



Teaching and Learning and Policy

March 2018

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Southwood Infant School

POLICY FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Aims:

- To challenge and motivate each and every child
- To ensure that the needs of every child are met appropriately
- To continue to raise standards and achievement levels

Through our curriculum and high quality teaching and assessment for learning, we aim to develop our children's knowledge, skills and positive attitudes so that we prepare them well for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges of later life.

Specifically we aim to:

- Provide an inspiring curriculum built on the foundation of the national curriculum through thematic activities and first-hand experiences, which will motivate and challenge the children through investigative and creative learning
- Educate the whole child ~ intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and physically in order that they may become independent, responsible, caring, confident and considerate individuals who make a positive contribution to their community
- Ensure that children are involved in relevant decision making and planning
- Create and maintain an exciting, stimulating and challenging environment which supports, enhances and celebrates learning
- Ensure that each child's education has continuity and progression
- Ensure that there is a match between the child and the tasks he/she is asked to perform and that every effort is made to enable children to meet ARE (age related expectations)
- Recognise the vital role which parents play in their children's education and make every effort to encourage and engage parental involvement in the educational process
- Treat everyone in a respectful way
- Cater for the needs of individual children of both sexes from all ethnic and social groups, with deeper learning for the most able and focused intervention for those who are experiencing learning challenges
- Support children to achieve personal excellence in all aspects of school life. The recognition and celebration of this will enhance the children's self-perceptions
- Promote excellent standards of behaviour, which will be reinforced by praise and reward

Teaching

High Quality Teaching

At Southwood Infant School we recognise the importance of high quality teaching to enable us to meet our aims. We believe that high quality teaching will inspire a love of learning for all members of the school community.

High quality teaching will positively impact on the pupils' learning and personal growth and will involve many facets. These include:

- Having good subject knowledge and an understanding of how children learn and develop
- Preparing detailed planning based on assessment of each child's knowledge, understanding and identification of next steps in learning
- Using different teaching styles to both engage, reinforce and secure new learning
- Variation of tasks used to meet the needs of all children, including those with Special Educational needs and those who are higher attainers
- Developing motivation, high self-esteem and a positive attitude to learning
- Promoting independence
- Managing and making effective use of the physical space, resources, equipment and display
- Ensuring that every lesson has a clear purpose, appropriate pace and participation and support and challenge
- Having high expectations of all children through targeted questioning and challenge
- Developing positive relationships between home and school.

How will Teaching be delivered?

Assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding leading to detailed planning

Long term and medium term planning will be developed by subject leaders in consultation with year group teams. The children are also asked to raise key questions and suggest avenues for their learning as new topics are introduced. Short term planning is developed from medium term plans and involves teachers planning astutely, setting challenging tasks which are based on systematic, accurate assessment of children's prior skills, knowledge and understanding. Key objectives and success criteria will be identified and shared with the children, and assessment foci identified and applied. Lessons will be interactive with a balance of teacher / pupil talk making use of high quality questioning and discussion in order to support and extend understanding. Misconceptions will be quickly addressed so that children close gaps as quickly as possible. The children's work will be marked according to our Marking Policy and constructive feedback and encouragement given. This feedback will be of high quality leading to high levels of engagement and interest. 'Closing the Gap' opportunities will ensure that learning needs are met promptly and efficiently. Teachers will evaluate and reflect on the outcomes of the learning objectives and will keep informative and accurate records. Where a need for greater support arises, teachers will plan additional support liaising with the SENCo where support beyond the classroom is required.

Catering for different learning styles of the children

When teaching, we will take into account the different learning styles of the children and, where needed, ensure a multi- sensory approach (auditory, visual and kinaesthetic) in our planning and delivery. We recognise that whichever learning styles children have they will need scaffolded experiences of other styles to prepare them for life. All children will have access to

the full curriculum, regardless of any difficulties or disabilities they may have. The children will have opportunities to work in flexible groupings depending on the task being carried out. At times, their work will be carried out individually and the amount of support provided will vary so that children have opportunities to work with assistance and opportunities to attempt a task independently. Groupings will be used very flexibly and must enhance progress and not limit achievement.

Task Variation and Differentiation

We acknowledge that all children are different and have a variety of needs. We aim, therefore, to plan and deliver lessons that offer both an appropriate level of challenge and support so that every child can achieve. All children will work on the same concept in class but the task set and support/challenge offered may vary according to their current understanding and next step needs. Pre and over learning will ensure children catch up and achieve. Children with special educational needs will have individual development targets in their areas of need. If areas of learning are not impacted by their special needs, the standard age related expectations will apply. More able pupils will be set tasks which require them to use and apply their learning in more challenging contexts so that they use their resourcefulness and think critically to solve more complex problems.

