

The Federation of St James the Great and St John's Catholic Primary Schools



Teaching and Learning Policy

We recognise that the learning experiences enjoyed by our pupils help them discover and understand their gifts. All that we learn should have meaning in our lives and help us to see our relationship to God, to one another and the world in which we live. Teaching and learning is a co-operative process involving staff, pupils and their parents, governors and others in the community. All must work together to help our pupils fulfil their potential. All members of the Federation will jointly work towards the aims by:

- Valuing each child as an individual and respecting their individual rights, values, beliefs and cultures in order that each child can achieve his or her maximum potential.
- Providing a welcoming environment in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered and in which success is celebrated.
- Provide positive role models.
- Fostering good relationships and a sense of belonging to the community.
- Valuing and celebrating pupil's success and achievements.
- Reviewing personal and professional development by providing INSET, training and support from colleagues in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.
- Ensuring all pupils have full access to Foundation Stage and National Curriculums.
- Pupils and teachers act together to establish an attractive and well-organised environment, engendering respect, care and value for all resources.

Principles of successful learning

Successful learning does not happen in isolation, but is a continuous process consisting of many influences and experiences in and beyond school. We believe that it is the quality, variety and effectiveness of these experiences that maximise a child's learning potential.

Aims and purposes

All efforts to continue to raise standards must be focused on learning. Continued and sustained improvement is dependent upon sustaining the high quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis. Across our schools the expectation is that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement. We expect every teacher to be a good teacher – no child deserves less. By adopting a Federation approach to teaching and learning across our schools, we aim:

- to provide consistency of teaching and learning across our schools.
- to enable staff to teach as effectively as possible.
- to enable children to learn as efficiently as possible.
- to give children the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners.
- to provide an inclusive education for all children.
- to learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach
- to share good practice.

Key elements and principles of teaching and learning across our schools – a practical guide.

All lessons across our schools should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning. New teachers to our schools will receive training to ensure they fully understand these elements and to enable them to embed them in their everyday practice.

All lessons have...Clear Learning Intentions or Objectives

- Learning intentions/objectives are shared orally and displayed.
- All learning intentions/objectives are written up and shared orally in child friendly language, there is little point in sharing learning intentions/objectives if students don't understand what you mean.
- The learning intention/objective is written or stuck into children's books.
- For learning intentions/objectives to be shared effectively, teachers must:
Move away from saying 'Today we are doing'... and instead say 'By the end of today's lesson you will all know/be able to/understand...'
- Make learning intentions/objectives specific
- Refer to them: at the start of the lesson, during the lesson and during the Plenary
- Students must know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson.

All lessons have... Well planned success criteria where this is appropriate

- Success criteria is displayed for the children to follow during the lesson or drawn up with the children, e.g. Steps to success.
- Weekly planning includes success criteria.
- Children use the success criteria to self-assess their own or other children's work.
- Children are given the opportunity to edit their work, referring back to the success criteria. This may be done later in the lesson or in the next lesson, as an opportunity for reflection and refinement of the task.
- Children are reminded of the success criteria during the lesson – often children's work is used by the teacher to illustrate the success criteria in action.

All lessons are ...clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning.

- All learners are challenged appropriately.
- Planning shows clear differentiation and ways to celebrate achievements.
- A range of learning styles are catered for through a VAK approach (Visual, Audio, Kinaesthetic)
- A variety of resources are used to support children and to enable challenge.

All pupils are...actively engaged in learning and work co-operatively.

- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account children's concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods.
- Opportunities to Think/Pair/Share and discussions with a Talk Partner are regular features in all lessons. Pupils are trained to use appropriate body language when engaged in discussion.
- Mini whiteboards are used for short bursts of activity, to develop understanding and to ensure children are active and engaged during the lesson.
- Visuals, artefacts, auditory input are all used creatively as a way to enhance learning.
- Children help and encourage each other
- Everyone participates
- Children are encouraged to explain their ideas clearly and in full sentences.
- Children are taught to work co-operatively through modelling and clear instruction on how to achieve this, with staff acting as facilitators.

Learning is improved by....opportunities for pupils participate in planned talk activities during lessons.

When we talk we do more than articulate our current level of understanding. The very act of talking forces us to organise our thoughts and so deepens understanding. We believe that Talking is central to learning. All lessons include planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions and extend thinking. Think/Pair/Share and Talk to your partner (TTYD) are regular features in all lessons. Pupils are trained to use appropriate body language when talking to a partner and pupils understand that their TALK is valued as much as their written work.

Learning is improved through... effective use of questioning.

