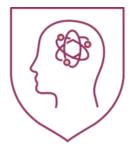# Learning Environment Policy

2023-2024

Date last reviewed | July 2023
Review period | Annually
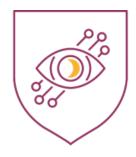**Lead Reviewer(s) |** Primary Principal & Secondary Principal

"Empowering students to aspire, create and excel in the world that is, so they can help create the world that will be"

The Science of
Learning

Social
Enterprise

Student Agency and
Innovation

Introduction

The learning environment is important as a means of adding greater depth and breadth to children's learning. It also raises self-esteem and encourages pride in the classroom and school. The learning environment at The Academy reinforces the school's commitment to high standards and the drive to continually raise achievement.

Aims

The school's aims for the learning environment are:

- To represent the vision and aims of the school towards excellence
- To celebrate varying levels of achievement and enhance students' work
- To increase students' self-esteem and pride in their work
- To motivate students by setting high standards to which they can aspire
- To create an enabling teaching and learning environment
- To encourage aesthetic awareness and a positive attitude to our school environment
- To arouse curiosity, pose questions and stimulate enquiry
- To reflect and value different cultural backgrounds
- To inform and inspire parents, carers, governors, teachers and visitors to the school

The School Environment

The School Environment is highlighted as a key factor in learning. There is clear evidence that physical characteristics of The Academy do impact on pupils' learning progress. Additionally, we acknowledge that the working environment affects well-being and well-being in turn has a key impact on performance. At

The Academy, we focus on and strive to enhance the following three key areas of the school's environment:

Natural Environment – The Role of Naturalness
Personal Environment – The Opportunity of Individualisation
Task Environment – Appropriate Levels of Stimulation

Natural Environment Expectations

Research evidence states that factors such as lighting, air quality, temperature and natural resources (plants, natural materials etc.) significantly influence learning, well-being and student performance (Tanner, 2009). The following recommendations will support the natural environment:

- Windows should be left clear from furniture and displays
- Internal lights should not be covered or blocked by display items
- Windows and doors should be opened when appropriate
- Temperature of classrooms are monitored regularly by class teachers
- Natural elements in the classroom are encouraged, such as plants and wooden furniture
- Neutral walls should not be painted on
- Shades provided in all outdoor learning spaces
- All display boards backed using hessian

Personal Environment Expectations

Classrooms and environments support individualisation by offering a variety of opportunities for different modes of learning. Flexibility is a key design requirement for learning environments at The Academy. Students should feel a sense of ownership of the environment, as this cultivates responsibility. The following recommendations will support the personal environment:

- Learning zones must be well-defined
- Varied displays should include pupil-created work
- Personalisation of area by children is important (named lockers etc.)
- Shared areas and corridors should have clear identities to support student navigation around the school
- Homely items such as lamps, carpets, photos and throws contribute to a personalised environment
- Learning environments, including corridors, should be kept tidy and well-maintained. Displays should not damage the school fixtures and fittings (e.g., no staples through doors, panels or door frames)
- Displays need to be culturally sensitive and mindful of Islamic values

Task Environment Expectations

Task environments must be balanced. While school displays have been shown to enhance student outcomes and support metacognition, cognitive load theory suggests that low-visual environment stimulation can be more effective than overloading classroom environments. Heavily coloured environments have significant effects on pupil's learning activity and their well-being. The following

recommendations will support the task environment:

- 50-60% of classroom walls should be clear of displays
- Classroom displays should focus on current learning
- Muted backgrounds should be used when displaying bright work
- Furniture should only be included in classrooms and corridors if it is purposeful
- Resources should be labelled, accessible and easily accessed in clear or natural trays
- Where possible, items should be displayed on or around display boards
- Environments should reflect a respect for learning and value the content

The Academy Displays

Corridor Displays

Purpose
- Corridor displays should be motivational and celebratory. They should be designed to showcase student work and learning outcomes and should include as many student examples as possible.
- A broad range of subjects and learning should be celebrated across the areas.

Responsibilities
- Phases and Departments are responsible for maintaining the corridor displays.