Motivation and self esteem

Children learn effectively when they feel secure, valued and have positive relationships at home and at school. In order to make learning a happy and fulfilling experience, we will:

- Ensure that we have a positive relationship with all children
- Ensure that children have good relationships with each other
- Use well-judged and imaginative teaching strategies which are sharply focused on the objective set
- Ensure that children know what they are learning
- Ensure that parents have good relationships with teaching staff
- Take into account different needs and expectations of all those within our school community
- Give children positive encouragement regularly, not just about achievements, but also about effort
- Plan activities which promote children's emotional, spiritual moral, social and cultural development
- Provide images that help children recognise and appreciate differences in others and see differences as positive and exciting, whether they are of gender, ethnicity, religion or special needs or disabilities
- Know about the children's interests and give them time and space to focus on activities which develop these
- Ensure that all adults are good role models who show that they are also still learning
- Encourage children to be independent learners who are willing to take a risk within a supportive environment
- Plan to develop learning skills such as problem solving, decision making, negotiating and evaluating
- Show children that we have high expectations and offer children challenge in their work
- Offer timely support and intervention, helping children to cope when they are not successful and help them to learn from their experiences
- Support children who have behaviour difficulties or communication difficulties.

Independence

Children need to develop their independence to enable them to be learners for life. We will encourage this by:

- Setting open ended tasks
- Using higher order questioning to promote deeper/critical thinking and reasoning
- Setting homework with appropriate deadlines
- Supporting an independent selection of resources in accessible classrooms
- Establishing responsibilities for equipment and the school environment
- Encouraging responsibility for the presentation and standard of their own work
- Teaching children the skills of time management
- Helping children to develop a set of positive attitudes and dispositions with regard to learning, e.g., persistence

We will create a well-organised classroom environment where tools are readily accessible, where pupils are taught and practise the skills of being independent, and where pupils are scaffolded in their learning within a supportive framework of routines, systems and high expectations.

Challenge

Challenge is a key part of every lesson and is something children should learn to embrace. We will ensure that every lesson provides the structured opportunity for children to move on in their thinking. When responding to children's work, verbal feedback including 'closing the gap' comments or extension questioning, will be used as an effective way to challenge thinking further.

The learning objective will be set out in child-friendly language using an "I can" statement. These are used in our classrooms to encourage children to be more actively involved in their learning. They are used to explicitly highlight to the children what they are being asked to do.

When marking, teachers will use a green pen for go (achievement) and a pink pen for think. The pink pen will be used to identify the next steps in learning and will require the child to respond. Teachers will follow up their marking at intervals, noticing 'threads of improvement'. Children will use a purple polishing pen to respond to marking.

Monitoring

Regular planned monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning including monitoring of planning, teaching, marking and outcomes ensures consistency and continuity of high quality provision.

Questioning

Lessons will be planned with opportunities for a variety of questioning at different levels. This will include both closed and open questions though it is the open questions that will promote higher order thinking. These questions will be sharply focused on the learning objective ensuring that questioning drives improved understanding and eliminates misconceptions. Sharply focused questioning will also ensure an effective balance of teacher/pupil talk. It is as important for the children to be questioning, as it is for teachers and support staff to be doing this.

Pace

Lessons will be appropriately paced and will build on prior knowledge. Opportunities to think, explore, reflect, respond and consolidate previous learning, will be built into lessons. Teaching will be adjusted and adapted depending on children's responses ensuring that there is depth in learning and that the needs of the children are met in the lesson. This may involve a group separating from the class, following a short input from the teacher to work with a teaching assistant in order to have input which is very closely aligned to their needs. This ensures that no time is wasted in children's learning.

Home/School Partnership Working

Home and school work in partnership to help develop the child as an effective learner and member of the wider community. To this end, we endeavour to communicate with parents and involve them in their child's education through:

- Home/School agreement
- School newsletters
- Open door policy
- Parents' evenings
- Curriculum evenings
- Focus class assemblies
- Half termly class newsletters and learning overviews
- Welcoming parent helpers within the school community
- Issuing written school reports at the end of the summer term

Learning**What is Effective Learning?**

At Southwood Infant School we believe that learning should be a dynamic, engaging, reflective and empowering activity to which all children and adults, regardless of race, gender, ability or background, are entitled.

