



Dunston Hill

Community Primary School



Teaching and Learning Policy

September 2020

DUNSTON HILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

TEACHING and LEARNING POLICY

Rationale

Our Teaching and Learning policy is at the heart of all we are doing at Dunston Hill Community Primary School. It aims to ensure that the children are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement. It also sets out clear expectations, provides a standard uniform approach, can be easily monitored and ensures equal opportunity for all our children.

Purpose

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- Meet the needs of all learning styles i.e. visual, auditory and kinaesthetic styles
- 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
- Show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people
- Enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community
- Help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens for the 21st century.

Our understanding

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and when planning our lessons, we take into account these different forms of intelligence ensuring wherever possible that there is a visual, auditory and kinaesthetic element to each of our lessons.

Effective learning results in:

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

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

Effective learning requires 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

planning documentation to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school and details what is to be taught to each year group.

For effective teaching to take place there are a number of 'ingredients' that we feel are needed:

- Effective prior preparation and planning resulting in a purposeful, well prepared teaching plan
- A clear learning objective shared with the children both visually and auditory
- A clear link to previous and future learning
- A clear outcome to be achieved at the end of the lesson
- A review of the learning at the end of the lesson
- Appropriate challenge for all children
- Teacher modelling through effective use of 'teacher talk' time
- Be appropriately and readily resourced
- Good questioning
- Quality interaction between teacher and pupil and pupil and pupil
- Pace
- Enthusiasm
- Fun, memorable and irresistible delivery, content and outcome
- Involvement of all the children
- Excellent behaviour management
- Opportunities for independent learning
- Elements of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning
- Follow up feedback through effective, interactive marking.

Our Responsibilities

We will ensure that our curriculum is irresistible, memorable and relevant. Through our planning, delivery, creative use of resources and personnel, professional development and training, we will aim to make teaching and learning at Dunston Hill outstanding.

Our Approach to Effective Teaching and Learning

- Our teaching is based on our knowledge of children's level of attainment and we have high expectations of all children. We take into account ability and any additional educational needs
- We set targets for the children in each academic year and we share these targets with the children and their parents. We review the progress of each child termly and set revised targets. Children have targets in their books and these are displayed on the classroom walls for reference by the class teacher
- Lessons are planned with clear learning objectives and we evaluate all lessons so that we constantly look for opportunities to improve our teaching. Teachers plan using a medium term overview and a short term weekly planning sheet
- Our teachers and support staff make a special effort to establish very good working relationships with all of the children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All of our staff follow the school policy with regard to discipline and behaviour and classroom management. We praise children for their efforts and help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our discipline and behaviour policy. We aim to teach in an atmosphere of 'care and respect for all'
- We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe and risk assessed

- We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual children, or small groups, and other times they carry out intervention work. Our support staff also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment
- All of our staff reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our staff in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. Regular monitoring provides feedback and next steps to help us make teaching and learning even better
- Staff have responsibility for key areas of learning and support other staff to develop their skills in these areas
- We teach daily phonics through Read Write Inc.
- We ensure the day has an organised and clear beginning which sets the tone for the day's work. All key stage 2 children begin their morning with a short handwriting lesson modelled by their teacher and work towards gaining their 'pen license' when they are consistently using cursive script. We use Nelson handwriting font
- Children sometimes work in small intervention groups outside the classroom with an adult to boost their learning
- We share the learning with parents through our weekly newsletters and update the school website with photographs and news about school activities and learning
- 'Pupil Voice' in our school is very strong and we have a very active School Council who are regularly consulted on school choices and decisions.

Our Learning Environment

We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children. We aim for our learning environment to:

- Be welcoming
- Be challenging and stimulating
- Be peaceful and calm
- Be well organised
- Be well resourced and clearly labelled
- Make learning accessible
- Be encouraging and appreciative
- Provide for equal opportunities
- Provide for a working atmosphere
- Support the development of independent learners.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments and are kept tidy. Children's work forms the basis of most of the display work. Each classroom has a Literacy ('Best Writing') and Numeracy ('Using and Applying') display board. They also have a designated 'Learning Wall' which tracks the children's learning in their topic work that half-term. This wall includes the objectives, key vocabulary, photographs, children's quotes and work samples. Display boards are backed with appropriately coloured backing paper and enhanced with borders. Borders are regularly checked and repaired. All resources and materials are clearly labelled, using a mix of handwriting and computer generated text. Signs on displays explain, invite questions or answers or are used as headlines. Display work is at least single mounted; this includes all signs. Fabric and/or other materials are used to enhance displays. 3D work is also in evidence across the school. Artefacts, artists' work, natural objects etc. are used to enhance displays. Teachers' handwriting provides a good role model for pupils. Key classroom displays are changed at least half-termly to reflect the current learning.

