

Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

The teaching and learning processes lie at the very heart of the school's business and the vision of what it is we want to achieve.

All other policies and practices impact upon pupils in the context of the classroom. This policy puts the aims of the school into classroom effect.

The nature and quality of classroom practice is the single most important factor-determining pupil's achievement, which lies within our control.

At Gainsborough Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the notion that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. 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.

Vision

We aspire for all our children to become confident, secure, caring individuals who achieve personal success and develop a love of learning. We want all our children to: "Be the best they can."

Mission

- ◆ To provide a warm welcoming secure environment for all children
- ◆ To encourage, value and extend every child's contribution to the school
- ◆ To recognise and celebrate success in everyone
- ◆ To provide a broad, balanced, carefully planned curriculum
- ◆ To build strong collaborative partnerships with families and the local community
- ◆ To encourage and enable the continuous professional development of all staff

Our School Ethos

We believe children learn best when...

- they feel happy, secure, confident and valued
- their surroundings are lively and interesting
- they have access to a range of appropriate resources
- they have entitlement to the full range of the curriculum irrespective of ability, difficulties or disability, social background, culture or gender
- they have time to reflect and talk about their experiences
- they know they are making progress and are able to celebrate their achievements
- they have opportunities for practical, relevant exploration of ideas
- they are able to work collaboratively as well as independently
- they know what is expected of them
- work is matched to their individual need
- learning is relevant to their lives in the wider community

Aims and Objectives

This teaching and learning policy is intended to promote consistency and high standards and the achievement of the school aims. At Gainsborough we aim to provide a caring, supportive and stimulating environment with high quality teaching through which to foster:

- A high level of literacy and numeracy and an enquiring mind which wants to learn more each day
- Independent young people who are confident, flexible and able to cooperate with others;
- Imagination and creative expression through a wide range of media

- Conscientious young citizens of our multi-cultural society who are tolerant and respect others' values
- Pride in achievement and a desire to succeed
- Effective links between the school, the child's home and the community which promote aspiration and high expectations
- Equality of opportunity for all

This policy reflects our classroom practice, values and the ways in which we have purposefully integrated Curriculum 2000 and 2014 into our ethos. We value teamwork, shared ownership and the roles and responsibilities of the individual. At the heart of teaching and learning are the children. Therefore, as a whole this policy displays the ways we enrich their school experience and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges of adult life.

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. The psychologist Howard Gardner identifies seven main areas of intelligence: linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working, and intrapersonal/reflective. We take into account these different forms of intelligence ensuring wherever possible that there is a Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic (VAK) element to each of our lessons.

Effective learning results in:

1. Knowing you have succeeded
2. Feeling you can do more
3. Explaining what you have learned
4. Applying it to other situations
5. Teaching it to someone else
6. 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.

Our Learning Environment

*Because children learn best when **they feel happy, secure, confident and valued...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- a familiar routine
- praise
- respect for others and our environment
- talking and listening to adults and each other
- increasing independence and responsibility
- giving increasing responsibilities to children
- a caring attitude
- tasks they can succeed in
- positive attitudes towards taking risks in their learning

*Because children learn best when **their surroundings are lively and interesting...** ...there will be evidence in the classroom of...*

- children's work being valued and celebrated
- stimulating displays reflecting a range of curriculum areas

- inter-active display
- development of imaginative play
- wide variety of activities
- giving time to talk about their own interests
- well resourced and accessible reading area

*Because children learn best when **they have access to a range of appropriate resources...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- organisation so that children know where things are
- resources for progression throughout the school
- labelling appropriate to age group
- clearly marked learning areas
- children taking responsibility for the care of all resources
- allowance for experimentation in a safe and controlled way
- ease of access to frequently used resources

*Because children learn best when **they have entitlement to the full range of the curriculum irrespective of ability, difficulties or disability, social background, culture or gender...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- teaching adapted for multi-sensory learning (VAK)
- challenges for more able children
- appropriate support for less able children
- equipment/resources adapted to meet the needs of children with difficulties or disabilities
- provision for children from less advantaged backgrounds
- effective use of teaching assistants to support children
- resources which reflect a variety of cultures, beliefs and religions
- opportunities and resources which challenge gender, racial and cultural stereotypes
- inclusion plans and IEPs to support and differentiate learning so all can achieve at their own level

