



Teaching and Learning Policy

REVIEW DATE: October 2019

Introduction

At Castle Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be creative and enjoyable. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives, and that children learn best when they feel safe and secure in an environment in which they are able to explore and experiment.

Aims and Objectives

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:

- 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.

Effective Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. We take account of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles when planning our teaching. In so doing many learning opportunities are made available to the children.

These include:

- investigation and problem solving
- research and finding out
- group work
- pair work
- independent work
- whole-class work
- asking and answering questions
- use of ICT
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- creative activities
- multi-media activities (eg .watching and responding to audio-visual material)
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations
- designing and making things
- participation in athletic or physical activity

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 Teaching

When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use the National Curriculum, Primary Strategies, Staffordshire RE Syllabus and EYFS to guide our teaching. These set out the aims and objectives of our school and details what is to be taught in each year group.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment (Assessment for Learning). Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge, skills and understanding of the children. We strive to ensure that all activities set are appropriate to each child's level of ability.

When planning work for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's individual and group education plans (IEPs). We have high expectations and are fully aware of, the need of all pupils, and we believe that the vast majority of their work is of the highest possible standard. They are supported by adult intervention and suitable resources, including multi-sensory where possible. The child's confidence is important to us and should be developed according to their IEP. Our school has achieved Level 1 Dyslexia Friendly Status.

We set literacy and numeracy based layered targets for the children each term and we share these targets with children and their parents. Pupils are also responsible for creating their own personal target. We review the progress of each child at the end of each term and revised targets are set as appropriate.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the National Curriculum, Primary Frameworks and EYFS. Our medium and short term lesson plans contain detailed information about the teaching activities and tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way we assess the children's work.

Each member of our staff team makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all 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 our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class rules. We expect all children to comply with these rules that we jointly devise in order to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. (See Behaviour Policy)

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission. In so doing, we follow the LA guidance on Off-Site visits and volunteers.

We deploy teaching assistants and volunteers as effectively as possible. They support individual children and small groups, for instance with IEP targets, in consultation with the class teacher. They also assist with the preparation of resources and storage of classroom equipment and displays.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children, and includes a working wall relating to literacy and maths. We ensure that opportunities are given for the children's work to be displayed. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and a variety of fiction and non-fiction books are stored in the library. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and areas for development and their professional development needs are planned accordingly. We provide internal and external advisory services to support our teachers in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding so that they can continually improve their practice.

The Role of Governors

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

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by helping to allocate resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through link visits to the school;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching and learning;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from core subject leaders and the termly headteacher's report to governors.

The Role of Parents

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:

- sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the curriculum that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- sending annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and/or investigative work.
- holding parents' evenings which provide an opportunity to discuss progress children are making.
- inform them of their child's targets
- 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 and PE kit;
 - ensure that their child is supported with homework activities which consolidate learning;
 - 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.

Monitoring Teaching and Learning

The importance of the monitoring process lies in how the information collected is used to move the school forward and so to achieve higher standards.

Monitoring is both a formal and an informal process.

- Informal monitoring is about being active and involved in the work of the school. It comes from being observant, talking to people and being interested in what they are doing and how they are feeling. It is an intuitive process that can yield a lot of valuable information.
- Formal monitoring is a planned process with recorded outcomes. It involves making conscious choices about what should be monitored, how it should be monitored and how the information collected should be recorded. It enables evaluative judgements and consequent actions to be undertaken.

All monitoring of teaching is done in a supportive way to reflect the mutual respect that is vital between professional colleagues. Monitoring should be seen as a process that all staff are fully aware of and involved in, not as something that is done to them.

Effective monitoring requires a clear focus to be established. This focus must be shared with all staff so that the purposes of the monitoring are clear. Staff should also be aware of when and how the monitoring will take place and how and to whom it will be reported.

Teaching is monitored in a variety of ways, including:

- by the Headteacher and Senior Management Team through classroom observation, attendance at planning meetings, reading of teaching plans and evaluations, monitoring of books and marking, talking to children and learning walks
- by subject co-ordinators through classroom observation, reading of teaching plans, sampling of work, talking to children and analysis of any other evidence relating to their curriculum area in connection with the agreed programme of curriculum monitoring

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Marking and Presentation Policy
- SEND policy
- Curriculum Subject Polices