Expectations
- Student work should be backed and labelled with the student's first name and class
- Work should be well-presented and neatly displayed
- Displays should indicate the learning that took place with the intention and a blurb
- Display items should only be placed on or around pin boards
- Hanging items should be approved by Head of Phase and MSO before installation

Classroom and Working Wall Displays

Purpose
- Classroom displays should be informative and interactive, using a 'working wall' approach. These displays may share information, questions, examples and scaffolds that engage students and support them with their learning. Working walls provide support and set expectations of the process of learning as a reference for students.

Responsibilities
- Classroom teachers, teaching assistants and students are responsible for maintaining the class displays

Expectations

- All boards are backed in hessian
- Working displays should be accessible for students to interact with
- Working displays should consider students' focused attention and cognitive load
- Working walls should mirror the learning process and reflect work that appears in student books
- Students' work or teachers' modelled examples provide support and set expectations
- Vocabulary relevant to current learning is evident
- There is an interactive element in displays using this approach
- Work on the working wall reflects the National/MoE Curriculum expectations for each year group
- Work reflects presentation expectations to student but is not necessarily mounted
- Teachers and students should contribute to the working wall as part of lessons
- Handwriting (hand-written, not printed) should not contradict the handwriting expectations

Appendix 1 – Phase-specific Requirements

Foundation Stage Classrooms - Displays

Classrooms should include the following displays:

- Days of the week (displayed with the visual timetable with prompt to show the day)
- Visual to show stopping signal used in class (on whiteboard)
- Visual Timetable (using real-life photos)
- Number line
- RWI visuals (displayed as taught) - on phonics board with 'Phonics' as title. Star to show the sound being taught currently and laminated sentence strip to show words containing the sounds taught.
- Common Exception words (displayed as taught)
- Learning Zoo (linked to HPL, display as taught)
- Leadership roles – visual for each role and space to write the child's name
- Welcome to FS1X or FS2X display on door (child made lettering) with realistic, photograph of animals
- HPL Display (alliterative title linked to class animal) for children to select examples of them showing HPL behaviour to be displayed – with child's name on a peg/label. Laminated HPL stickers for children to put onto their work.
- "Look what I have made" sign for children to showcase construction/modelling which will need to be dismantled at the end of the day. This must have a writing link which can be progressive over the year (e.g. label with your name, label with a caption, write a describing bubble sentence about your model.) You can take a photograph of this for display on the HPL display if you want a permanent reminder of this work.
- Cubby labels – First Name, Photograph, Class Animal
- Child painted titles for displays
- Wellbeing check in display – available for the children to access throughout the day (this will go up in classrooms once it has been introduced)
- Self-registration (this will be agreed as a year group and will be consistent across all classes. This will be developed throughout the year).

Resources

- Letter formation mats
- Labelled trays
- Shadows for resources on shelves
- First and last and photograph on books

Primary Classrooms – Displays/Environments

Consistent font for display headings across KS1 (classroom and corridor displays)

Classrooms should include the following displays using consistent resources across each year group:

KS1

- Welcome to... on door
- No Teacher Notice Board required
- Reading/library area
- Role play area
- Alphabet, upper and lower case, in line with RWI/Nelson handwriting formation as appropriate
- English working wall – dedicated space for yellow lined flip chart paper (flip chart paper to be changed to regularly to reflect current learning/old paper to be removed)
- Maths working wall – dedicated space for squared flip chart paper (flip chart paper to be changed regularly to reflect current learning old paper to be removed). Laminated squares (optional)
- Science working wall – dedicated space for yellow lined flip chart paper (flip chart paper to be changed regularly to reflect current learning /old paper to be removed).
- MSCS / Projects 4 Change board if possible (i.e., if there are enough boards)
- RWI Speed Sounds visible in classroom (complex)
- Reading and Writing prompt visuals
- Number line up to 20 visible in the classroom
- Clock labels
- Classroom monitor jobs (consistent across KS1/2)
- Days of the week and months of the year in English/Arabic
- Visual Timetable on whiteboard
- Learning Zoo visible
- House points totals/Big Hitter board
- Behaviour Display - The Academy Values, Attitudes and Attributes (HPL - VAAs) – Empathetic, Agile and Hard Working (Blue bubbles already painted on walls). Whole school behaviour chart visible in the classroom (e.g names/lolly sticks etc. consistent in year group – this can be discrete)
- Child-friendly feedback for success guides should be visible
- Daily check-ins on tables
- Literacy support station/table/drawers:
  - Letter formation mats
  - Phonics mats
  - Alphabet mats
  - Common words
- Maths support station/table/drawers:
  - Counters
  - Numbers up to 20
  - Hundred squares
  - Place Value Charts