*Because children learn best when **they have time to reflect and talk about their experiences...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- time for relevant talk and discussion
- talk being valued, through children and adults listening and responding to each other
- children discussing and completing tasks in pairs and groups
- development of active listening skills
- opportunities for reflection and concentration

*Because children learn best when **they know they are making progress and are able to celebrate their achievements...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- praise and encouragement
- systems of reward
- children's work displayed with care
- analysis of work with teacher
- children's assessment of their work and setting of own learning targets
- shared reading and work across years
- sharing work with other teachers and children

*Because children learn best when **they have opportunities for practical, relevant exploration of ideas...***

... there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- first hand experience
- children learning through play
- investigations
- problem solving
- opportunities for practical activities reflected across the curriculum
- a variety of teaching and learning strategies

*Because children learn best when **they are able to work collaboratively as well as independently...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- individual and collaborative work
- time allowed for children to consolidate and extend own learning
- flexible groupings related to the task in hand – mixed, set, ability, peer grouping, preferred learning style

*Because children learn best when **they know what is expected of them...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- clear instructions, focussed learning objectives and a success criteria
- teachers checking children's understanding
- boundaries for behaviour
- high expectations

*Because children learn best when **work is matched to their individual needs...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- work planned for different abilities and learning styles
- continuous assessment
- a range of appropriate resources
- accessible learning areas which reflect a range of abilities
- children working on task
- children feeling secure, confident and valued
- questions which help children consolidate and extend thinking
- key workers for children with a higher level of need

*Because children learn best when **learning is relevant to their lives in the wider community...***

...there will be evidence in the classroom of...

- visitors representing different sectors of the community
- visits to places outside and within the local community
- topic work related to global issues

Our classrooms and corridors are attractive learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. 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. Each classroom has well ordered clearly labelled resources.

All areas and resources of the school including the classrooms should be clearly labelled. Children should be made aware of these resource areas at the beginning of each year. The learning environment should be organised to ensure that the children have the opportunity to learn in different ways. These include:

Engaging pupils in learning – ownership by the pupils

- Interactive displays – to support and reinforce learning
- Asking questions
- Challenging
- Criteria for success

- Exciting new ideas
- Fresh/relevant to current topics and themes
- Colourful

Enabling learning to take place

- Working walls
- Word lists
- Connectives
- Number lines
- Timelines
- Clocks
- Place value cards available
- Whiteboards

- Access to basic resources by pupils (crayons, scissors, paper, glue, etc...)
- Number squares
- Tables squares
- High frequency words
- Key vocabulary
- Interactive whiteboards

Keeping what is learnt in mind

- Key ideas
- Word lists
- Connectives

- Success criteria
- Flip charts
- Mind maps, links, working walls

Celebrating success

- Displaying good work (also in corridors) – updated termly
- Achievements, certificates

- Exemplar materials
- Photos

Raising expectations

- Setting targets
- Agreed class rules and school expectations
- Aims

- Class/group targets
- Consequences board

Clarifying routines

- Timetables
- Access to labelled resources

- Visual activity cues
- Signs

Encouraging independence

- Access to resources
- Working walls
- Strategies for self help

- Word banks, dictionaries, thesaurus
- Class responsibilities, rotas, monitors

Inclusive classrooms

- Multi-cultural content
- Gender role models
- Named work by all pupils
- Access

- Pupil ownership
- IEPs/Inclusion plans

Routines and Rules

Routines and rules within the school contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be:

- Agreed with the children and clearly understood
- Fair and consistent
- Realistic, observable and positive
- Kept to a minimum but enforced consistently
- Daily activities such as morning maths with which the children are familiar

All expectations and rules should result in the children knowing the boundaries of behaviour and should be set within the terms of the Positive Behaviour for Learning policy.

Achievement

- Verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, Deputy/Head teacher and parents/carers
- Displays of work
- Opportunities to perform or share
- Positive notes
- Sticker, certificates, Golden Time
- Celebration Assembly

Target Setting:

Targets are set in Reading, Writing and Mathematics for individuals and groups of children in Years 1 to 6. Literacy targets are based on writing assessments and are discussed with children. Numeracy targets are based on the work to be studied each term. Targets are discussed with parents at parents' evenings. End of year targets are set in English and Mathematics for children in Years 2 to 6. Pupils are tracked carefully every term.

