
- Reasoning
- Justification
- Clarification

We do this by using the KAGAN interactive teaching strategies in many of our lessons. We believe this improves children's confidence and metacognition which helps accelerate progress and ultimately raises attainment.

**Adopted by the Governing Body**