- o Base 10
  - o Number names spellings – up to thirty then include 'tens' number spellings
- Resources labelled using letter-join no lead font (pre-cursive print in line with RWI for Year 1)
- Locker names using template including the Wellington logo in letter-join no lead font (pre-cursive print in line with RWI for Year 1)
- First and last names on students' books, subject and class typed on to school label in letter-join no lead font (pre-cursive print in line with RWI for Year 1)

KS2

- Welcome to.... on the door (black lettering)
- Outside display – black lettering with pastel coloured background (consistent in year group)
- No Teacher Notice Board required
- English working wall with black lettering– dedicated space for yellow lined flip chart paper (flip chart paper to be changed regularly to reflect current learning/ old paper to be removed)
- Maths working wall with black lettering– dedicated space for squared flip chart paper (flip chart paper to be changed regularly to reflect current learning /old paper to be removed). Laminated squares (optional)
- Science working wall black lettering– dedicated space for flip chart paper (flip chart paper to be changed regularly to reflect current learning /old paper to be removed)
- P4C Curriculum / MSCS working wall(s) if possible, in the classroom
- Maths support station/table/drawers:
  - o Base 10
  - o Place value charts and counters
  - o Hundred squares
  - o Number lines linked to year group needs (e.g. Y4 negative number lines)
- English support station/table/drawers:
  - o Dictionaries and Thesaurus
  - o Common word spellings mats
  - o Word banks (linked to year group needs e.g fronted adverbials, conjunctions)
- Reading/library area
- Reading and Writing prompt visuals
- On walls...(the following will be consistent across KS2)
  - o Days of the week (with Arabic translations)
  - o Months of the year (with Arabic translations)
  - o Place value chart (linked to year group needs)
  - o Alphabet (Upper and Lower case - letter join no lead font)
  - o TTRS display – including names of children or icon relating to children (only LKS2)
  - o History timeline

- o Clock labels (linked to Year group needs e.g 24hr /digital/analogue)
- Wellbeing display – provided by the wellbeing lead
- Time to Talk cards
- House points totals/Big Hitter display
- Behaviour Display - The Academy Values, Attitudes and Attributes (HPL - VAAs) – Empathetic, Agile and Hard Working (Blue bubbles already painted on walls).
- Whole school behaviour chart visible in the classroom (e.g names/lolly sticks etc consistent in year group – this can be discrete)
- Child-friendly feedback for success guides should be visible and/or available
- Visual Timetable (consistent in year groups)
- Classroom monitor jobs (consistent across KS1/2)
- Locker names using template including the Wellington logo in letter-join no lead font
- First and last names on students' books, subject and class typed on to school label in letter-join no lead font

Secondary Classrooms - Displays

All Secondary School classes will have displays pertinent to their subject. These should be updated as and when the topic/unit or subject content changes.

The focus of classroom displays is to support learning and act as a reference to encourage independence and wider learning or reflection opportunity.

- Teaching Principles should be displayed in a format accessible to the students and for ease of reference by the teacher.
- The focus of the display should be clear including a 'title' or visible explanation of what the display demonstrates.
- Displays should include questions to promote interactivity and critical thinking.
- Links to wider/real world, MSC or National Agenda opportunities should be made explicit to students where applicable.
- Form classes should have a form board, where specific elements are displayed – e.g. timetable, notices, house points, student leaders.
- Every teaching room must have a literacy working wall(s) with the department literacy foci made clear to the students. A changeable 'Key Vocabulary' display is advised that can be built upon or regularly refurbished subject to topic changes.
- If you display WAGOLL work, it must be accompanied by clearly visible reasons as to why the work is exemplary and support the learning in the classroom.
- Each classroom should have a demarcated area for behaviour celebrations and where sanctions can be logged.

- Literacy marking codes should be stuck to student desks (a larger poster version can be requested additionally)
- 'How to report a problem' graphics should be on display
- Lesson roadmaps should be clearly visible to students upon classroom entry.
- Where possible/necessary, Arabic text/labelling to support in translation of keywords.
- Teacher Administration - planning board, timetable, paper class registers, fire register, emergency exit plan, etc.
- Resources and drawers labelled