We recognise that learning involves many different aspects, including:

- Questioning
- Understanding
- Investigating and hypothesising
- Playing, exploring and creating
- Making connections between new and existing information, and applying knowledge and understanding
- Being able to use new 'processed' information
- Developing social skills and emotional intelligence
- Developing personal skills and positive attitudes
- Developing thinking skills

We also acknowledge that all children and adults have different strategies and styles of learning, related to different personality characteristics, and their previous experiences. We aim to address all learning preferences through our teaching.

The Learning Environment

For effective learning to take place we recognise a positive environment is central to success and that there are several factors contributing to the effective learning environment. We will therefore:

- Provide stimulating, safe and welcoming surroundings
- Seek to foster a strong and positive partnership between staff, pupils and home, in respect of both academic and social learning
- Develop a learning culture so that staff continuously seek to develop themselves in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the school
- Deliver the curriculum in a variety of different ways in order to cater for the different learning styles of all pupils
- Make use of a wide and varied range of learning resources
- Work hard to provide a caring atmosphere of positive reinforcement and celebration that recognises the achievement and efforts of all pupils
- Utilise the skills of the local community to add breadth and variety to the learning environment
- Utilise new age-appropriate technologies

Physical Space, Resources and Display

We acknowledge the importance of creating a stimulating, effective and appropriately resourced learning and teaching environment. We do this by:

- Providing high quality resources to support schemes of work and the needs of individual children
- Organising the classroom to maximise use of space and learning opportunities, and ensuring that it is well ventilated and well-lit, clear and tidy, and with well-defined working spaces
- Using displays to stimulate, to challenge and to inform, to provide interactive learning opportunities and to celebrate children's work

The Learning Experience

The learning experience must be managed carefully in order to give each child the greatest opportunity for success. It requires the staff to know and understand the pupils in their care and to shape their learning accordingly. We will therefore:

- Understand that children learn in different ways at different rates and start at different points.
- Ensure that learning is an active process and wherever possible based on first-hand experiences
- Encourage our children to set high standards for themselves, respect the views and contributions of others, value excellence, and develop the self-confidence and motivation to become independent learners
- Employ a personalised approach to learning, providing appropriate challenge that will allow all children to experience success

All staff will be thoroughly committed to ensuring that the needs of all children are met and that the school will embrace a culture of continued learning for all.

Teachers will regularly review their practice against the core, post-threshold and leadership standards and will fully engage in a range of professional development opportunities including attending training sessions / courses, working with a coach or mentor, carrying out peers observation and lesson study. They will ensure that they continually reflect on their practice, keep abreast of current developments in education and the curriculum and uphold the ethos and values of the school.

Assessment

Assessment is inclusive of all abilities and drives teaching and learning, making it relevant and appropriate to the needs of the children. Assessment processes and timeframes are captured in our Assessment cycle. Appropriately challenging individual and group targets are set each term based on a range of information gathered by the teacher which builds a picture of the child's current attainment and identifies next steps in learning. The school curriculum aims to provide the right opportunities and quality of teaching in order for children to achieve 'mastery' in the curriculum content, i.e. knowledge, skills and understanding for their age group (ARE – age related expectations).

A child achieving '**mastery**' will be able to show good levels of **fluency, independence** and **resilience** in all aspects of the curriculum they have covered.

Formative Assessment

Information about a child's progress and attainment is gathered through formative assessment which is carried out on a day to day basis through discussion with the children and marking against lesson objectives and I can statements. Good assessment for learning will include; regular opportunities to engage in effective question and answer sessions, marking with feedback and regular mini plenaries. Formative assessment is used to assess knowledge, skills and understanding, and to identify gaps and misconceptions.

Periodic Assessment

Information will be gathered and recorded using Hampshire Assessment Model. The principle of CIAO (Consistently, Independently, across a range and Overtime) is used in a range of activities to demonstrate what children know and can do independently. The school uses national and locally agreed criteria relating to national curriculum ARE expectations in order to determine attainment and to track progress. Key performance indicators, end of year tests and early learning goals will be used to inform a child's on track-ness throughout the year and used to make accurate judgements about their end of year attainment. The purpose of in-school phased assessment is to evaluate pupils' learning and progress and to inform next steps.

Summative Assessment

Information is also gathered at the end of each year and key stage. This will provide an assessment of a child's attainment and progress looking over time at a range of work. Nationally standardised summative assessment provides information on how pupils are performing in comparison to pupils nationally. Assessment outcomes will be shared with parents on a termly basis.

Our aim is always to determine what each child needs to do next and with what level of support in order to make at least good progress in their learning. Assessment information is shared with relevant staff, the head teacher and parents. A summary of attainment and progress within cohorts is discussed with the senior leadership team and governing body as part of their monitoring and review activities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Curriculum and Marking policies.
Wendy Southgate March 2018