



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Date: **September 2016**

Review date: **August 2017**

Mission Statement

At St. Mary's we aim to provide an inspiring, enjoyable educational experience where all children can develop their talents, whether academic, creative or sporting. Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and confidence and self-esteem is grown in a happy, caring and stimulating environment. Ultimately, we want our pupils to develop a love of learning for life.

Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

The school policy for teaching and learning was developed and agreed by the whole staff. At St. Mary's School we believe in a love of learning for life. We want learning to be a rewarding experience for everyone and recognise that the best teaching and learning experiences can help children to lead happy and fulfilling lives. Through our teaching we aim to equip children with skills, knowledge and understanding to fulfil their intellectual and personal potential so they are enabled to make choices about their career and creative pathways.

Teaching and learning are central at St. Mary's School so this is a key policy. It outlines our agreed view of children's entitlement and how we intend to support and encourage learning. It provides a framework of expectation to inform and reflect planning, provision and evaluation of teaching and learning at St. Mary's School.

Aims

At our school we will provide rich, relevant and varied learning experiences which allow children to develop their skills, interests and abilities and achieve, be proud and succeed together.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in the core and foundation subjects;
- focus on children's attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science;
- enable children to become confident and independent learners;
- develop children as resourceful, resilient learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with others - both peers and adults;
- develop the highest standards of behaviour and conduct;
- develop children's self-respect and self-awareness and encourage them to show positive attitudes and respect towards the ideas and feelings of others regardless of race, culture or religion
- enable children to understand, feel valued within, and make a positive contribution to this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent-thinking citizens;
- help children be proud of their own work and recognise the achievements of others.

Effective learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop pedagogies which enable all children to learn in ways that suit them.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways including:

- investigation and problem solving;
- open-ended tasks;
- research and finding out, with independent access to relevant resources;
- group work, paired work and working on their own;
- effective questioning;
- presentation and drama;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and off-site visits;
- creative activities, designing and making;
- use of multi-media, visual and aural stimulus;
- participation in athletic and/or physical activity;
- homework;
- after school clubs;
- guest visitors and performers.

Effective teaching

Our teaching will focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and

understanding in each area of the curriculum, so that they can reach the highest level of personal achievement.

The school's subject specific schemes of work and long term plans sets out aims and objectives and details what is to be taught to each year group in each curriculum area. This policy seeks to enable staff to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching in their classroom. It should inform and reflect planning and provision at St. Mary's School:

- In years one to six, pupils work towards appropriate National Curriculum.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils work towards the Early Learning Goals.
- Coherent sequences of lessons are planned to address key aspects of learning. Teachers use their assessments of children's progress and attainment to inform lesson planning. They have high expectations and use 'top-down' planning to ensure the highest ability pupils are challenged during lessons.
- Lessons have clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils and regularly referenced.
- Success criteria are displayed to support expectations and independence.
- Tasks are set appropriate to each pupil's level of ability, including higher attaining pupils.
- Pupils are expected to work independently and be productive.
- Learning is reviewed within or at the end of lessons as appropriate.
- Lessons can be reshaped according to the teacher's assessment of pupils' needs.
- Pupils receive prompt and regular developmental feedback which enables them to reflect upon their performance and take actions to improve.
- Teachers respond to pupils' work with marking which informs pupils of their successes and indicates clearly the next steps needed to secure improvement.
- Pupils are valued as unique individuals, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our pupils, and to ensure that all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion are met.
- When planning work for pupils with special educational needs, due regard is given to information and targets contained within their pupil passport. Teachers modify learning and teaching as appropriate for any pupil with disabilities.
- Teaching assistants are deployed as effectively as possible to work both inside and outside of the classroom with individual pupils or small groups, depending upon the nature of the work.
- Classrooms are attractive, safe environments which celebrate and support pupils' learning. Displays should reflect the core subjects along with topics being studied currently. A stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high quality work. All pupils will have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. A range of good quality fiction and non-fiction texts will also be displayed and accessible in all classrooms.
- Educational off-site visits are planned to support and enrich the curriculum. A strict set of procedures is adhered to when undertaking off-site visits as outlined in our Educational Visits and Activities policy.

Improving Teaching and Learning

All our teachers are expected to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and help shape their own professional development plan. Along with school self-evaluation and appraisal, this informs a programme of CPD to address staff needs, with in-house expertise as well as external providers used to support professional development. We support our teachers in increasing their knowledge and skills, so that they can continue to develop their practice and ensure they contribute to improving the school's provision.

Monitoring and evaluation

We believe that teaching should be conducted in an atmosphere of trust, respect and honesty. We link our appraisal process with the OFSTED criteria and this policy for teaching and learning in order to provide a clear and consistent expectation of the quality of practice across school.

This policy, along with Teachers' Standards, pupils' standards of progress and attainment and the OFSTED criteria for teaching and learning provide a basis for staff to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their classroom and across the school. Staff development needs will be identified in line with this policy.

When evaluating teaching and learning in school, we make use of:

- classroom observation;
- data analysis;
- analysis of pupils' work and teachers' feedback;
- planning scrutiny;
- moderating and discussing the quality of pupils' work with colleagues;
- learning walks;
- pupil interviews;
- feedback from parents and wider stakeholder surveys

Role of the Head Teacher and Cognita Education Executives

Senior leaders and Education Executives are responsible for school effectiveness and efficiency.

They should:

- drive improvements to teaching and learning;
- monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies in raising pupil attainment;
- ensure that staff development and appraisal policies promote good quality teaching;
- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.

Role of Parents/Guardians

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:

- being available whenever possible for informal discussions at the beginning and end of the school day;
- holding open evenings when parents can discuss children's progress;
- sending a termly written report in which children's progress is explained;
- providing homework projects;
- arranging presentations or meetings to explain specific developments;
- publishing documents and updates on the school website;
- inviting parents to classroom, phase or curriculum events and performances.

We believe that parents have a responsibility to support their children and the school in the implementation of 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 and prepared to participate in educational activities;
- 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;
- support school in the promotion of positive and appropriate behaviour;

- fulfil the requirements set out in the parent contract.

Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. St. Mary's School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential. Policies are available to expand on this further.

Accessibility of policy documents

Parents and carers are welcome to ask for further information about any policy matter. Copies of all current school policies are available for parents and carers to read. A copy of each policy is available from the school office and a selection are available online via the school website at www.stmarys-henley.co.uk. The school will try to arrange for the translation or summary of a document should this be requested by a parent or carer whose first language is not English.

Review

We acknowledge that this policy and our understanding of learning need to be reflective and open to new research in order for our teaching to be successful. The head teacher and staff will review this policy during summer term 2017.