It is adults who help pupils make sense of information. The frequency and nature of interactions between teacher and pupils is highly significant. We develop understanding by

- Using open ended questions and key questions planned in advance.
- Providing wait time- (5 - 10 seconds), pupils need time to think through their answers before replying.
- Providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as 'In two minutes I am going to ask you....'
- Allowing pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups. Pupils then respond with 'We think that...'
- Ensuring pupils fully understand the question.

All pupils receive regular and clear ...feedback which enhances learning.

- Assessment for learning is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning.
- All pupils are clear about how they need to improve; including verbal feedback during lessons.
- Individual/group targets are set half-termly for Maths and Writing – these are displayed in the front of their books and children will have regular opportunities to refer to them during lessons.
- When marking children's work, the main focus is on meeting the learning objective, success criteria and/or targets. Evidence is highlighted, or commented on.
- Marking identifies next step prompts.
- Pupils are given regular time to respond to marking.
- Peer assessment is included in the cycle of feedback and support is given to ensure this is effective.

Learning is improved through ...the fit-for-purpose use of Technology

Technology is used to enhance learning where ever possible. Although Technology is nearly always used at the start of lessons to engage children and in the plenary to consolidate learning, it is also used during the lesson as an aid to learning.

Learning is improved through the use of... effective behaviour management.

Effective, positive behaviour management is used to foster a positive learning environment in the classroom. For further details, please refer to the Behaviour Policy.

Learning is improved through the ...Effective use of additional adults .

- Additional adults are clearly directed to support learning, including the preparation of resources.
- Teaching assistants spend the majority of their time fully engaged with pupils on the carpet and tables during lesson times.
- Teaching assistants are included in the planning and they are clear about who they are supporting and why. Planning is shared in advance with teaching assistants so that they have an opportunity for clarification.
- They should be working with and quietly engaging the pupils, explaining the task or using other resources, e.g. number line, to facilitate learning.
- They are involved in assessing pupil's understanding and feeding back to the teacher.
- Teaching assistants to indicate support in books in relation to the Learning Intention/ objective.

Learning is improved through... the effective use of a plenary and mini plenaries.

- Review what has been learned
- Reflect on how it has been learned
- Adjust learning appropriately to better match learning needs
- Effective questioning is key. Questions to be included in planning.
- Strategies needed to encourage pupils to think critically..

Reviewing learning is a key to memory and not confined to the end of the lesson. Teachers review throughout the entire lesson and constantly refer students back to the success criteria of the lesson, reinforcing prior learning.

Learning is improved through.....actively encouraging pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what has helped them to learn.

Use prompts like:

- What did you do today that you found most helpful when you were learning?
- What did you do today that you found difficult or challenging?
- What are your targets?
- What opportunities do you receive to practise your targets?
- Are you getting better at your work? How do you know?
- If you had to do the task again, how would you do it?
- If you had to give one piece of advice to someone tackling the same task, what would it be?
- Opportunities for reasoning are planned for and modelled, where appropriate.

Learning is improved through...a great classroom environment.

- We aim to ensure that all classrooms, group learning areas and whole school areas are spaces that everyone can use to learn and be proud of.
- All classrooms, from Year 1 onwards, should have a working wall relating to English and Maths
- All classrooms should have these areas of learning as prominent parts of the class:- RE; Reading / Writing (incorporating Phonics EYFS & KS1); Maths.

Learning is improved by..... opportunities to learn at first hand (primary experience).

- Planned visits at least 1 each half term
- Exploring the school and local environment
- Specialist visitors or experiences both in and out of school
- Using links to local community and parish

Learning is improved by.... well labelled and neatly organised resources.

- Classroom resources should be well organised and clearly labelled.
- Labelling should be a mixture of high quality handwritten and printed material.
- Children should know where to find the resources they need for an activity in order to develop independent learning

Here are some Key Elements for our reviewed Teaching and Learning Policy.

the 'non negotiables'.

All lessons have...clear learning intentions/objectives

All lessons have... well planned success criteria where appropriate

All lessons are ...clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning

All pupils are...actively engaged in learning and work co-operatively

Learning is improved by....opportunities for pupils participate in planned talk activities during lessons

Learning is improved through... effective use of questioning

All pupils receive regular and clear ...feedback which enhances learning

Learning is improved through ...the fit-for-purpose use of technology

Learning is improved through the ...effective use of additional adults

Learning is improved through... the effective use of a plenary and mini plenaries

Learning is improved through.....actively encouraging pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what has helped them to learn.

Learning is improved through...a great classroom environment

Learning is improved by.... well labelled and neatly organised resources

Reviewed September 2018