The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School

Learning and Teaching Policy

Introduction

The contents of this policy are designed to help all of us to promote excellent learning. These principles for learning have the potential to increase the life chances of our children by maximising the quality of the education we provide; they have the potential to improve pupil's engagement, enjoyment, achievement, relationships and behaviour in school, as well as parental satisfaction, and the capacity for us as staff to find real professional fulfilment in our work.

Key principles of this policy are that:

- To provide a broad, balanced curriculum, which is designed to engage, excite and inspire the children.
- To provide a flexible curriculum, which adapts to respond to the needs and interests of children (see Children's Charter), and which reflects current local, national and international events and affairs.
- To enhance and enrich the curriculum with a wide range of experiences and opportunities inside and outside the classroom and school.
- To help children understand their own learning behaviours and build positive learning attitudes.
- To foster a 'can do' culture, where all involved are supported and encouraged to be resilient, prepared to 'have a go', where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities and where effort is recognised and rewarded.
- To develop a community where learners feel safe, secure and valued as individuals.
- To develop children's self-respect and encourage them to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others, regardless of race and culture.
- To equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives and to see themselves as lifelong learners.

Effective Learning

People learn in different ways. Learning opportunities should incorporate a range of strategies in order to engage children in learning and meet the needs of all learners. These could include:

- investigation and problem solving
- research and discovery
- whole-class work
- group work (in groups selected for different reasons)
- paired work /talk partners
- individual work
- independent work, which is child directed
- collaborative work
- selecting and using relevant resources to support learning
- asking and answering questions
- use of IT including visual images, film, interactive teaching resources etc.
- learning outside the classroom
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- guest visitors and performances
- creative activities
- debates, discussions, oral presentations and other speaking and listening strategies
- drama techniques
- designing and making things
- participation in physical activity
- setting challenges for themselves

- enrichment opportunities
- elements of competition

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning; to review the way they learn and how they learn and how to overcome challenges in their learning.

Assessment for Learning (including quality feedback)

Assessment for learning will be evident in planning and lessons to ensure lessons are well paced and all pupils make progress in learning.

Learning Objectives that are:
- taken from the National Curriculum 2014
- context free, clear and focused on learning rather than task
- displayed (where appropriate)
- discussed with and explained to the children
- based on prior attainment, knowledge and understanding

Success Criteria: 'Steps to Success' – when used -
- break down the learning taking place
- include the steps or 'ingredients' the children need to be successful in their learning
- are identified by the teacher during the planning process
- are often generated with the children during the lesson
- are written up and referred to during the lesson

Plenary – when used -
- planned times during, and/or at the end of, the lesson
- reviews progress towards learning objectives and success criteria
- allows adults, and children, to address misconceptions, make improvements and add further challenge
- learning may be applied to different contexts
- time to reflect on the 'how' of learning in addition to 'what' has been learnt

Differentiation
- takes place throughout the lesson
- is matched to children's ability and next steps learning
- when planning work for children with Special Educational Needs, information and targets contained in the children's Learning Plans are addressed
- may occur through adult support; range and level of resources; time; task; different outcomes

Adult Input
- engages children in the learning
- is active and interactive
- has appropriate pace to ensure maximum learning takes place
- responds to, and is adapted to, ongoing assessment during the lesson
- clearly models successful learning/the learning activity
- generates success criteria
- is flexible according to the learning taking place
- different inputs for different groups
- different start times for different groups
- input – activity – input – activity
- guided groups etc.

Questioning
- use of 'no hands up' as a strategy to encourage engagement for all
- questions will be asked to assess learning, challenge and deepen thinking and understanding

- the range will include open/closed; higher and lower order
- will be differentiated
- opportunities will be planned for children to develop their own questions and questioning

Targets
- are related to children's levels of attainment and next steps learning
- children are involved in setting and reviewing these
- are easily accessible and referred to regularly

Active Learning
- children are given opportunities to be involved in the learning throughout the lesson
- a range of strategies is used
- there is an appropriate balance of adult/pupil talk

Feedback & Marking (see Marking and Feedback Policy)
- regular feedback will be given to the children
- identify success and areas for improvement/next steps learning
- refers to learning objectives, success criteria, children's individual targets and ability-related spelling, punctuation and grammar
- opportunities are planned for children to regularly respond to feedback and marking