Displays around the school cover a wide range of subject areas and are changed at least termly.

All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. Book corners promote the importance of reading.

A written or visual timetable of the day/lessons/activities is displayed in each classroom so that children are clear about the day. Such routines enable them to become more independent.

Children have access to number squares, multiplication grids, number lines, word banks, high frequency words etc. These are stored centrally in every class. Children know how to access these and are encouraged to do so independently.

Our learning environments are organised to ensure that the children have the opportunity to learn in different ways. These include:

- Group work
- Paired work
- Independent work
- Whole-class work.

Children's Work

For each new piece of work:

- The date is written in full for literacy and numerically for mathematics. Pupils underline the date using a ruler
- The learning objective is written and underlined
- Key stage 1 pupils work towards this; teachers ensure that all KS1 work is dated and has a learning objective
- Where appropriate, children are taught how to stick work into their books carefully. These should be trimmed prior to sticking in.

Covers on exercise books are not defaced.

Marking

Written responses are used mainly for marking children's work. These responses may be to praise, advise, inform, or to mark the child's successes and areas for improvement.

Teachers and associate staff respond where possible, with the child being present. This enables the work to be discussed together and the teacher to read the comment to the child if appropriate. It also allows for reflection by the child, stimulation of ideas and the teacher to suggest the child's next task or action. Opportunities are made for a child to respond and make improvements to their work.

A written response is usually made to a piece of work when the teacher looks at a group or class set of books. This is particularly applicable when responding to work such as creative writing. In other curriculum areas such as mathematics, marking – and hence a written response – may occur during the lesson with the child alongside. If the teacher has responded to a piece of work in the absence of the child the written response may be given again as an oral response when the work is returned to the child or the child may be asked to read the written comment when he or she gets the work back.

Children are involved in the marking process and may respond to their own, and each other's work in written form. Areas of success are highlighted in pink and an area for improvement will be highlighted in green. All work is marked against agreed success criteria and a comment may be added to support and close the learning gap.

All written comments are made in clear, legible, neat handwriting in a style consistent with that being taught to the children. Written comments are made positively and at the same time are constructive in that they may inform or advise the child as to how they can improve their work or performance.

Comments may be written at the end of a piece of work or part way through depending on the layout of the work.

Golden Rules

Our 'Golden Rules' positive behaviour management strategy in the classroom contributes to a healthy learning environment and is:

- Visually displayed and given high profile
- Clearly understood by the children
- Consistently used.

Achievement

We take every opportunity to celebrate achievement through:

- Verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, Headteacher, Deputy/Assistant Headteachers, and parents
- Displays of work
- Opportunities to perform or share
- Positive comments to parents, notes, phone calls
- Certificates and rewards.

The 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 regulations
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- Ensure that staff development and appraisal policies promote good quality teaching
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policy through the school self-review processes. These include reports from curriculum team leaders, the Headteacher's reports to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The Role of Parents and Carers

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

- Holding parents' consultation workshops to explain our school strategies for teaching literacy, numeracy etc.
- Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework etc.
- Sending an annual progress report to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and to indicate how the child can improve further
- Sending home a curriculum overview at the start of each term
- Sharing good practice on our school website.

Evaluation

Improvement in our learning and teaching will show itself in:

- Well behaved, well-motivated pupils and a well-ordered school
- Improved SATs results
- Improved attendance rates
- Good parental feedback
- Positive feedback from Ofsted/LA/visitors etc.
- Highly motivated staff
- Good attendance of staff
- Over-subscribed admissions register
- Good response from parents to open evenings, questionnaires etc.