

Woodfield Primary School



(09) Teaching and Learning Policy

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Teaching and Learning Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and regard the teaching and learning which takes place in Woodfield Primary School to be part of a learning continuum which begins before the child comes to school and continues into secondary education and beyond.

Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; in short, it should be fulfilling. Through our teaching, we aim to equip pupils 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 pupils to lead happy and rewarding lives.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 We believe that pupils differ in the ways in which they learn most effectively, and the conditions for optimum learning also differ in relation to the context in which the learning takes place. In some situations, pupils may prefer to learn by listening, in others they can only learn effectively by actively doing, and these preferences may differ for each individual. At Woodfield Primary School, we aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all pupils to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

- 2.2 Through our teaching and our learning environment, we aim to:

- Ensure that pupils develop a self-image of themselves as capable learners;
- Enable pupils to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- Nurture pupils' self-esteem, and help them to build positive relationships with other people;
- Equip pupils with the key knowledge, skills and understanding which they need for the next phase of their education, and in order to maximise their life chances and economic well-being in adulthood;
- Develop pupils' self-respect, encouraging them to understand the ideas, attitudes and values of others, and teach them to respect other people's feelings;
- Show respect for a diverse range of cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- Enable pupils to understand their community and British values, helping them to feel valued as part of it;
- Help pupils grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens;
- Instil a lifelong love of learning

3 Effective learning

3.1 Research tells us that pupils learn in many different ways in different situations, and respond best to varying types of input; we must therefore teach in a variety of ways, tailored to the context for learning and the differing aptitudes of our pupils.

3.2 We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they also enjoy learning, and feel that they will succeed, because the learning challenge will have been set at the right level. We want pupils to feel a sense of 'ownership' of their own learning and not to feel that education is something which is done to them.

3.3 All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:

- Teaching should build on previous learning;
- Pupils should be taught to understand the purpose of the intended learning;
- The teacher should explain the learning objectives and why the lesson is important;
- The lesson should incorporate opportunities for a range of learning styles to be accommodated;
- There should be opportunities for collaborative learning, through the use of Kagan strategies, to promote pupil engagement;
- Pupils should be given opportunities to reflect on and review what has been learnt;
- There should be planned opportunities for feedback to the pupils, celebrating success, reviewing learning strategies, and assessing learning;
- Teachers should indicate what the next step in the learning will be; this may be verbally or written.

3.4 We offer opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:

- Investigation and problem-solving;
- Research and discovery;
- Listening;
- Group work;
- Paired work;
- Independent work;
- Whole-class work;
- Asking and answering questions;
- Using ICT to support learning;
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- Creative activities;
- Child-led learning opportunities, planning from pupils' interests;
- Collaborative learning strategies;
- Talk for Writing strategies;

- Drama;
 - Looking at pictures and other visual images, including appropriate DVDs and television;
 - Listening and responding to music or audio material;
 - Play, including 'small world' play and role play;
 - Group discussions, debates and giving and listening to oral presentations;
 - Designing and making things;
 - Participation in athletic or physical activity.
- 3.5 We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn.
- 3.6 We help pupils to understand different types of learning. These include 'steps for success' outcomes. Teachers ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to ensure that previous learning is securely embedded through practice and improvement. We encourage pupils to recognise good learning behaviours in their learning. By encouraging pupils to recognise and talk about their learning in these ways, they can become partners in learning with their teachers, who will be able to better match their teaching to the learning needs of individual pupils.
- 3.7 As a school we are fully aware that effective learning, as research suggests, results in a change in the long-term memory. Teaching and learning at Woodfield is underpinned by research into the working and long-term memory. Teaching, activities and the learning environment support pupils' skills in each lesson whilst other activities and features of the learning environment contribute to developing automaticity of key skills (e.g. maths meetings).

4 Effective teaching

- 4.1 When we are teaching, we focus on motivating all the pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum plan 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.
- 4.2 Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their pupils. Our prime focus is to develop and further the knowledge and skills of all our pupils.

We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of attainment. When planning work for pupils with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in any specific education plans. Teachers modify teaching and learning activities as appropriate for pupils with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation. We will strive to meet the needs of all our pupils and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

- 4.3 We set academic targets for the pupils in each year and we share these targets with pupils and their parents/carers. We review the progress of each child at different points throughout the academic year.
- 4.4 We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the National Curriculum. Our lesson plans contain information about these objectives (which may differ for groups of different levels of attainment), the planned learning activities, the resources needed and the way in which we will assess the pupils' learning. Most importantly, our lesson plans support our teachers in their implementation of teaching. We reflect on all lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching.
- 4.5 In our lessons, we ensure that the learning intentions are shared with and understood by the pupils, and, to that end, are expressed in appropriate, child-friendly language. We also ensure that pupils understand the 'success criteria' for the lesson – i.e. what they need to ensure they do or pay attention to in order to succeed and achieve. Often, these success criteria will be decided jointly with the pupils, to ensure that they have a full understanding of them.
- 4.6 Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish highly effective relationships with all the pupils in their class and often beyond. We treat the pupils with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All of our teachers follow the school policy with regard to behaviour and classroom management. We set and agree with pupils the class code of conduct and we expect all pupils to behave according to the school's Code of Conduct that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise pupils for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We are a Thrive school which is embedding the approach across the whole school. We are therefore deepening our understanding of how we can support the development of social and emotional learning and in what way this underpins our capacity for wider academic learning.