Planning:

We have moved towards a challenging creative curriculum where learning is engaged within topics. Our focus is more on skills than just knowledge. English and Maths are taught discreetly as well as within topics to ensure progression.

Long term planning – ensures the breadth of coverage of the curriculum throughout the year within the topics covered.

Medium term planning – identifies the breadth, core skills and objectives to be covered within a topic. References are made to the National Curriculum and EYFS Curriculum within this.

Short term planning – shows learning objectives and a break down of skills and activities; including differentiated tasks, the role of support staff, assessment for learning, prior and next steps. Planning is annotated and adjusted daily to meet the needs of the pupils.

Assessment:

Assessment exists to help the teacher to help the child. It ensures more effective teaching by providing the evidence for closer matching of tasks to the child's needs. It assists the children by providing them with an indication of what stage they have reached in the learning process. It helps to identify future planning and teaching strategies. It also helps us to recognise and move on from success.

Assessment **for** learning (AfL) helps to identify the next steps needed to make progress. It takes account of pupils' strengths as well as weaknesses.

Assessment **of** learning (AoL) is more associated with judgements based on grades and ranks and with public accountability.

AFL means:

- **Every child** knows how they are doing, and understands what they need to do to improve and how to get there. They get the support they need to be motivated, independent learners on an ambitious trajectory of improvement.
- **Every teacher** is equipped to make well-founded judgements about pupils' attainment, understands the concepts and principles of progression, and knows how to use their assessment judgements to forward plan, particularly for pupils who are not fulfilling their potential.
- **Our school** has in place structured and systematic assessment systems for making regular, useful, manageable and accurate assessments of pupils, and for tracking their progress.
- **Every parent and carer** knows how their child is doing, what they need to do to improve, and how they can support the child and their teachers.

Assessment for learning

- Is part of effective planning
- Focuses on how pupils learn
- Is central to classroom practice
- Is a key professional skill
- Has an emotional impact by promoting self-esteem
- Affects learner motivation
- Promotes commitment to learning objectives and success criteria
- Helps learners know how to improve
- Encourages self-assessment
- Recognises progress from pupil's previous best

Strategies we use to link assessment to better teaching and learning

- Use of effective questioning techniques
- Using effective marking and feedback strategies
- Sharing learning goals – objectives and steps to success/success criteria
- Reinforcing prior learning and identifying future learning
- Peer and self-assessment
- Annotating and evaluating weekly planning to inform next steps
- Use of data from formal assessment to inform planning and differentiation
- Improvement time: children are given suggestions as to how they can improve their work and given time to follow this through
- Regular assessment tasks

Role of Governors:

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

- Support the use of appropriate teaching by allocating resources effectively
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are effective in supporting successful learning and teaching
- Monitor how effective learning and teaching strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- Ensure that staff development policies promote good quality teaching
- Monitor teaching strategies in light of health and safety regulations
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders and the annual head teacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

Role of Parents/Carers

We believe that parents/carers have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We work hard to inform and support parents in how they can help further their children's learning and confidence at school. We do all we can to inform parents/carers about what and how their children are learning by:

- Holding parents'/carers' evenings and curriculum evenings to discuss their child's progress, to identify steps forward and to explain our school strategies for teaching and learning across the curriculum
- Regular events including special and celebration assemblies, curriculum evenings and coffee mornings to involve parents/carers at different levels
- Sending information to parents/carers at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school
- Sending annual reports to parents/carers in which we outline the child's achievements throughout the year, explain the progress made by each, how they are achieving relative to expected levels and how they can improve and develop in the future. Parents/carers may discuss any concerns they have with teachers.
- Information about homework expectations is also sent at the start of each term so that parents/carers know what will be given to children each week. We also have meetings explaining to parents/carers 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 investigative work

We believe that parents/carers 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. Holidays during term time should be avoided as these interrupt the child's progress and they miss important work and may fall behind. Parents/carers are asked to inform the school of any absence on the first day (telephone answer phone available) so that we know that they are safe at home
- Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit
- 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

As children begin at Gainsborough they follow our induction process which supports each child's introduction to their new teacher and class and to the sort of experiences they will be having within their class/phase. Parents/carers are provided with important information and meet with senior staff, as well as their child's class teacher. Parents/carers can share any concerns they may have. They also receive information about helping their child and supporting their learning.

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to review the school's Teaching and Learning Policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.