

Teaching and Learning Policy



Introduction

At St John's Primary School we believe that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. We want children to be active partners in their learning and to become lifelong learners. Our Teaching and Learning Policy aims to ensure that the children at our school are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement.

Rationale

Our Teaching and Learning Policy is at the heart of all we do. It sets out clear expectations, provides a consistent approach and ensures equal opportunities for all our pupils.

Aims and Objectives

At St John's Primary School we provide a rich and varied experience for all pupils to learn in a caring, supportive and stimulating environment. Through this, children are allowed to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- support children to show respect for all cultures and, in doing so, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued;
- foster in children the desire to succeed and to take pride in their achievements;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

We offer opportunities for children to learn through:

- whole class, group, paired and individual activities
- researching and finding out
- investigating and solving problems
- questioning
- reflecting on their learning
- creative activities
- designing and making things
- participating in physical activity
- field work and educational visits
- responding to visual and oral materials
- debates, role play and presentations

Effective learning results in:

Knowing you have succeeded
Feeling you can do more
Explaining what you have learned
Applying your learning to other situations
Teaching someone else
Feeling good about yourself

Mantle of the Expert

To enhance the purpose and enjoyment of learning we are using Mantle of the Expert to help deliver the foundation subjects, linking in English, maths and science where possible. The Mantle of the Expert is a dramatic-inquiry based approach to teaching and learning invented and developed by Professor Dorothy Heathcote at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in the 1980's. The big idea is that the pupils undertake all their curriculum work as if they are an imagined group of experts. We have embedded this into our planning and will continue to monitor how it is used best, to enhance children's learning experiences.

Effective teaching

Effective learning only comes from effective teaching. When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching.

We believe children learn effectively when the teacher provides:

- thorough planning and preparation
- a clear Learning Objective which is understood by the children
- a clear link to previous and future learning
- appropriately differentiated learning
- a clear outcome to be achieved by the end of the lesson
- opportunities to review and reflect on learning
- enthusiastic delivery
- fun
- appropriate pace to the lesson
- teacher modelling
- clear success criteria
- open-ended, thought provoking and challenging questions
- thinking time
- an atmosphere where the children are prepared to take risks
- developmental feedback and directions to the next steps in learning
- opportunities for self and peer assessment
- involvement for all children

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment and do this by using a rigorous system of pre-assessment at the start of a unit of work. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with Special Education Needs (SEN) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) we give due

regard to information and targets. We have high expectations of all children and believe that all children should be included in the full range of education opportunities. We have the expectation that the curriculum will be extended to meet the needs of the most able pupils. As far as possible the needs of the More Able and Talented children will be addressed within the year group. Staff will challenge the thinking of identified More Able and Talented children.

We track and monitor ALL children to ensure 'good' and accelerated progress is made. We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Assistants support the learning of individuals and groups of children in the class room and through targeted intervention.

The Learning Environment

All areas and resources in the school are clearly labelled. Children are made aware of these resources at the beginning of the year. The learning environment is organised to ensure that children have the opportunity to be independent and to learn in different ways.

Learning takes place in an environment which is:

- challenging and stimulating
- peaceful and calm
- happy and organised
- well resourced and clearly labelled
- encouraging and appreciative
- welcoming
- safe to take risks
- providing equal opportunities
- providing a working atmosphere

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunities, throughout the year, to display their best work. All classrooms have a range of fiction, non-fiction books and dictionaries as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. The use of 'wonder walls' is being developed to ensure pupils have full input into the record of learning happening in the class. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes high quality work by the children.

Routines and Rules

Routines and rules in the classroom contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be:

- agreed by the children
- fair and consistent
- realistic and positive

All rules should result in the children knowing the boundaries of behaviour and are set within the terms of the Behaviour Policy.

Achievement

We believe achievement, effort and positive behaviour should be recognised and rewarded.

This is undertaken through:

- verbal or written praise by teacher, assistants, peers, head teacher and parents
- displays of work
- opportunities to perform or share in a range of situations
- 'class dojo' points systems
- Stickers
- house points
- Golden Book
- Star of the Week certificates awarded in Achievement Assemblies

Role of Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policy on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulation;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of school's teaching and learning policy through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders and the termly head teacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- half termly Assertive Mentoring meetings with class teacher, pupil and parent
- Learning Webs informing parents of the content that the children will be studying
- Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform, PE kit and stationery;
- Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;

- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement;
- Support their child in their home learning.

Home Learning

Homework tasks are set each week to support and extend the learning that has happened in the classroom. The tasks set are often open ended to encourage development of independent learning and to allow for individuality.

We also have an expectation that parents/ carers hear their children read on a regular basis.

Monitoring and Review

We are aware of the need to review the Teaching and Learning Policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

Reviewed annually

Last review 5th September 2016

To be reviewed September 2017