We recognise that behaviours can be learned and within our cognitive awareness, but also that they can be unconscious, patterned, non-problem solving defence or discharge responses which might feel overwhelming. Attentive, observant adults working in relationship with pupils are required in order to recognise behaviours, identify the underlying needs and respond in appropriate ways.

We believe that everyone has the right to feel safe, special and to have their needs met. Therefore, our Behaviour Policy reflects the deeper, important social and emotional learning that each pupil needs to develop. Within this, consistent containment aims to ensure that one individual's need and learning does not adversely impact on another's.

- 4.7 We ensure that all tasks and activities that the pupils engage in are safe. When we plan to take pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are

obtained. We inform parents or carers, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.

- 4.8 We deploy support professionals and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes, they work with individual pupils and sometimes they work with small groups.
- 4.9 Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays frequently so that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the pupils and supports their new learning. We ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to display their best work. We use 'working walls' and displays of work in progress in order to demonstrate effective learning strategies and to model good practice. The learning environment, including working walls, should provide support for pupils' learning in each lesson. This support may take the form of worked examples, word banks, concrete and pictorial resources to support conceptual understanding, 'helpful hints', key vocabulary or be used as part of daily retrieval practices to support the development of automaticity. Not all displays of pupils' work will be pristine and exemplary, therefore. However, other displays also showcase the highest standards to ensure that all have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- 4.10 All classes have a range of dictionaries and of both fiction and non-fiction books available to them, as well as displays relating to English and maths. We use displays as resources for learning, often providing prompts for the pupils. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning and that an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources, which results in high-quality work by the pupils.
- 4.11 All of our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, planning their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills so that they can continually improve their practice. An ethos of collaboration, self-efficacy and challenge is at the heart of our professional development to develop effective teaching, as the school's CPD & Induction and Joint Professional Development policies explain.
- 4.12 We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.
- 4.13 For further clarification on our commonly agreed strategies, please see our Teaching and Learning Handbook.

5 The role of the Head Teacher and other senior leaders

- 5.1 The Head Teacher and other members of the senior leadership team are primarily the leaders of teaching and learning. Woodfield has a collaborative and self-reflective ethos that supports staff to have self-efficacy in developing their own practice. The practice of the Head Teacher and other senior leaders models high-quality teaching. They have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the school. This will be achieved through:
- The formal performance management and appraisal of teachers;
 - Supporting teachers to becoming self-reflective practitioners;

- Team teaching and working alongside teaching colleagues;
- Talking to pupils about their learning in lessons;
- Working alongside teachers to review books and work from lessons, enhancing the effectiveness of teaching and learning;
- Overseeing pupil assessment records.

6 The role of Governors

6.1 Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to 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 used optimally to support teaching and learning;
- Check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
- Seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good-quality teaching;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from the Head Teacher, senior leaders and subject leaders and a review of the continuing professional development of staff.

7 The role of parents and carers

7.1 We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in supporting their pupils' education. We do all we can to inform parents and carers about the curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, what their pupils are currently learning and the outcomes of assessment. We do this by:

- Holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies for various aspects of the curriculum such as English and maths;
- Detailing information to parents and carers on the website;
- Sending parents and carers annual reports in which we explain the progress made by each child, their involvement in wide opportunities as well as indicating how their child can improve further;
- Explaining to parents and carers how they can support their pupils with homework and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading with younger pupils and support for older pupils with their projects and investigative work;
- Welcoming information from parents and carers about their pupils which may impact on their learning in school, or tell us about their learning and achievements beyond the school gate.

7.2 We believe that parents and carers have the responsibility to support their pupils and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents and carers:

- To ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible and comes to school on time;
- To ensure that their child is fully prepared for school with the correct equipment for lessons, uniform and PE kit;
- To do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- To inform school if there are matters outside school that are likely to affect a child's learning or behaviour;
- To support the school by ensuring homework tasks are completed regularly;
- To promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 Senior leaders and the Governing Body monitor the school's Teaching and Learning Policy, and review it regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. Formal, written updates to this policy will be made on an annual basis.