

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



Teaching and Learning Policy September 2023

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 school community will jointly work towards the school 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 school 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 Early Years 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 in our school 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. We refine our practice in light of research. Across our school 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 whole school approach to teaching and learning across our school, we aim:

- to provide consistency of teaching and learning across our school.
- 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 help them retain key facts and knowledge on which to build for the next stage of learning.
- 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 school – a practical guide.

All lessons across our school 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

- To begin with a review of prior learning.
- Learning intentions/objectives are shared orally and displayed.
- All learning intentions/objectives are written up and shared orally in child friendly language.
- Learning intentions/objectives are not muddled up with the context of the lesson.
- 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
- Use child-friendly language – there is little point in sharing learning intentions/objectives if students don't understand what you mean.
- 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

- All pupils are clear about how they will achieve the learning objective.
- Success criteria is displayed for the children to follow during the lesson or drawn up with the children, e.g. what they will be able to do, what they will need to be able to remember.
- Weekly planning includes success criteria.
- Children use the success criteria to self-assess their own or other children's work.
- 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, adapted to meet needs and abilities, to enable all pupils to access learning.

- All learners are challenged appropriately.
- Planning shows clear differentiation
- A range of teaching approaches is used including first-hand experiences, modelling, manipulatives, and precise teaching.
- A range of learning strategies are used by presenting information including use of key questions, key vocabulary, concept maps, graphic organisers, mind maps, etc.
- **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 with a partner.

- 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.

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. It is partly the reason why we remember so much of what we teach to others. At our school 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 (TTYP) are regular features in all lessons. For pupils in Year 6 Peer Tutoring becomes a significant strategy. 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.
- 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.#

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 our Behaviour Policy.

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

- Additional adults are clearly directed to support learning.
- Interventions need to be specific and time limited with measurable review points.
- Teaching assistants spend the majority of their time fully engaged with pupils on the carpet and tables during lesson times.
- 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.

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

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 less helpful?
- 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?

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

- Across our school 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 Literacy 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
- Including the use of the school Handwriting scheme.

**Here are some Key Elements for our reviewed Teaching and Learning Policy.
the 'non negotiables'.**

Each theme or topic should begin with a review of prior learning

All lessons have...clear learning intentions/objectives

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

All lessons are ...clearly differentiated, adapted to meet needs and abilities, 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