

Teaching and Learning Policy

St. Mary's Primary School

At St. Mary's we live and learn, sharing God's love

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we believe that learning should be a lifelong process and a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching, we focus on inspiring the children to learn, equipping them with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be independent learners who reach their full potential. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences contribute to children becoming successful learners, who lead rewarding lives as responsible citizens.

Aims

- To develop a community of learners where learning is valued, enjoyed, supportive and lifelong
- To enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
- To develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of all others, regardless of any differences
- To encourage children to take pride in their work and the work of others

Learning Culture

To enable children to learn well, the school will work to develop a culture where children:

- enjoy learning
- feel safe – respect, value and support each other as learners
- take risks
- recognise mistakes and errors as a learning opportunity and persevere
- set high expectations – learning behaviour, progress in learning, presentation etc
- develop a 'Can do' attitude

and where adults:

- establish positive working relationships with all children in the class
- model learning and expected behaviour for the children
- treat all children fairly, with kindness and respect, with encouragement, praise and rewards for all

This learning culture needs to be actively taught and quickly established (in September), then further developed and reinforced, throughout the year, involving the children at every stage.

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
- whole-class work
- group work (in groups selected for different reasons)
- paired work

- 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
- 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 athletic or physical activity
- setting challenges for themselves

Children should be taught 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.

Effective Teaching

Responsive Teaching (AfL) will be evident in planning and lessons to ensure learning is well paced, enabling all pupils to make good and better progress. Prior assessment of the pupils' understanding should be used to inform planning and to demonstrate a clear progression in skills.

The most effective teaching will include:

- **Learning Objectives**
 - clear and focused - based on learning rather than task
 - displayed
 - discussed and explained to the children
 - based on prior attainment, knowledge and understanding
 - differentiated to meet the needs of all learners
- **Success Criteria**
 - 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 ideally generated with the children during the lesson
 - are referred to during the lesson
- **Plenary**
 - planned times during, and at the end of, the lesson
 - reviews progress towards the learning objective 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' and 'why' of learning in addition to 'what' has been learnt
 - should be used during lessons especially when the progress of the class, group or individuals will be furthered

- **Outcomes**
 - what will be achieved by the children by the end of the lesson
 - the learning activity/evidence of learning
 - sufficient time given to enable children to achieve meaningful learning
 - matched to the children's next steps in their learning
- **Challenge for All**
 - takes place throughout the lesson
 - is matched to children's next steps in learning
 - 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 eg.
 - different inputs for different groups
 - different start times for different groups
 - input – activity – input – activity
 - guided groups etc
- **Questioning**
 - questions will be asked to assess learning, challenge and deepen thinking and understanding
 - the range will include open/closed; higher and lower order (eg. Bloom's Taxonomy)
 - will be matched to the children's understanding and ability
 - opportunities will be planned for children to develop their own questions and questioning
- **Feedback & Marking**
 - regular feedback will be given to the children
 - identifies success and areas for improvement/next steps in learning
 - refers to learning objectives, success criteria, children's individual targets and age related expectations in 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
- **Targets**
 - children should be involved in setting and reviewing their targets (as appropriate to the age and ability of the children)
 - easily accessible and referred to regularly
 - are related to children's next steps in their learning
 - are set for writing, reading and maths
- **Active Learning**
 - children are given opportunities to be involved in the learning throughout the lesson

- a range of strategies are used
- there is an appropriate balance of adult/pupil talk

Opportunities should be planned to enable children to develop and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

Learning Environment

An appropriately stimulating environment sets the climate for learning:

- an exciting, well-organised classroom promotes independent use of resources and supports high quality learning
- teachers and children work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources
- classrooms should be child friendly, relevant and tidy, and should be word and number rich
- displays might be used to:
 - celebrate success - achievement, Star/Learner of the Day/Week, HT award winner, Values, Writer of the week etc
 - support class organisation – visual timetables, clearly labelled resources
 - promote independence by providing prompts – questions, support for when children need it
 - support learning – working walls, presentation examples, interactive & challenging
 - displays are changed regularly and reflect the current topic/themes/ learning

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants and other adult helpers are deployed throughout school to support learning as effectively as possible. They are involved in:

- supporting learning and children's progress
- supporting assessments of children's understanding
- developing children's independence

Volunteer helpers, mainly parents, are directed by teachers to assist in some classrooms with general tasks: listening to readers, assisting on outings and in providing other help, such as particular areas of expertise.

The Role of Subject leaders

- monitor progress and attainment in subject areas and action plan to address areas of need
- support colleagues to develop practice and subject knowledge to maximise progress
- take the lead in policy development
- have responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources
- keep up to date with developments in their particular subject area and are responsible for sharing this with colleagues
- meet with the Governor with responsibility for their subject once per term to provide a position statement and update

Role of Parents

Parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. School holds many events to enable parents to be more confident in knowing what and how their children are learning. Such events are:

- Parent consultations in which the progress made by each pupil and his/her next steps in learning are explained and discussed
 - 'Meet the teacher' during the summer term
 - Stay and play/pray sessions
 - curriculum meetings at the beginning of each year
 - open sessions where parents are invited to spend time in school seeing how school 'works'
 - sending an annual report to parents explaining the progress made by their child and indicating areas for improvement
 - explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework
 - holding parent workshops to explain the work covered and the strategies and methods taught to the pupils
 - sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the learning areas and topics that the pupils will be covering that term
- (We will keep parents informed of a pupil's progress on a more regular basis if appropriate.)

Role of Governors

Governors support, monitor and review the school policies 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 regulations
- 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 the school's teaching and learning policies through the school's self-evaluation processes. These may include reports from subject leaders and the termly Headteacher's report to governors, as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff
- meet termly with staff to monitor progress in individual subjects

Monitoring & Evaluation

Staff will be regularly monitored for professional development purposes. Judgements can include the quality of teaching, pupils' work, assessment information and behaviour over time. A feedback form will be used and provided to individual staff, identifying the strengths and any areas for development.

Each staff member has a section in the Appraisal file – records of monitoring and the outcome of subsequent professional development opportunities will be recorded in this file.

The triangulation of teaching and learning will be monitored using;

- learning walks
- senior leaders or subject leaders conducting brief observations for shorter sessions – for example, a guided reading session
- data analysis
- book/planning scrutiny
- assessing the quality of the classroom environment

- professional conduct
- marking and feedback
- pupil conversations

This is not an exhaustive list – however, staff will be made aware in advance if other monitoring activities are to take place.

Reviewed

February 2024