Self & Peer Assessment
- children are trained to self and peer assess
- guidelines are discussed, agreed and developed with the children
- is used regularly to enable children to address misconceptions and make improvements to their work
- is in addition to teacher assessment/feedback

Planning

- A long term plan has been developed by staff to cover National Curriculum requirements for each year group. This plan works alongside the New Primary Framework to provide a full coverage of subjects and has been planned to facilitate a dynamic curriculum which is responsive to children's interests.(see Children's Charter)
- For foundation subjects medium term plans are produced by the staff teaching in each Key Stage with advice from subject leaders. They show which themes will be taught, when and how.
- Short term plans are produced by class teachers to enable them to deliver what is in the medium term plan. Short term plans will include differentiation, showing how children at early stages of development will be supported and how the more able will be challenged. Short term planning will include consideration of how other adults in the room are to be utilised.

Different resources, learning objectives, levels of support or expected outcomes are means of providing differentiation, as are enabling questions, individual target setting and giving prior knowledge or help about themes to be covered.

The Learning environment

At the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School
- We provide exciting, tidy, well-organised and resourced classrooms, which promote independent use of resources and support high quality learning
- Adults and children work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources

Display
The purpose of display is to:

- celebrate success – show case achievement, Star/Learner of the Day/Week
- support class organisation – visual timetables, clearly labelled resources
- support learning – interactive and challenging, working walls, presentation examples
- promote independence by providing prompts – questions, support for when children are stuck
- reflect the current themes/learning and are changed regularly
- document the *process* of learning . As such, displays should evolve over time as learning develops and could include a combination of annotated photographs , artefacts or pictures acting as stimuli for learning, annotated mark making and writing, and pupil generated pictures and artwork.

In our school the colour of the background is also chosen so as not to distract from the learning being displayed and pale natural colours and hessian are favoured, as these promote optimum conditions for learning within the learning environment. Text used for titles or comments should ideally be black on a pale background to ensure that colourblind or dyslexic pupils or adults can read them.

Working walls
- support literacy and numeracy learning and the thematic curriculum .
- contain prompts and resources for learning, examples of pupil's work, examples of quality work from previous classes, genre work and teacher generated examples of aspects of reading , writing or maths being focused on.

Behaviour for Learning (including Building Learning Power)

In our school we recognise the barriers to learning created by a 'fixed' view of ability and intelligence ' as pre determined and unchangeable'. This view negatively affects confidence, motivation, willingness to 'have a go' and ultimately learning potential. If we can develop a 'growth' mindset (Carole Dweck) and teach children that intelligence can be developed through effort, then this will impact positively on confidence and self esteem, willingness to try new learning, and resilience. All adults should model their own 'growth' mindset and enthusiasm for learning by focusing on the process of learning, the importance and excitement of meeting challenges, putting in effort and using strategies which help us all to learn. Failure or mistakes are then seen as learning opportunities, not something to be avoided at all costs, but welcome and necessary steps on the road to meeting challenge and future success.

As a school we have agreed not to use external rewards for learning as these also have negative effects on attitudes to learning and reinforce the 'fixed' mindset and ultimately reduce motivation and participation. Instead, we aim to give pupils specific praise for what they have accomplished and the strategies they have used, such as practice, research, persistence, evaluating and making improvements. e.g " Well done, that is a beautiful flower, I love the way you've worked so carefully at mixing the colours."

We recognise that pupils need the skills to be able to control their own learning and have the opportunity to become higher order thinkers. We therefore make a priority of teaching, modelling, valuing and supporting the development of the following learning habits through the Building Learning Power programme. In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 each learning habit is linked with an animal.

	Learning Habit	**Animal Association**
Year A 2016-17	Collaboration	Bees
	Perseverance	Tortoise
	Questioning	Cat
	Revising	Chameleon
Year B 2017-18	Imagining	Unicorn
	Managing Distractions	Ants
	Listening and Empathy	Dog
	Making Connections	Spider

Other related Policies:
                        All subject specific policies
                        Behaviour Policy
                        SEND Policy
                        Assessment Policy
                        Marking and feedback policy

Policy developed by: E Ibison (Acting Deputy Head teacher)
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